

Minutes of West Byfleet Neighbourhood Forum Committee Meeting 20th March 2014

Present

Penny Hoskyn, PH (Joint Chair)
Pauline Hedges, PA (Joint Chair)
Emma Hier, EH (Publicity Officer)
Lisa Graae, LG (Acting Membership Secretary)
Keith Creswell, KC (Treasurer)
Mark Fuller, MF (Webmaster)
Ian Yates, IY (Secretary)
David Hastie, DH
Wade Pollard, WP
Phil Wilson, PW
Richard Thomas, RT

Chairs: Forum Update etc.

WBNF application will be considered at 27 March WBC Committee meeting. PH & PA attending, others also welcome.

Post meeting note: application was approved

PA mentioned the Economic Regeneration Committee (chair is councillor Ian Johnson) which is a WBC fact finding committee. Recently decided they need to look at second centre in borough ie WB visit last Wednesday. Johnson stated that he did not want anyone other than councillors present. However Gary Elson invited Pauline along. Matt Peachey, the Economic Development Officer for woking BC, was also present; he is reportedly far sighted and has great plans for supporting businesses. Jenny Jackson (planning officer) was also present. They were all very impressed that all shops were occupied and independent. Formal meeting followed. Copy of demographics assessments is available from PA (also in public domain). PA later agreed to send the demographics information to IY.

One councillor stated that Waitrose is not overtrading and that parking is not a problem. Also stated that houses north of the railway are social housing.

GFK will be moving in August this year. 200 employees who do daytime lunchtime shopping.

Need a vision for WB. Business association has a draft one including swat assessment. This will be presented at a meeting with Matt Peachey on Wednesday 26 March. It will also come to the Forum in due course.

PH stated to Ian Johnson the hope that WBNF will be consulted in future.

PA noted that WBC would very much like to extend library (as would county) and add meeting rooms etc. This would help to address the lack of community space.

Gary Elson attending next task group on 7 april and happy to raise anything and report back. If anyone wishes any topic(s) to be raised, they should send their request to PH / PA, who will send on to GE.

Membership Update (Chairs on behalf of absent Membership Secretary)

Fui-Ling Bolton has resigned for family reasons. There is therefore a vacancy for Membership Secretary. Lisa has stepped in temporarily. A volunteer is required to fill the role more permanently.

May need to bring in more people to the committee because there will be other positions that need filling. LG & KC were thanked for Dartnell park efforts which have resulted in 18 new members. The electronic approach seemed to work better than paper when attracting people.

LG had looked at revamping membership form.

MF stated that it is pretty much the same as the old one bar age ranges. Can update website accordingly.

Currently 143 members.

Data protection was stated as an issue of which the Membership Secretary will need to be aware. It was stated that John Bond of the RA had previously done some research. KC stated this research would normally fall to the Secretary.

Post meeting note: PH contacted John Bond, who in turn contacted Margaret Fletcher (Treasurer for the RA); the issues of data protection and public liability insurance are being investigated using various source of information including the RA.

Webmaster Update

135 visits to site in last 30 days (e.g. searching for Sheer House etc.)

29 people have signed up online since inception, about 10 of which expressed willingness to be on the committee. (Considerably more expressed that interest on paper forms.)

Need a volunteer to keep website up to date with relevant information.

EH was nominated by LG. Emma accepted. WP was suggested by PH and he accepted.

KC stated that at some point a steering group will probably be required for the website in the future. PH agreed, stating that this committee (as it currently stands) can't do everything because it will expand

MF stated website very flexible so outsiders can upload, with his prior approval.

Mission statement important. MF confirmed there is one on the website.

Publicity Update

Meeting held last Friday (14th) to look at membership forms, publicity leaflets planning etc.

Looked at other forums such as Pyrford, Hook Heath, Chobham.

Came up with questions in relation to 3 areas on the leaflet.

Regarding the planned drop-in, PH stated that we can't use Sheer House but West Byfleet library is booked 6-9pm Thursday 1st May 2014.

Leaflet is to get people to come to drop in and give people ideas of the sorts of things we're looking at.

KC: great to gain interest and tell people what forum is about but the use it can be put to afterwards will be limited until we have a decent polling tool. PW agreed.

MF: if we want a full survey tool, we need survey monkey. Could also use system similar to membership sign up which automatically downloads to spreadsheet. But anyone could use the latter; no restriction and not password protected so anyone could submit. Could also use poll but would require something like £500 of developer time.

There was a debate about the types of question that should appear on the leaflet advertising the drop-in and what the purpose of those questions would be. Much of the debate centred around whether the questions should be very open and broad, or about specific (and possibly emotive) topics such as Sheer House (even if the application will have been determined by then). There was general (though perhaps not unanimous) agreement that the questions should be formulated to (in descending order of importance):

1. Attract people to the drop-in
2. Allow us to obtain an overview of the areas people are interested in (not undertake a full analysis at this stage)

The idea is to get responses to the questions at or before the drop in, for overview analysis afterwards.

Pyrford have only asked three very simple questions. Many round the table thought that would be a good start.

In response to a statement that if most of the responses relate to the desire for cinemas etc there will be nothing we can do about it, KC stated that major redevelopment requires community infrastructure financial contribution. WBNF can then influence how that is spent. So responses about cinemas etc are still worthwhile

LG reminded everyone that the drop in will not be the last time we ask people for their views.

PH: library manger is happy for forum to go in and use the library for meetings anytime it's open. Will need to spend next few months engaging people in conversation e.g. mother and toddler groups etc. Also need to have leaflet/form completed asap.

PA stated that she and a team of 4 students do 6000 leaflet drops. Students paid £50 each. They could be delivered over weekend. So can guarantee a full delivery. Several committee members people also volunteered to help with the leaflet drop.

EH stated £150 for 2500 quoted for leaflet printing.

School could do £10 for 1000 but black & white only and excluding folding.

We need to get our views on the leaflet, in particular the questions, to Emma by 27 March, so that the leaflet can be finished by 8 April at the latest. EH to email leaflet round (*post meeting note: this has been done*).

Leaflet to be delivered over easter weekend.

PA needs to draw up a delivery plan and made a request for members to identify any drops that they can do. PA will then do the rest with the students.

EH stated that we need to be careful not to deliver to premises outside WBNF area.

Intention is to print 3000 leaflets & some posters

RT stated that it would be good to add mission statement (or reduced version) to membership form & leaflet

Treasurers Update

Of the £1000 available £869 has been spent to date. All finances currently running under Residents Association. As soon as we are official we will be running under our own banner but still using RA for finances for the time being.

Likely to need minimum £750 per annum for general running costs.

Need to raise money; suggest fundraising subgroup.

Waitrose might do a green token.

Post meeting note: this is being explored with Waitrose

It seems uncertain as to whether WBC have withdrawn funding.

PA volunteered to go through business association to approach local businesses for Corporate Social Responsibility contributions.

KC agreed to send electronic version of accounts sheet to IY.

DH stated that he has come up with a source of government money for funding the plan and courses that WBNF members can go on. They are free and first come first served (as is the money).

DH agreed to circulate web address for grants available for courses etc (*post meeting note: this has been done*). DH has also asked one of the case study projects about tips on funding

PW stated that hook heath applied for grant and got full 7000 possibly before they were formally approved. Suggest approaching hook heath.

Also need to sort out legal side e.g. whether we need to be incorporated in some way to be eligible for grant.

Current Issues: Ward Boundary

It was reported that residents have complained that council had not publicised consultation widely enough.

Pyrford and byfleet have sent in representations.

Byfleet has to expand because it doesn't have enough people in it, so it has to include some of wb or other wards.

It was generally agreed that the changes in the last 24 hours result in a better solution than the previous plans.

PW agreed to circulate note for RA committee meeting that will take on 21 March.

PH will compose letter following outcome of RA meeting.

Boundary Commission second round of consultation in July following publication of their recommendations

Next Meeting

Thursday 23rd April 2014, West Byfleet Social Club