

West Byfleet Neighbourhood Forum meeting minutes

Location: Zoom teleconference
Date: 14 July 2020
Time: 7.30pm
Attendees: Wade Pollard (Chair), Sally Cantello, Keith Creswell, Emma Davis, Stewart Dick, , Penny Hoskyn, Roland Nevett, Dharma Sivarajasingham, Bob Tilley
Mary Bridgeman, Gary Elson (Councillors)
Apologies:
Ian McAtamney, Emma Slaymaker
Amanda Boote, Graham Chrystie, John Bond (Councillors)

Agenda items

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of last meeting
3. Sheer House update
4. SADPD - update
5. Councillor briefing
6. Village signs
7. Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL)
8. AOB

ITEM NO:

1. Apologies were received as above.
2. Minutes of last meeting - no formal meetings were held by the Forum during the lockdown period.
3. Sheer House update

Following the news that the Retirement Villages Group (RVG) had acquired the Sheer House complex, the West Byfleet Business Association organised a meeting on July 8th to which they invited Directors from RVG and Keeble Brown (RVG's PR company) to join members for a general discussion on plans for the redevelopment of the site. The respective Chairman for the West Byfleet and Pyrford Neighbourhood Forums and the RA were also invited along with the Manager for Business Liaison at WBC and the WB Village Representative. GE hosted the meeting in his capacity as Chair for the WBBA; local Councillors had attended a meeting previously with RVG/Keeble Brown and Officers from Woking Borough Council (WBC).

SD reported that RVG (owned by Axa Insurance) are investing £90m in developing the site. The proposed accommodation will mostly be flats with no commercial premises but a similar amount of retail as at present. 67 parking spaces are planned along with c100 for residents. RN reported that RVG currently run 1600 dwellings in 40 retirement villages (most of which are campus style) so are

likely to commit to a quality build and management of the flats and public realm. He believes that priority will be given to local residents for flats and for retail space.

RVG is requesting some changes to the current outline planning consent. The decision is awaited from WBC prior to RVG applying for detailed planning consent. The group is estimating 18 months to demolition and start of the build project with a 2024 date for completion although this was felt by some Forum members to be optimistic. A confirmation of time lines and key dates has been requested from RVG. The company has agreed to put up hoardings around the site to prevent antisocial behaviour and damage prior to work starting.

RVG are communicating and consulting via their PR company with local residents about their plans, using Facebook and other media. This consultation has been well received. The Forum considered whether it should act as coordinator of locals' views. This question to be debated further in August.

4. SADPD - update

A draft decision on the examination had been due late January/early spring but has been delayed until late July owing to the pandemic. At this point the discussions between WBC and the Inspector should be made public.

5. Councillor briefings

MB reported that issues with the Brooklands central reservation are in hand. The Muddy Lane appeal has been turned down. SCC are proposing closing the Scotland Road bridge to road traffic as part of the 'Active travel scheme'. The West Byfleet guides are looking for new premises - members were encouraged to think about possibilities for them, at least for the storage of their equipment.

GE met Dave Bentley, the Police Borough Commander for Woking, about anti-social behaviour in West Byfleet and the Woodlands car park in particular, together with Isabelle David from the Residents Association.

A White Paper will appear in September discussing how local authorities may wish to constitute themselves. Tim Oliver, Leader of SCC, will make an online statement soon.

6. Village signs

RVG has been notified of the importance of keeping the current signs in the village, including the notice boards.

ACTION: WP to find out who is responsible for relocating the signs when building works begin on the Sheer House complex.

7. NCIL

Councillor AB is chasing WBC regarding progress on installation of the benches on the Rec. The committee noted that the current level of NCIL owed or on account to the WB community is at £401,720.34.

10. AOB

It was reported that the WBNF Social Media subgroup met to discuss tightening up on the content on the Forum's Facebook page given that planning issues will come to the fore again with Sheer House development.

ACTION: ED to reiterate the rules for posting on the FB page.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 11 August 2020, 7.30pm - Short Zoom meeting re RVG liaison. Tuesday 8 September, 7.30pm - full WBNF meeting via Zoom.