

Minutes of The Reddings Residents' Association Committee Meeting

Time, date and venue: 19-30 hours, 09 May 2018 (main hall Community Centre, North Road West).

Attendance:

Gary Fulford – Chairperson (GF)
Adrian Mckie - Secretary (AM)
Tony Smith - Treasurer (TS)
Simon Willis (SWi)
Lorraine Fulford (LF)
Cllr Nigel Britter (NB)
Cllr Simon Wheeler (SWh)
Cllr Mike Collins (MC)
Paul Barnes (PB)

Apologies:

James Russell (JR)
Peter Swales (PS)
Tim Benton (TB)

1. Previous minutes – agreed? Yes

2. Matters arising from previous minutes and update on actions.

Responses from councillors re:

a) Local parking issues – what is being done?

NB said that the Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) enforcement team was monitoring BMW but they believed that the issue was not with BMW, but with local commuters. This was not agreed because BMW's rental of 80+ parking spaces at the Park and Ride and the numerous photographs of BMW employees parking in side roads and walking into BMW (some witnessed by the enforcement officer) clearly show that the problem is a BMW one, albeit that other commuters do not help the situation. If there was a problem with obstructive parking then the police would be involved. SWh said that in many cases the parking was not illegal, although it would be regarded as an obstruction if parked within 10 metres of a junction or white line. SWh said the PSCOs in Hester's Way used their own judgement as to whether there was an obstruction and issued tickets at their discretion.

TS commented on the fact that while much of the parking was not illegal, it was a nuisance and made it dangerous coming into North Road East /Reddings Road Roundabout, as effectively one side of the road was blocked. TS and AVM also said that they saw BMW employees walking down North Road East in their uniforms so it was obvious who it was.

CO said there were problems with the contractors of Cotswold View parking on North Road East, while GF said that part of the conditions for planning permission was that no contractors should park on the road. It is not possible to park on site because the parking area is full of materials and plant. Deliveries unload in the road, often blocking driveways. GF said BMW were not implementing their travel plan which was one of the conditions for planning permission being granted. MC said that while such conditions were technically enforceable, in reality they were unenforceable. GF asked why then did the council pass the application. [MC said he will raise it again with BMW in order to make an impact.](#)

GF said that if BMW were serious about the travel plan they could have mini buses picking up their employees, but SWi felt travel plans were unenforceable. It was felt that when GCHQ tried to enforce their travel plan, it just meant cars parking on local roads rather than GCHQ. It is felt that the travel plan was therefore just a tick box exercise for the planning officers to ease the concerns of the planning committee, but CBC do not then enforce these conditions.

b) Grovefield Way/BMW site - unauthorised use of site for builders work/yard, unauthorised barriers, and openings, non-adherence to traffic plan, water discharge, loading transporters (2 instances photographed). Landscape Report December 2017.

It is a condition of planning permission that car transporters should not unload on a highway and that the rules were being flouted. SWi said travel plans should be reviewed annually by the company. TS asked what the councilors were going to do about it.

NB said the issue had been brought up at CBC house meetings, but the issue was with Gloucester County Council where the CBC councilors had no influence – hence the need to pass it to SWh. [MC will have a word with BMW but said the councilors will have to follow protocol.](#) He did feel that the travel plan was a tick box exercise in favour of developers, but he will do all he can to make a point. MC said that we cannot change what had happened but we can learn from it in the future.

A robust Local Plan is the best means to “learn from the past mistakes” and GF added that BMW had already contravened planning by having an unauthorised builder’s yard, unauthorised barriers, water problems, transport issues as well as landscape issues, and were the planning permission conditions actually going to be enforced?

NB felt that the spoil heap next to North Road West had covered up a spring and led to the discharge of water on this road. It was made of the soil removed by BMW when building the showroom and it was up to them to remove it.

NB felt that the Grovefield Site will go to appeal or there will be another plan issued at the last minute. GF said they had until 14 June to issue a revised plan, a day after the TRRA AGM.

SWi said BMW need to clear the site in order to meet the planning conditions. NB said unloading transporters had to stop and SWi added that there was a transporter turning circle shown in the original plans, but it had not been built. The recent photo taken of the transporter unloading on Grovefield Way was the final straw. [AVM has a contact at BMW Head Office and will write to them,](#) while CO suggested that this should be publicised on social media.

c) Pedestrian crossing on Grovefield Way.

SWh is waiting to hear a response back about the delays in the pedestrian crossing being activated. He said that pressing the button should trigger the lights to work and there should only be a delay if the button is pushed in quick succession. This is to allow free flow of traffic.

d) Grovefield Way status as Distributor Road with no access points permitted.

This was to be discussed later in the meeting when Blenheim Villa is covered.

e) Litter – KFC/Asda/others to sponsor bins

NB said there was an enforcement issue regarding litter with KFC but the agreement only covered the immediate area. Environmental Health had visited both Asda and KFC and is monitoring the situation.

AVM pointed out that during a recent community litter pick with JR, TS and SWi approximately 100 empty Strongbow cider cans and 25 cheap vodka bottles had been picked up from the lane beside B&Q. We had also seen the manager of KFC who said a member of staff went out every morning at 9.00 am and spent an hour picking up litter. Unfortunately many KFC customers are too lazy to put their rubbish in the provided bins, despite being only a few feet away from their cars.

SWh said he could get an agreement to put in a bin at the end of the B&Q lane, but there would be issue around who would empty it, as he could not expect Ubico to do it. GF pointed out that CBC had received £2.1m of Section 106 money but the local area had yet to benefit from it. NB will follow up the question of getting a bin.

TS reported that the B&Q lane was now comparatively free of litter following the community litter pick and he and his local volunteers were picking up any new litter. A bin at the end of the lane was needed though.

f) North Road West. Water appears to have stopped flowing and the latest holes have been repaired. Not sure if something has been done on the Grovefield site and, if so, by who and whether it was due to councillors or James or just drier weather?

It was felt that different agencies were passing the blame to each other and not taking responsibility.

NB said that filling in the holes would have to coincide with dry weather. AVM said that following the recent wet weather new pot holes were emerging outside the Community Centre.

SW said that a leaking stop tap in Bamfurlong had been repaired and this had stopped flooding there. NB said Rob Vale of CBC was aware that water was coming from somewhere in North Road West, but MC and NB felt it was the spoil heap on the BMW site that was to blame as it had blocked a local spring. MC said that CBC are talking to BMW/developers about getting the spoil heap removed.

g) Air Quality plan and local air quality and monitoring – all DeFRA’s fault?

While it was felt that it was a good idea to calibrate the air monitor in Reddings Road, GF said its later location should have been in Grovefield Way or Hatherley Road, as the level of the pollution could actually be tasted in both locations due to the daily standing traffic.

GF said all developers should pay to have a pollution monitor fitted, but MC said 2 new proposed dwellings on Grovefield Way would not be enough to justify it. GF said it would have a knock on or cumulative effect. MC said that it was frustrating that all new development proposals were looked at in isolation. NB had asked for the pollution monitor to be placed in Grovefield Way, but this had been refused as it had to be placed in Benhall at the instruction of DEFRA.

GF said that it was the councilors who will vote the Local Plan and stressed that they needed to look again at the Local Plan regarding pollution and other matters, which he felt was very aspirational but was not adhered to.

GF added that the Local Plan should be expressed in clear, unambiguous English that could be understood by everyone. AVM felt that the local guide to Council Tax was written very clearly and, to be consistent, the Local Plan should be as well.

GF said that air quality should be assessed with all new developments. At the moment there was a lot of new development going on including West Cheltenham, Arle Court nursing home, the new Leckhampton school and the Park and Ride extension. Air quality measurement should not be confined to one narrow area in the borough. [NB will take up the issue.](#)

h) Humpty Dumps Play area – works have not yet restarted.

[NB said there was no finishing date for the contractors.](#) CO said that it looked well when it started, but understood the wet weather had delayed completion.

i) Art installation

[NB said there were three art structures available but no date for installation.](#)

j) Park & Ride congestion / barriers

SWh confirmed that Stagecoach would take over the Park and Ride on 14th May.

SWi asked if local businesses were to be involved.

MC confirmed that presently BMW had 80 allocated spaces. SWh said that the current operators Bennetts had sold bus passes to BMW while GF added that passes had also been sold to Ultra and GCHQ, which defeated the object of a Park and Ride. LF said they had given up using the service as they could never find a space and reviews on the Park and Ride website say the same thing.

SWh said as far as he was aware no new spaces had been allocated to third parties.

SWh said no one would be allowed to park free of charge as barriers would be fitted where a ticket would be needed to exit the car park. SWh felt that there could be some surplus spaces available, although GF raised the question of where people, who currently parked there free of charge, would go to park. SWh suggested that the price could vary according to the month as demand varied. MC said that Park and Ride would only make money if there were other deals in place. GF understood that it needed a 1,000 paying spaces to make money based on the evidence given to the inspector in 2007 and 2011 for the extent planning permissions.

LF queried whether the Stagecoach Super Buses would also be empty, as the Bennetts buses had been. SWh said Stagecoach had advertised what they were doing before the County Council had done their bit. He added that it should operate as a Park and Ride and not as a car park. CO suggested that there was a simple way of ensuring compliance. Here a user with a return ticket would only be allowed to exit the car park if the ticket was stamped with a code on the bus on the return journey. MC said a robust system was needed.

k) Local Plan consultation – what is happening with a redraft?

GF said there had been a delay in publishing the redrafted Local Plan. MC did not know the publishing date while NB said the proposed meetings to discuss it had been cancelled.

l) Communities Action Plan documents Jan 17– joint Warden Hill/Up Hatherley/Reddings/Benhall to be reformed?

GF asked why the Reddings had not been included and NB said TRRA was not in existence when they were initiated. GF felt they were aspirational documents and asked how they would be followed up. NB will chase up.

m) Compliance on contractor parking to be resolved on the Cotswold View site (because it is creating traffic and pedestrian danger around Springfield Close & North Road West/The Reddings/Reddings Road junctions).Speed control measures on The Reddings/Reddings Road in the form of the portable speed sign.

Contractors were parking on North Road East as well as on Reddings Road, despite a condition that they had to park on the Cotswold View site.

NB said he had been promised a speed sign but never received it. SW said he had paid for two speed signs; one for Benhall and one for The Reddings, but only got one. [There is not the one for The Reddings, but he has asked Rob Vale for one.](#) It seems there were issues with the current ones as they cannot be bolted on lamp posts.

TS said neighbourhood watches had speed guns, but NB said they could only pass on information to the Police. [TS will ask his father in law for a speed gun.](#) CO said local neighbourhood groups often recorded licence plates and passed the details onto the local Police. When an individual was caught three times the Police would go and see the individual.

NB said the Police would trace the owner from the number plate, but MC warned about local groups circulating number plate details on social media as there could be claims of victimisation and could fall foul of the new GDPR rules. AVM said this could be completely avoided by passing the information directly to the Police. CO recommended looking at the website communityspeedwatch.co.uk.

o) A40 bus lane

NB said the A40 bus lane/"bus stop lane" was going ahead and MC confirmed that it was being funded from Section 106 money from Asda and BMW and some central government money, but not local money.

LF asked about the trees and NB said that any left would not be touched, unless they caused a physical obstruction to construction. MC said that if one cut down a tree with a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) there would be a fine of £1,000 per tree and a responsibility to replace it.

p) BMW & attitude to community?

It is generally felt by the community that BMW have very poor regard for the residents, and that BMW need to improve the relationship with the community.

3. Update on new developments on Reddings Park and Blenheim Villa (Swi/NB).

- a) 19 Reddings Park - planning permission has been rejected.
- b) Blenheim Villa. GF explained that the visibility splays for the proposed Blenheim Villa's application involved taking down and trimming the hedgerow which was owned by Gloucestershire Highways. No notice had been served on Gloucestershire Highways so the application was invalid. Furthermore the Wildlife and Countryside Act prohibited trimming of hedges between 1st March and 31 July each year. Any visibility would be compromised by the growth of the hedge, which included fast growing species such as hawthorn and blackthorn. Any trimming outside these times would have to be met at the public expense. GF asked SWh to say to the County Council that it is their hedge.
- c) TS wondered if access from the proposed development could be made onto Reddings Road and not Grovefield Way. GF said this was thrown out by the Inspector in 2002 for being too dangerous. NB said a meeting had been booked to discuss the application and he will use all the information prepared by TRRA. NB has requested it goes to committee.
- d) GF said the traffic study was invalid as it was done in January which was not a neutral month (i.e. one which would not be influenced by school holidays, bank holidays etc.).
- e) SWi said there were no planning notices posted and GF added this was the same with 19 Reddings Park. SWh said it must go through the planning process and GF pointed out that the application's red line (outlining the area seeking planning permission) on the plans was not in the right place.

4. Questions to Planning Committee?

GF wondered whether it was worth asking the Council under the Freedom of Information Act for a list of applications that had been successful where notices had not been displayed. SWH said the legal requirement to display notices was minimal and indeed recently the Council had slipped back.

GF also asked where the Council stands relating to the notification of neighbours, so SWH suggested TRRA place that question at the next Council meeting. MC suggested placing two questions. NB said this would put a marker in the sand, while TS said this was preferable than using the Freedom of Information Act.

5. Asda delivery lorry noise, and undesirables hanging around the bike racks (SWi)

GF said specific complaints had been received about lorries arriving at Asda at 3.00 am in the morning. However, when he asked the resident complainant if he could forward the email onto Asda, he had received no response back.

One of the problems involved Asda lorries turning off their engines, but with their freezer compartments still running. NB has spoken to Asda about this and also about a contractor washing the building at night.

The movement of the car wash facility was not seen as an issue and it was confirmed that the recycling bins would stay in their current position.

TS reported that some trees have been cut down behind Asda, which GF said had acted as an acoustic barrier for the local residents from Asda. While TS will investigate further about what is going on, neither he in Tylea Close or AVM in North Road East had issues with Asda noise. NB will also investigate what is happening with the trees.

GF suggested that if Asda lorries arrived early they should park up in the laybys on the A40.

Undesirables loitering on the bike racks were not discussed due to lack of time.

6. Website/ social media review. (SWi)

It was agreed that the website looked very good.

There was a question about the issue of wildlife on the Blenheim Villa site which includes slow worms and bats, but GNER had not been consulted. There is general concern that whilst GNER have extensive records of wildlife, they say that the requests from Cheltenham Borough planners are very limited, so the information provided is very restricted. Residents will be reminded to report sightings of wildlife to GNER in order that as thorough and realistic a record as possible is held.

There was a discussion about the new GDPR rules where organisations had to ask people to opt in to receive future emails. TS wondered whether non- profit organisations were exempt from this rule, as it did not apply to his local PTA group. GF said TRRA had about 300-350 contacts, but NB felt that TRRA may be ok as it was a very new organisation people may have already opted in by joining. TS will look into this.

7. North Road East/Reddings Road roundabout + P&R/B&Q roundabout (AVM and JR)

AVM said this was an issue he wanted to discuss following JR's request in his election campaign for local opinion on it. As JR was not at the meeting AVM proposed not to discuss it now.

SWh said this raised the old issue of having mini roundabouts and while he had discussed it with Rob Vale, it should be remembered that buses would need to go through it. Rob Vale had suggested moving it slightly or even creating a "ghost bend" with painted lines on the road surface. This would not mean altering the curb, but adding a white line. He said this would be done when the road was resurfaced.

GF said that the Cotswold View traffic survey had revealed that some drivers were crossing the roundabout at 60 mph. SWh will put it to the council that work needs to be done, but added that it may not happen this year.

8. Exiting North Road West and Reddings Road onto Badgeworth Lane (AVM)

AVM raised this following comments from residents who said it was difficult to see effectively out of these pull outs and that cars were travelling too fast on Badgeworth Lane.

SWh said this issue had been raised already and is being reviewed.

AVM suggested that the white finger sign on Badgeworth Lane, indicating the Reddings turn, should be replaced with a more visible sign. Also the 50 mph limit was too high as on many occasions he had pulled out of Reddings Road when it was completely clear, only to have a car speed up behind him.

12. Arvonía roundabout planting (AVM)

AVM said that this was a bit of light relief for the meeting. Over the last year and with the consent of the council he had been weeding and sowing wildflower seeds on the Reddings Road/Grovefield Way "Arvonía" roundabout. The wildflower seeds had been selected specifically for clay soils.

13. AGM

AVM had prepared a draft flyer for the AGM. It was felt that unless anything urgent happened with the Grovefield Site a door to door flyer was not needed.

MC said he would be unable to attend the AGM, but NB will come.

As the meeting had now gone on for 3 hours and everyone was very tired, it was agreed for committee members to discuss the contents of their AGM speeches at a separate time.

It was agreed by those that will speak at the meeting that there is no need for a projector and screen, although PB said the PA system and radio mikes were available.

Committee members must confirm ASAP whether they will be standing for re-election.

Next meeting AGM 13 June 2018 - 7-30, Main Hall

🕒 Will need to set up hall – committee at 19-00.