



## **Walton-on-the-Hill Village Forum**

**Tuesday 11 October 2022 @ 8pm**

**Breech Lane Community Centre**

### **Walton Village Forum Ordinary Meeting**

#### **1. Welcome & Apologies**

- Grant Webster (Chair) opened the meeting, welcoming everyone.
- Apologies were noted, including George Curry (committee member) and Caroline Devine (committee member), Jean Bye, Colin Griffiths, Andrea Dix, Councillor Zelanie Cooper, Clive Osgoode, Phillip Truett & Nuala Sheerin.

#### **2. Approval of Minutes**

- The chair apologised that due to an oversight the AGM Minutes had not yet been circulated but that they would be ahead of the next meeting along with the minutes of this meeting.

#### **3. Matters Arising & AOB**

##### **a) Mere Pond**

- David Lerner delivered a presentation covering all the material in the report provided in the meeting pack.
- Grant Webster (Chair) mentioned that the independent consultant's report that the WVF commissioned, would be ready in a couple of weeks the results of which would be shared at our AGM in the new year.
- There was some discussion about a borehole being a potential solution for ensuring the water level of the pond is maintained. Cost and ownership are two issues that would need to be overcome along with the fact that there is no current precedent for the council

using boreholes to maintain pond water levels in the borough.

- Questions about desilting were raised by members in the audience and the Chair suggested waiting for the findings of the independent report before any decision on appropriate next step were determined.
- Discussion ensued about the fish. It was noted that the fish were moved illegally by concerned members of the community to another pond in the borough. The Chair and councillors reminded the meeting that the moving fish without a license from the Environment Agency took no account of the risks posed by disease.
- It was further noted that it would be preferable to ensure no fish lived in the pond given the fluctuation of the water level, unless something could be done to remedy the situation. Further it was noted that dumping of fish is illegal and that a sign should be installed to deter any would be fish dumpers.
- The Chair mentioned that the removal of fish was happening at the WVF expense and that we'd prefer to spend our funds for the benefit of the community rather than moving distressed fish being dumped by members of the public for whatever reason.
- The formulation of an emergency plan was discussed which would be put into action to remove any fish in a timely manner should the water level recede in future years, to mitigate them getting into distress.
- The abuse launched at the council, councillors and the WVF was discussed, the Chair noted that he had little interest in engaging with uninformed opinions shared on social media, thus the purpose of the independent report being to educate the community at large about Mere Pond and what appropriate next steps if any should be taken.

**ACTION:** Various actions were noted, the main one being the sharing the outcome of the independent consultant's report once it was in hand and had been shared with the WVF.

**b) Pavilion @ Howard Close**

- A summary included in the pack regarding progress was discussed briefly. The Chair updated the audience about an initial quote of £163k ex VAT that had been received.
- Further updates on fund raising efforts to date were discussed and that the WVF had applied for both CIL funding and to Your Fund Surrey, with updates to follow at the next meeting in the new year.
- It was also mentioned that at the appropriate time the WVF would invite members of the community to view the final proposal ahead of any works starting.
- The Chair mentioned that it wasn't unrealistic to expect building to commence some time during 2024 assuming funding was in place and a contractor had been appointed.

**c) Planning Matters**

- Marilyn Ridgewell update the meeting regarding Virgin Broadband cabinets that were originally planned for siting at Gun Corner, but with constructive intervention from the WVF and more specifically Marilyn and Jean Bye, an alternative location was being sought together with the contractor.
- Some signage issues were also discussed relating to businesses in the village who were told this was in hand with planning officers.
- Richard Harris (TWRA) further updated the meeting with respect to some specific local planning matters that the TWRA were addressing on behalf of the community.

**d) Folksy Theatre – 2022**

- Emmeline briefly updated the meeting about the Folksy production of Alice in Wonderland held in the summer and although we managed to make a small profit to put towards the Pavilion @ Howard Close, it's been decided to not host another production in 2023.



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- Attendance wasn't as high which as the year before which we believe was a result of people being away etc..., while 2021 we were coming out of the COVID pandemic, and many more people were around which helped the attendance figures.
- e) **Walton in Bloom**
- Emmeline read a message from Jean Bye which has been included.
- f) **Remembrance Sunday**
- The Chair appealed for some help to put up poppies ahead of Remembrance Sunday.
  - It was also mentioned that the WVF had purchased a soldier to replace the one that had been vandalised near the pond. It was also mentioned that we'd probably not leave it out all year but rather in the run up to and after Remembrance Sunday each year to avoid it being vandalised again.
- g) **AOB**
- Lorraine Smith updated the meeting on the May Pageant which had another fantastic year. Please see the update included with these minutes.
  - A VETS update was provided and advertised that another event would be held to train community members on how to use the defibrillator housed in the telephone booth at Gun Corner. This would be advertised via the Forum email list after the meeting.
  - Philip Truett invited everyone to buy a ticket for the Friends of St Peter's Wine Tasting to be held on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November at 7:30pm, with tickets costing £10.

#### **4. Questions for Councillors & TWRA**

- Councillor Rebecca Paul from Surrey CC updated the meeting on the average speed cameras proposed for Dorking Road which there still wasn't a firm date for.
- Councillor Paul also told the meeting that plans were afoot for the redesign of Pebble Hill Junction in this financial year. It was also confirmed that Breech Lane would also be resurfaced in 2024.
- A further update was provided on a speed assessment to be carried out in Walton Street to provide evidence that a 20-mph speed limit should be set for the village.
- Finally, Councillor Paul re-iterated that people should use the council website to log issues online, such as potholes as this was the most efficient way to report them and ensure they receive the right attention.

#### **5. Date of next meeting**

- Meeting dates for the 2023 were shared with the meeting and noted.
- 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023, 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

The meeting was drawn to a close