

MINUTES OF WERRINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNCIL MEETING TUESDAY 18th January 2022

PRESENT: Pauline Fury, Martin Greaves, Ivan Hammond, Vince Moon, Bill Mercer, Geoff Smith, Sally Weald, Tony Forster

WARD COUNCILLORS: Cllr Sandra Bond, Cllr Judy Fox, Cllr John Fox

APOLOGIES: Cllr Bryan Tyler, Cllr Steve Lane, Roger Proudfoot, Howard Fuller

1. **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES:** Vince Moon thanked everyone for coming to the meeting especially on such a cold evening. He also thanked members for taking Covid precautions and for wearing masks. Apologies were accepted as above. Sally introduced Tony Forster who had expressed an interest in joining the group and the planning side of things.

2. **OPEN PUBLIC MEETING:** There were no members of the public in attendance.

3 **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Minutes of 29th November 2021: These were approved as a true record and there will no matters arising

Annual General Meeting 2022: The admin team supporting Matt Gladstone has acknowledged Sally's invite to attend the AGM in June. John and Judy Fox said that he had been attending some meetings but he wasn't due in Peterborough full time until next month. This will be followed up in a couple of weeks.

Underpasses: Paston Parkway, being financed by the Proceeds of Crime, needs to be complete by end of March and Davids Lane being financed by Tesco need to be complete by end of May. A free art workshop takes place on 12th February at Werrington Village Centre on a Loan Shark theme. Nathan had wanted to see if he could get across to the graffitied wall on the other side of the Brook but the permission and environment impact process was too great. Sally said that despite all the comments made that Davids Lane should be painted, there has been no interest in helping to oversee the event and little interest in suggestions and contributions on the artwork. Hopefully it will take off further nearer to.

50th Anniversary: Geoff and Martin will take this forward.

Correspondence: None received.

Date of next meetings: Whilst it had been suggested that Mondays and Tuesdays should be alternated, it would help Sally if the May meeting could be a Monday as she has to travel back from Southampton that afternoon. The following dates were agreed:

Monday 28th February 2022, Monday 11th April 2022, Tuesday 17th May

It was asked why there wasn't a meeting in March. Sally said that the group only meets every 6 – 8 weeks so that is how the dates fell.

4. **HONORARY TREASURER**

- Geoff reported that the total funds held in our accounts at this time is £9,916.33 which is comprised of £9,769.12 in the current account, £7.06 and £67.18 in our other TSB accounts, and cash-in-hand if £72.97. A number of ring-fenced amounts, as previously reported, are included in these sums. He is in the process of preparing the year-end accounts for 2021 ready for the independent examination and AGM annual statement of accounts. He hoped to have some more specific Information for our February meeting.
- Sally said that the renewal of the website was due at £50. She said that Mike only charges a nominal amount but hosts and supports the updating of the website. This is likely to be funded by the Neighbourhood Forum money. It was agreed to renew this with Mike and agreed to invite him to send an estimate for 2023/2024.

- Sally asked if Geoff could send a note of the amount of money left in the Loxley Co Op fund to Roger. She thinks that the deadline for the completion of the work was extended from September to January so she suspects that there will be a reminder for the report very soon.

5. ENVIRONMENT

In the absence of Roger, there was no formal report.

Sally advised that Roger had installed bird and bat boxes over the New Year and he was thanked for doing that.

6. WERRINGTON SPORTS CENTRE

- i) On December 2022 the City Council announced the closure of Werrington Sports Centre from 1st January 2022. Extract from the decision:
 - *Staff recruitment continues to be challenging in the current labour market. This is an issue which is affecting the business at most levels.*
 - *Werrington Leisure Centre continues to be the worst performing leisure site with forecast losses in 2022/23 of c.£200k per annum. Following a full review, headline membership prices were reduced to help build membership levels back as many competitors have done locally and nationally. Even with this action Werrington Leisure Centre's membership has not increased at sufficient levels to improve this position.*
 - *The leisure centre will be closed for public use from 1st January 2022, enabling Peterborough Ltd to redeploy the staff to other, more profitable sites where staff shortages are impacting operations.*
 - *A review will be carried out in July 2022 with the intention of reopening to public use from September 2022.*
 - *The outdoor grass football pitches will continue to be available through this period as they do not require access to the indoor facilities to operate. The changing rooms will not be available however, which is no different to many PCC pitches across the city. The school will continue to have use of the facilities throughout the daytime.*
 - *There are 8 contract staff that this affects and 6 zero hours posts.*
 - *This proposal is not one that has been taken lightly by the council, but, given the financial challenges we are facing we cannot fund a discretionary service operating at a significant financial deficit. Werrington Leisure Centre being closed to public use for a period of time allows staff to be allocated to other sites which are experiencing staff shortages, and this will have a more positive impact on those revenue lines.*
- ii) Sally spoke to John Fox that evening raising questions about the decision especially questioning the predicted costs. She went through the information received back and this includes: the costs cover staffing, outdoor grass pitch maintenance, utilities (paid as a percentage for the whole site), rates, equipment purchase and replacement, gym equipment maintenance and repair, training, insurance, cleaning products etc. but in line with other shared sites the school pays nothing. The site received £18,000 from the Covid package. Staff work various hours across the sites and were furloughed, gym numbers have declined over the last 8 years. The academisation will not affect the reopening of the centre in September.
- iii) Vince and/or Sally have attended two Zoom meetings involving officers, Councillors, user groups, local reps although it was hit and miss whether we got the meeting link. During these meetings: The City Council acknowledged that this has not been handed very well especially with leaving the Councillors, School and Users out of the loop. For some user groups this is their livelihood and they had no notice. The main emphasis of the initial discussion is over the lack of trained staff across all the Centres and this closure will allow the other Centres to remain open. The losses detailed above were hardly mentioned at these meetings. Whilst space has been offered at other sports centres, their participants are local and won't travel across the City. Once these groups fold here they will not reopen once the Centre reopens thereby further jeopardising its future.
As a result of these meetings, Ken Stimpson has come forward to provide staffing to allow the Centre to be opened without changing room access for those groups not requiring any equipment

set up. This has involved a lot of work from the school who are doing this on a cost basis using their staffing, cleaners, insurance etc. Notwithstanding this the charges are very high (especially as this is a PFI school) and are unsustainable for some groups. Further talks are ongoing to allow 'volunteers' from the group to assist with the reception thereby reducing the required staffing, for groups to change nights to share the expenses. Andy from The Ploughman has offered support. Outdoor activities on the fields remain unaffected but with no access to changing rooms. Further work is being undertaken with the groups. Further meetings are expected.

- iv) Note that currently there is clearly no room for negotiation for any other public access during this time and it is hoped that work with groups can re-establish some of them there. The focus must be to ensure that the review in July takes place with the community involvement to ensure the Centre's reopening in September. So we must keep an eye on this.
- v) The petition on the Council's website has 745 signatures.
- vi) Unfortunately whilst residents have complained in the past of the hedgerows being used as toilets during football matches, the Centre will not be opened to access its facilities, it being said that other most other football pitches don't have such facilities.
- vii) The position was discussed in great detail. The various points made include the following:
 - John and Judy Fox described the timing of events and what work they have been doing. They are not letting this rest and continue to speak to all parties involved. They are specially highlighting that the two sports centres remaining are close together and there are none north of A47.
 - It was confirmed that the User Groups and their volunteers able to access the Centre have their own first aiders, insurance, policies.
 - Werrington Sports Centre has closed because it brings in the least money and this releases staff for the more profitable centres.
 - There is a complex financial arrangement between the school and sports centre.
 - How many users are there? And what is the area where these users come from? Its not just Werrington. Sandra confirmed that Gunthorpe residents are making comment to her about its loss.
 - The Sports Centre being closed during the day is only like Bushfields
 - Why can't the Centre be run on a similar line to the library with volunteers coming forward to run the Centre alongside staff. It was observed that the Sports Centre needs to make money, whilst the library doesn't and there are wider health and safety implications
 - There remains no access to changing rooms and showers. Why should residents put up with the hedgerows being used as toilets. But the continued use of the playing fields cannot be jeopardised because of this?
 - What stage is the petition in? It has received enough signatures to take to the Full Council?
 - Why can the school support the Centre opening with only one member of staff yet Peterborough Ltd can't. Why is the insurance being blamed? It was observed that the lack of staff remains at the core of this.
 - There is no access on a Saturday so for groups who meet on a Saturday and during the week, this affects their numbers and income streams.
 - What will the relationship in the future be with the Academy?

viii) PLANNING:

i) Ken Stimpson Community School Fence:

- Sally advised that following the public meeting, Cllr Ayres' decision about the fence had been expected in early November. In amongst other things the Save Werrington Fields Group pointed out, following legal advice, that the proposed fence just couldn't just go ahead as 'permitted development' because it was a 'change of use. It is now been advised that Cllr Ayres will request that this is submitted as a Planning Application and this is therefore now awaited.
- Sally has requested that a proper public consultation is undertaken with the Plans being made available so that those people not online can review what's going on.
- Tony said that he understood that the actual fence was not going to be part of the Application and it is just the Change of Use that is being consulted on. He also advised that he had written to the Education Department.

- Councillors advised that they have called the application in already so that it will go to Planning Committee.
- In responses to questions about how this spend can be justified, the Council have advised that this is a 'Health and Safety' matter.

ii) Other Planning Issues:

- Sally advised that she had been working with Tony setting up notifications and reviewing the cases coming through with a view that Tony will take on more of this role.
- **1395 Lincoln Road:** This development was previously considered by WNC and residents are now complaining about the site noise. Sally has said that there is nothing that the WNC can get involved in and referred them to the Nuisance team at Peterborough City Council. Martin confirmed the hours outside of which a nuisance can be deemed.
- **69 Astor Drive:** This extension was considered last year as residents felt that it was overbearing but it was approved by Planning. During its current build the neighbours are complaining about the increased height of a chimney and different windows being installed but Planning Team have advised that these changes fall under permitted development. Sally has again advised that WNC can't help. Sandra said that she wasn't aware of the original complaints but was now aware of the problems.
- A question was asked if anything further had been heard about the Werrington Centre Flats. Sally and Councillors advised that nothing that been heard.

WARD COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS

Sandra Bond advised:

Trees and flowers are being planted in the John Clare and Campbell Drive area. Students and staff of Ken Stimpson have been involved with PECT supervising. The top turf has been recovered to create bee tunnels. The trees are still awaited for Campbell Drive.

With the budget being frozen there will be no more bin and signage. It is unfortunate the Gunthorpe order put in three months ago has been lost.

Speedwatch has been affected by Covid but it will go ahead on Fulbridge Road

Judy Fox advised:

The Sports Centre work has been taking a lot of time

John Fox advised:

A bench was previously ordered but a location is needed for it. There are difficulties with certain sites especially with nearby housing. Sandra has had experience with this. She added that with the appearance of a memorial bench in Cuckoos Hollow, other people have asked about this. But there are problems with overkill. Tony confirmed that there were such problems in Central Park and suggested that alternative commemorative could be explored like trees?

- There is a need to look at timings of lighting and considering if the skate park needs lights until 11pm bearing in mind it isn't used at this time. if the lights here may affect the usage of the surrounding footpaths especially if there are events on at the schools
- He is meeting Sergeant Rose the new police officer shortly. Sally said that she had already had contact with him when she was emailing Nicky Peacock. John will find out who the local officers are now.
- In response to questions, Councillors said that they did not know if there were going to be any further cuts to local services as a result of local budget cuts.
Concern was expressed about the condition of Hodgson Community Centre. It is not known what the current situation is with the asset transfer and it is not known who is still meeting there especially with the pre school closing.
Members asked when the brown bin service will resume but nothing has been heard.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

- i) **Jubilee:** Sally advised that Roger had asked about what the Neighbourhood Council might do to celebrate the Jubilee. Whilst a street party was mentioned, there are difficulties with where, whose invited, whose arranging, the scale, road closures. It is hard to see that the Neighbourhood Council's remit (and insurance) would meet such activities and feels that the Community Association would be better placed. Consideration was given to what else could be done but no other alternative was suggested.

ii) Dive Under Tunnel

- a) Sally advised that she and Vince represented the Neighbourhood Council by attending the special train service from London to Spalding through the dive under tunnel on the day of the official opening. The passenger included local Councillors, members of the Council, representatives of the companies and organisations involved in its construction. It was just a quick journey with the formal presentations and opening being later in the day.
- b) Bill Mercer gave a written report as follows:
- *The main site compound and adjacent yard is being cleared and being top soiled in readiness for reuse.*
 - *The temporary site compound is also being in progress to be cleared.*
 - *All the surplus excavated material has been cleared and sent to the old Maxey Brickworks site for disposal.*
 - *The main site work area has been completed, top soiled and fenced.*
 - *The new diverted railway line has been completed, signalled and is in use by Network Rail and all the operating good and passenger rail companies.*
 - *Network Rail completion works is expected to be fully finished by February 2022.*
 - *Bill Mercer has been in conversation with Cllr John Fox and the office of Paul Bristow MP to ascertain when final noise review of the comparison between the old railway line and the new railway diversion and new tunnel will be undertaken by Network Rail and the construction consultants.*
 - *The result of this noise review will dictate the requirement for a new noise abatement to protect the existing properties adjacent to the new line boundary with the North Werrington, The Paddocks, Kingsbridge Court, Sunnymead, Redbridge, Tarrant and Livermore Green; 471 properties. The noise abatement fence will be required along the railway/private properties boundary from Gascoigne to Livermore Green.*
 - *Tree replacement will be required along the footpath to the rear of Gascoigne to Livermore Green to replace the earlier cutting back by PCC to absorb the increased CO2 and noxious gases, from increased rail goods traffic and periodic diverted passenger traffic as and when needed to facilitate repair work to the main line between Peterborough to Doncaster.*
- c) He emphasised:
- With the line now being changed from a flat track to a sloped track there will be more noise and gases from the trains
 - He is in contact with Paul Bristow and officers to progress the noise tests. The residents of the 471 houses affected want to know when this will happen.

iii) FRIENDS OF WERRINGTON LIBRARY

Bill reported:

- Holding monthly tea and coffee mornings
- Holding bi monthly book sales of retired library books and gifts of books offered by members of the library and the general public. The monies raised at the book sales and coffee, tea and cakes mornings are gifted to the libraries for purchase of paper, coloured pencils and pens for children/parents Saturday morning children events.
- Book sales and coffee/tea morning were held monthly for the last 10-20 years to support the local library activities. Dates for the next tea/coffee/cake mornings at the library is 5th February 2022 and monthly thereafter that. Details on library notice boards.

iv) PETERBOROUGH NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

- Bill reported:

Following the uncovering of a drug dealer in business in a private house in Redbridge, North Werrington reported by a local Neighbourhood Watch, a police raid took it out of operation. On Tuesday 25th January 2022 Werrington Neighbourhood Watch led by Ivan Hammond will hold a pop up event to provide reassurance to the local area at 10-12am Tuesday 25th January at the entrance to that estate, delivering Neighbourhood Watch leaflets door to door and sell low cost crime prevention items including safety alarms.
- Bill added that this was to reassure residents that the Neighbourhood Watch group and police

were supporting the area following the drug arrest especially as this was the second such event.

- Geoff advised that this is a Peterborough Neighbourhood Watch group event and has NOT been arranged by Werrington Neighbourhood Watch.
 - Sally asked if this was the same event as being advertised as part Neighbourhood Action Week which included the litter picking event. Bill said that this was happening following the drug arrest and wasn't part of anything else. Sally raised concerns that there were going to be two events the same day.
 - Martin asked why was this area being singled out as there are many such drug related incidences being reported in Werrington and why aren't these residents being reassured.
- v) **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:** Sally was asked about progress with the Neighbourhood Plan. She said that it was slow going. Helpston now has a plan under consultation which is another nearby area covered but compare the size of Helpston. The funding has to be returned at the end of March and hopefully it will be available again next year. Tony asked what else was needed and Sally said that the Basic Conditions statement hadn't been attempted and she will recirculate the details

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Monday 28th February 2022 The Barn