

# Alton Community Panel Meeting Notes (draft)

## Meeting 11 – 10 March 2026



**Main aim of meeting:** Discussing how we respond to Future Of London's Evaluation Recommendations.

*This was our first normal meeting of 2026, following the Evaluation (Meeting 10) and the Field Trip in January.*

**Panel Members:** Albert Balogun, Asma Choudhry, Sandra Claringbould, Tatiana Dobрева, Charles Einloth, Simone Johns, Nusrat Mahmood, Orleen Mcintosh, George Mills, Angus Robertson.

**Others at meeting:** **Alton Renewal Team:** Jo Baxter (Community Engagement & Cultural Coordinator), Charlotte Rowlands (Project Assistant) & Anna Singleton (Head of Alton Regeneration). **Architects HTA:** Iain Sherman and Lucy Smith. **Third-Party Chair:** Daisy Froud.

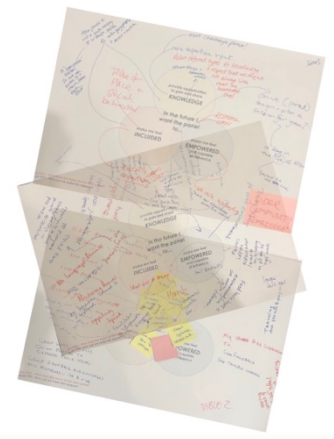
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### A. Follow up on recent actions, and other ARP Team and Chair updates.

- 1. Block A naming.** The Council's Naming Officer has ruled out the shortlist drawn up with Panel Members in February as none meet their current rules and guidelines. **Action:** Lucy and Jo to prepare a new shortlist with interested Panel Members which, once approved, will then go out to a wider public vote as originally intended.
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### B. Panel Reflections on the Evaluation Process and Report

- Overall, **Panel Members found the process well planned and useful.** However, there was some confusion about Knowledge, Included and Empowered being the criteria against which progress was discussed. These were not concepts that had previously been shared with the Panel.
- The report was generally felt to be strong.** However, **some questions were raised** about its conclusions. (These have been shared with Future of London as requested amendments.)
  - While the Council *is* working in different, deeper ways with residents, it is not yet the case that this new approach is "resident-led". It would be great to aim for this however and, **if Empowerment is the aim, to have a clear Recommendation to work towards resident-led activity.**
  - The report defines Empowerment as "sharing power" but doesn't go on to assess the degree to which power has or hasn't been shared. Power around regeneration outcomes still arguably mostly sits with officers and professionals. As **the most successful sessions in Panel eyes were those where power was shared, and where the Panel were involved before key decisions were taken**, the report would ideally make explicit Recommendations for more power-sharing and early Panel involvement.
- The Panel shared the following further reflections around Empowerment:**
  - Meaningful empowerment would involve **seeing change on the ground as a result of Panel input.** At the moment the Panel is *told* that they are having an impact, which is good, but the real proof will be as projects are completed. Maybe it's too early to really assess empowerment?
  - Empowerment also includes **having full access to information** and **genuine opportunities to speak, contribute and share opinions.** However, in practice, there are still **"many people above us who have the final say,"** e.g. the Naming Officer re. Block A, which can limit how empowered the Panel feels.
  - Members as a whole agreed that it is **important to be involved as early as possible in decision-making processes**, rather than being asked to provide feedback once key decisions have already been made.



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### C. Main Session Activity: Views on Council's Proposed Actions in response to Evaluation

Daisy shared slides on this topic with the Panel, who then fed back on the Proposed Actions in small groups (pages 3 + 4). Panel Members were also able to send further thoughts after the meeting.



# Views on Council's Proposed Actions In Response to Evaluation Findings

The ARP Team, HTA and the Chair proposed a set of actions in response to the Future of London Report, grouped under 5 headings taken from the Report. We particularly asked for the Panel's views on **the orange questions**.

- The Panel shared their views on these, both in 3 small groups at the meeting, and by email afterwards.
- They were also invited to share suggestions for other Actions that they would like to see happen.

## A. OVERALL STRUCTURE



Proposed Action	Panel Response
<b>1. Proposed Panel terms:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 years, with a new round of applications in May 2027.</li> <li>• Panel would have option to re-apply for a second term.</li> <li>• Ratio of places e.g. at least 5 of the 15 (TBD) to be new members to allow consistency vs. new perspectives.</li> </ul>	Important to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have clear criteria for panel member retention.</li> <li>• Draw knowledge of project/estate out at interview</li> <li>• Offer new members training to get up to speed</li> </ul>
<b>2. Chairing:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain Third Party Chair and keep Daisy for time being.</li> <li>• Review early 2027</li> </ul>	
<b>3. Do we need a formal Terms Of Reference?</b> Or will existing documents do?	Something will be needed for new Panel Members e.g. definitions and 'onboarding'.

## B. TIME PRESSURES ...



Proposed Action	Panel Response
<b>1. Possible longer session</b> Exploring 2.5 hours starting at 3.30pm	Being explored by Jo with Panel via email
<b>2. Look at more optional extra sessions.</b> Inc. possible 'Super-Sessions' bringing all Alton Panels together	Interest from at least 1 group in Super Panels.
<b>3. Principle of 'Keep It Simple' for session design</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities only as complex as they need to be</li> <li>• Realistic agendas, and simple templates for Guests – could be designed with Panel.</li> <li>• More time simply for discussion to hear all views</li> </ul>	<b>Suggestions/reflections from Members:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A 10 min overview and update of Masterplan and ARP progress at the start of meetings would be a useful, concise way to stay up to date.</li> <li>• Working in smaller groups can help to make info more understandable.</li> </ul>
<b>4. Getting the right level of Masterplan engagement:</b> Would Panel prefer (a) ongoing broad overview of ALL Masterplan or (b) deeper discussion on a FEW priority areas?	See <b>Section D</b> of the main Notes (p.2).

## C. ... AND MANAGING INFO AND RESOURCES



Proposed Action	Panel Response
<b>1. Keep refining how to make the best of 2-hour meetings.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balance of advance info vs. material shared 'live'?</li> <li>• What works or not about current ways to send post meeting thoughts?</li> </ul>	<b>Thoughts on Advance Info/Homework</b> <i>Many felt that its important to have (allows you to prepare, and saves meeting time for discussion) and generally is working well, but suggested:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ideally it would be distributed earlier (2 weeks?)</li> <li>• Vital: a simple 1 page Key Points summary of large documents.</li> <li>• Important items could be highlighted or shared in summary 'bubbles'.</li> <li>• Many prefer visual material (pictures and diagrams) to text.</li> <li>• Language to be simple: reduce complex or technical terms. (The Landlord Offer approach – 8yr old level – meant <i>all</i> could understand.)</li> </ul>

Proposed Action	Panel Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formats should be designed for phones, as most read it on those.</li> <li>• Important: physical print-outs available in advance, and at meetings.</li> </ul> <p><b>Thoughts on Follow-Up/Homework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to share and capture feedback with those who couldn't attend.</li> <li>• Good to have a follow-up prompt after each meeting with 'homework' questions – those discussed in meeting or those there wasn't time for.</li> <li>• Many prefer to share thoughts via WhatsApp rather than email.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2 Keeping track of progress:</b> Post session Notes on the website, publicly available.</p>	<p>Positive response.</p> <p>Good to make more use of the website and promote it more widely.</p>

#### D. MEANINGFUL IMPACT AND FEEDBACK LOOPS



Proposed Action	Panel Response
<p><b>1. More flexible programme planning, still shaped by Panel.</b> A pool of topics and priorities, not a fixed programme.</p>	<p>Positive response to this.</p> <p>Emphasis on seeing projects at a point when key decisions are yet to be made and power can be shared.</p> <p>Some Members sent in topics they would like to see discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental, traffic and health + wellbeing impacts during the years of construction.</li> <li>• The proposed Social Impact Assessment</li> <li>• Community Investment Levy and Section 106 funds and their use</li> <li>• Community management of new community spaces</li> <li>• Local employment opportunities from regeneration</li> <li>• Potential need for new services and their design</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Focus on hearing &amp; capturing all perspectives.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More opportunities for individual voices within the large group</li> <li>• More conscious, calmer small group facilitation – possible officer training.</li> <li>• More detailed, nuanced small group note taking.</li> <li>• Would Panel like facilitation training too?</li> <li>• <b>Would Panel be willing to have roles in small groups e.g. note-take?</b></li> </ul>	<p>Significant interest in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping at the session with note-taking or facilitating; agree roles ahead of break-outs – flexibility important though; not just one person taking that role.</li> <li>• Facilitation training for everyone: Panel and officers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Ensure clear systems to share follow-up and Panel impacts (or lack of).</b> <b>Would a Taking Stock doc 3 or 4 times a year be helpful? Or something else?</b></p>	<p>People saw the Taking Stock as useful and on average thought 3 times a year would work. Possibly accompanied by a mini presentation or discussion.</p>

#### E. REPRESENTATION AND INCLUSION



Proposed Action	Panel Response
<p><b>1. Recruiting to fill 3 current vacant spaces:</b> Focus on younger voices and residents with physical disabilities.</p>	
<p><b>2. Ensure a range of diverse and creative meeting formats.</b></p>	
<p><b>3. Explore different routes for input outside core sessions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing formal and informal evaluation.</li> </ul>	<p>While many members don't feel a need for anonymity, several were sympathetic to the idea.</p>

Proposed Action	Panel Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can Panel share more detail about desire for anonymous feedback or suggestions?</li> </ul>	<p>The need is probably less for anonymity from the Council, and more about Members not feeling that their voices or different views are properly heard at meetings.</p> <p>Not everyone was aware that they were welcome to send thoughts to Jo after/between meetings.</p> <p>Practical suggestions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A QR code on the table that, if your view was different to your group's, would allow you to submit your view separately.</li> <li>A free comment/suggestion box where people can say anything they want.</li> <li>Both Chair and Facilitators actively encouraging different views e.g asking "can someone give me a different opinion?"</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. More training and knowledge-deepening for Panel.</b> Are there particular things Panel would like to focus on?</p>	
<p><b>5. Explore "informal knowledge sharing with wider community".</b> Do Panel have particular ideas for this?</p>	<p>One Member said via email that this seems important to discuss in future: the Panel is only a small group and we need to share the info as widely as possible.</p> <p>Suggestions at the meeting included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An ACP newsletter/broadcast – perhaps created by the Panel itself (though maybe not necessary if more info is going on website).</li> <li>More interaction with TRAs e.g. leaflets and attendance</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Keep exploring with Panel how to create an inclusive culture.</b> Would Panel genuinely like to design and lead a session or sessions e.g. for officers or consultants? (or make a short film about the Alton?)</p>	<p>There is some interest in leading a session.</p>

ENDS