

Bowburn & Parkhill Community Partnership Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 28 September, 2004 at 6.30pm

Present:

W Bates, J Beck, Malcolm Bell, Mary Bell, J Blackburn J Blakey, J Bryan, R Bryan, M Carey, K Calvert, P Dawe, N Dixon, J Farley, J Geyer, J Gray, M Jubb, R Millerchip, J Patterson Maggie Robinson, Maureen Robinson, S Robinson, A Shutt, M Syer, W Tickell, C Thompson, J Thompson, R Walsh, D Whittaker

In attendance: L Boyd, C Brown, L Hinton

1. Apologies for absence:

A Blakey, P Dawson, L Lyons, D Morgan, S Smith, G Stoker, S Thackeray

2. Minutes of last meeting, 24 August 2004:

The minutes were accepted as a true record.

Lyn introduced Carol Brown, the new SRB6 Support Officer for Bowburn and Linda Hinton, Regeneration officer for Three Rivers Housing Group.

3. Matters arising from the August minutes:

a) Linda will arrange a visit to a bungalow as soon as one is available. ACTION LINDA
The grant from Three Rivers was turned down as the conditions were too demanding but the Partnership would like to keep their options open for the future. Linda made it clear that the grant did not have a ceiling and was at the discretion of the Chief Executive. Three Rivers may be approached again under 'New Business', and they can still help with applications for grants. Lyn thanked Linda for the clarification for a formal request.

Copies of the 'Right to Buy' leaflets and a sheet of explanatory notes were available.

Linda will make further enquiries on the right to buy a bungalow. ACTION LINDA

William Temporal raised the following issue, Purchase of pensioner's council owned bungalow, the Partnership will ask for clarification from City of Durham Council Housing Department as to whether or not it is possible for an individual to purchase a bungalow. Action Housing Department. Linda replied to a question by saying that landlords take care not to have difficult tenants and the homeless are housed in supported housing.

b) Ken Calvert had folders from the 'Stock Options' meeting for tenants.

Mike described the 4 options: i) Status quo; ii) Arms Length Management Organisations:

iii) Private Finance Initiatives: iv) Transfer stock to another landlord.

The council hopes to make a decision made by April 2005.

Mike felt that Bowburn was a special case as there is money to be invested in the village.

A member noted that a private landlord could exploit tenants. Linda explained that in Sunderland a site generated income, which was put into housing, and monies left were used for regeneration. A final decision on the way forward will be left with the tenants.

c) The Walkabout and the Education issues were held over until the next meeting.

d) Mike noted that the meeting for the Banner Project was separate from the Centenary Celebration.

4. Reports:

Treasurer:

Robin provided a report showing proceeds of £5530 coming from an anonymous donation, SRB6 and the City Council, and an Awards for All grant. Expenditure since March is £360 on secretarial work and prizes, leaving a balance of £5170.

Lyn congratulated the Partnership on winning a grant and reminded the Partnership that within the award was money for a Christmas Party for the children to include the parents to let them know what the Partnership was doing within the village.

Paul requested a list of events from Maggie so that the Partnership party could be booked.

Regeneration working Group:

The Group reported on the Walkabouts and Themed Workshops. A list of addresses of those families with children of school age will be given to the Council, if they go out of the area. Work on the Lawson Road site has started. There is no firm decision on the composition of the Three Rivers site. In Phase One families in 3 bedroom houses are difficult to re-house. A change of criteria has been suggested but dismissed. However the criteria has complications when a block of almost empty houses cannot be demolished because it isn't someone's turn to move. There is the worry of vandalism; therefore families *may* have to move before their turn. Brian Spears realises this as a serious issue and will give it careful thought. Demolition could start in the second week of October.

Bill Temporal was of the opinion that Thompson's of Prudhoe had been appointed to demolish the site.

A resident concerned that she would be isolated if units were demolished around her was assured that it might be safer than being next to properties that were being vandalised. It was suggested that she should have a talk with a local Councillor who could help with her questions. Richard Walsh pointed out that the demolition firm would be a member of the Considerate Constructors Scheme, which meant that there would be a hoarding around the site until it was safe and free from debris.

Bill Temporal enquired about money received from the sale of the land at Lawson Road but Mike told him that no money would be available until the houses were sold.

12 Villages/SRB6 Representative:

'Build a computer' course has good feedback. Places are available for the Eco card making at West Rainton. Tutors from New College did not turn up for some courses at Kelloe. A 'Keeping Good Financial Records' course is on 16 Nov. Ring Kelly on 3018 753 to book a place. A music and graphics computer course has been suggested. Visits are proposed to Harehope Eco Quarry and Jesmond Community Pool. 12 Villages funded a successful Open Day for the History Society. The 12 Villages Annual Conference will be held on 2 October. John Gray thanked SRB6 for supporting the History Society.

Re-housing Course - Decanting Tenants:

Richard felt that the Council was following a procedure of 'best practice' by inviting him to the course. The Home Loss Payment is £3400 from September and the Disturbance Payment is intended to compensate for any moving expenses. Richard suggested that the Council should draw up a 'decant agreement' and he has a model agreement to start discussions. He has contacted the course tutor for additional support. Disputes can be put to the Lands Tribunal.

A tenant said he had signed for £3100 + £200 per room, which was agreed by an Independent Assessor. Paul reminded the meeting that there could be no change of mind once the payment from the assessor had been made.

5. Correspondence:

Those who had signed for the Workshops had received a letter from Three Rivers to inform them of the programme and timetable of the Themed Workshops.

6. Three Rivers Housing Group:

Linda let everyone know that the evaluation sheet showed that everyone had been happy with the format of the Workshops. There would be an open meeting for the general public when the Workshops were complete. Future Workshops are as follows:

5 Oct. Traffic & Transport, 19 Oct. Heart of the Village, 8 Nov. Recreation & Leisure, 22 Nov. Heritage & Culture, 6 Dec. Jobs & Employment.

7. Management Committee:

The Officers were concerned that they should consult with a wider group of members, which could include those who had signed the constitution. It may duplicate meetings but it would bring more people into the planning stage. It was questioned whether a sub group was necessary as no one had complained but the voting rights should be sorted out. Officers are meeting to adapt the Constitution for the specific needs of the Partnership and it was emphasised that everyone has the right to sign the constitution. Mike suggested that it could be the right time to look at the constitution and Lyn put forward that the CVS could help.

Mike proposed that the CVS be contacted to review the constitution, and John Gray seconded the motion. The motion was carried overwhelmingly during AOB.

Certain individuals were concerned that they could not sign the constitution or have a vote. Lyn stated that she thought Glen Duckett, who quoted the example of a Brandon Councillor, had raised this matter. Lyn stressed that all individual residents in the village could sign and Glen had merely indicated a potential area for declaring an interest.

Maureen Robinson stressed that everyone had the right to vote. Individuals again showed concern about not being able to vote. Robin explained that everyone over the age of majority can vote and if certain people carried on being divisive then they could be asked to leave the meeting. Maggie Robinson followed by William Temporal complained and walked out of the meeting.

8. Sharing information:

It was asked if everyone was satisfied with the way residents were receiving information. It was suggested that people were reminded where the minutes were available.

Stan Robinson left the meeting

The position of notice boards was discussed. A member wanted the issue researched and a bid put in for these boards as soon as possible.

William Temporal returned to demand that everything be put in the minutes.

9. Any other business:

Lyn suggested that the Chair and Secretary of the Partnership should meet with the people who had left the meeting in an attempt to sort out difficulties.

There is girls' football coaching at Abbey Leisure Centre.

The State of the City Debate which is part of the Constitution of the City Council did not allow those who attended to ask questions.

Ken Calvert said he would be sent a personal reply to his question. Lyn informed everyone that Bowburn could send in their comments on the debate to the City Council.

Maureen Jubb was asked to contact those who were interested in the Centenary Celebration group to organise a meeting. ACTION MAUREEN JUBB

10. Dates and times of next meeting:

Tuesday, 4th November in Bowburn Community Centre at 6.30pm.

Tuesday, 30th November in Bowburn Community Centre at 6.30pm.

The Partnership welcomes your attendance at the next meeting, which is open to all.

Please bring a companion. A lot is going on that everyone needs to know about.

Copies of the minutes can be viewed at:

Bowburn.net web site (www.bowburn.net), Community Centre, Lawson Rd, Library, Marlene Ave, Post Office, Surgery.