

BEECHES COMMUNITY GROUP

Notes of Meeting held on 13 March 2014

Present:

Stuart Tarr (Chairman), David Grange (Secretary), Anne Rawlins (Treasurer), Mike Jupp (Social Secretary), Liz Frost (Sovereign Housing), Cllr Nigel Robbins (GCC and CTC), Cllr John Burgess (CDC), Caroline Braidwood (BGC), Paul Maidens (RA Chairman and BGC Vice Chairman), Jamie Walton (CTC) plus members of the public - Malcolm Lewis (ex BGC Chairman), Jenny Smith, Peter Braidwood, Chris Vickery, Anne Vickery, Rick Day & Rose Day.

1. Welcome and Apologies

Stuart Tarr welcomed everyone to the meeting, his second full meeting since his election as Chairman in November, and reported the following apologies:

PCSO Renee Broad (crime statistics report submitted), Vicki Paxford (Cottsway Housing report submitted), Keith Handley (Neighbourhood Watch report submitted), Doug Emmott (Litter), Kerry Heathcote (RA committee member), Cllr Patrick Coleman (CDC and CTC), James Trotter (Bromford Housing report submitted) and Cllr Mrs Shirley Alexander (CTC).

2. To Approve the Minutes from Meeting held on 16 January 2014

Proposed Nigel Robbins and seconded Paul Maidens: unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes that are not Included on the Agenda

None – but see point made later under Any Other Business.

4. Chairman's Report

See Annex to the minutes. Stuart also drew attention to the naming of the new Beeches wards and the Cotswold District Council Local Plan 2011-31 to be discussed under Item 7.

5. Finance Report (Attached)

- Bank balance is currently £221.88.
- New signatories on account now organised

6. Reports from the Group

i. Community Speed Watch & Neighbourhood Watch – Keith Handley

Community Speed Watch - Keith Handley understands from Andy Fogden that Community Speed Watch is now back up and running under the control of Gloucestershire County Council Road Safety Partnership. He is investigating further how the RSP are taking this forward for new CSW schemes.

Neighbourhood Watch - No new schemes have started since our last meeting. Keith is hoping that a new scheme may come to fruition in Blue Quarry Road.

The sale of the window alarms within the BCG area has been disappointing; only 5 residents have made purchases. This has been a BCG NHW initiative which Inspector CLIFFORD at Cirencester Police station is endorsing. Due to the number of house burglaries in Cirencester the Neighbourhood Watch Office have offered these alarms to ALL NHW members in Cirencester. They are on sale to all at Cirencester Police Station reception. Anyone wishing to purchase should in the first instance obtain from the police station.

ii. Litter Picking –Doug Emmott

A litter pick was planned to take place on 15/3/14 (Malcolm Lewis).

iii Website, Facebook and Twitter – Paige Lilley and Caroline Braidwood

The Website is updated on a monthly basis. Facebook and Twitter have been set up but not much used.

iv. Corinium Via Residents Association – Paul Maidens

Road signs for Trotman Walk/Forstall Way have now been agreed and will be replaced asap. PM to investigate whether bollards agreed with the developers on footpaths, to prevent unauthorised motor vehicles, will be in position soon.

7. Reports from Town, District and County Councils

Cllr Nigel Robbins – £40k budget has now been allocated for the 'Healthy Living' project and ideas for expenditure were invited from the group. Riverside path (Churn) was suggested but this may be part of the City Bank renovation. Ward names were discussed (for the division of Beeches into two wards – Beeches North and Beeches South). Many suggestions made, including "Beeches" for Beeches North and "New Mills" for Beeches South on which decisions have yet to be reached (suggestions were noted by Cllr Robbins to report to the Town Council). The Cotswold District Council Local Plan 2011-31, on which the Town Council has been asked to consult on new site development proposals, contains the Austin Road flats as a redevelopment site. It was proposed that the Paterson Road flats should also be included in this redevelopment and this received wide support with Cllr Robbins and Stuart Tarr to follow up with the Town Council including sending a joint letter to Bromford Living. The Xmas chalets were discussed and it was felt that a satisfactory answer to all questions had been presented to the Group. Cllr Robbins requested that any potholes in the roads should be reported to him (plus any other damage such as road signs) for further action but he also stated that he felt the roads were generally in good repair.

Kingshill Community Facility – Stuart Tarr attended a meeting in February to discuss the facilities to be made available with the Chair of Governors and the school administrator. The facility will be open to all (for a fee) and bookable through the school. Ideas for its use were invited from the Group.

Blue Quarry Road – People are still driving on the green. Concern expressed about this and the nearby Archery Road green and a desire was expressed that this should be nipped in the bud before it became more serious. CTC will remediate the tyre tracks when next mowing the greens.

Bromford Living – Poor lighting and pavements are still an unresolved issue at St Mary's Road and Queen Anne's Road which are adopted highway which James Trotter will continue to pursue. James will also speak to the residents in Archery Road about ball games on the green and propose a solution. The broken fencing in Fosse Close will be fixed by the end of April.

Sovereign Housing – Issues with commercial vehicles being left on the Corinium Via development overnight were discussed and Liz Frost said that this will not be permitted on future rentals (the restrictive covenant applying to vehicles with a 600Kg carrying weight had been overlooked on current tenancy agreements). Existing tenants will be asked to conform with this covenant. A problem concerning skateboarding in Trotman Walk was discussed and Liz will investigate whether some sort of protective barrier might be installed and ask tenants to stop using the area for this purpose.

Cirencester Town Council – Agreement had now been reached with Cotswold District Council and a grit bin and dog waste bin in North Home Road, plus two dog waste bins at Corinium Via, should be installed soon.

Bus Service – The proposed layby adjacent to Mike Jupp's house for parking has now been agreed. Mike Jupp has still not received the stage 3 audit document despite the bus service due to start in May/June 2014 – he felt that it was unacceptable to start prior to this document being available and Cllr Robbins agreed to follow this up asap. Mike also pointed out that a delay of 5 months was unacceptable for the receipt of this document.

Social Events – A coach trip is to be organised in August.

8. Any Other Business

Mike Jupp asked to raise a procedural point on the completeness of the 16th January meeting notes which had earlier been approved under Item 2; he was disappointed that the notes did not record all the points he had submitted in writing and orally to that meeting including a reference to email correspondence he had initiated with councillors. The Chairman replied that the notes were not intended to be a verbatim record of all that was said at committee meetings but were a summary or précis of them to capture the main points at issue and of the action taken to address them; as Chairman he considered that the notes as recorded had achieved that objective and that no additions were necessary. The Secretary and other members present agreed with that view and it was decided to leave the notes undisturbed as drafted and approved under Item 2.

9. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 8th May 2014 at 7pm at Ingleside House.

The meeting was closed at 8.45 pm

Annex to 13th March Minutes: Beeches Bulletin as reported by the Chairman

Red Cross Healthy Homes Checks

FREE Healthy Homes visits aimed at improving the safety and well-being of people in their homes.

Advice about Flooding and Sewage

Officers from Cotswold District Council have been undertaking door-to-door welfare visits in neighbourhoods which have been affected by flooding and the discharge of sewage, following recent storms and GCC have established £50,000 relief fund offering up to £1000 per property to replace damaged furniture essentials. **PUBLIC MEETING Friday 4 April: 1130-1300, Cotswold District Council.**

Cirencester Retail Toolkit

Just published, Executive Summary awaited. Cirencester retail in a relatively healthy position.

Town Council Grants Press Release

Announcing Grant Aid and Financial Support 2014/15: applications by 4th April 2014.

£2,500 for this purpose; applications for grant aid will be considered where the aims and objectives demonstrate an economic, social or environmental benefit to the town or local community. Cirencester Town Council will also be setting aside a total of £12,000 to be shared between Cotswold Counselling, Citizens Advice and Cotswold Volunteers; as well as £2,500 towards the running of the Open Air Swimming Pool and £3,500 for ward based community projects and events.

Parking Consultation

Introducing on-street parking charges to encourage use of the car parks and improve the accessibility of town centre on-street parking.

March Hare Festival - Draft Events

The Festival will run from March 29th - September 14th 2014. Hare trails around Cirencester and Red Hare Days in April, May, June, July and August - Sponsors will be putting on special events and promotions.

Phoenix Festival 2014 30th and 31st August in the Abbey Grounds. The Festival will feature music from the Cotswolds, with a host of local traders, food and drink experts, artists, and youth performance arts. There will be something for everyone including children's activities.

Town Council Budget and Council Tax

Press release announcing a 1.4% increase which is around 12 pence per month for a typical Band D property. CDC have announced a 3% cut on top of last year's 5% cut, GCC frozen.

Small Sparks Grants

Barnwood Trust has launched a new grant programme. Small Sparks Grants are for people who want to get together with friends and neighbours to do things that they enjoy, benefitting the community where they live. a minimum of four people must be involved of whom at least one must have a physical or mental health challenge or is an older person who would like to make more friends. Grants of up to £250 are available; there are no formal application forms to complete.