

GENERAL MEETING – MINUTES
Bowburn & Parkhill Community Partnership - Charity Number 1112151
Tuesday 17 July 2007. From 6.30pm to 9.30pm

Present: W Bates, J Blackburn, J Blakey, S Colquhoun, R Cowen, P Dawe, N Dixon, K Haigh, J Kane, S Millerchip, S Raine, A Richardson, Maggie Robinson, Maureen Robinson, S Robinson, W Stainthorpe, M Syer, S Thompson, R Walsh, S Walworth, A Wilson, J Wilson

In Attendance: P Anderson, G Marsden, M Ridley, J Tindale

1. Apologies for absence: J Anson, K Barber, B Cockburn, K Griffiths, G Hutchinson, R Jackson, J Kelly, R Millerchip, P Sinclair, A Shutt, I Hunter Smart, D Whittaker

2. Police Report: Cassop No crime reported; Parkhill 1 burglary by bogus official, Bowburn 2 burglary, 1 assault, 6 theft, 5 criminal damage. PC Cockburn invited any queries to be emailed to him. None came forward.

3. URRI – Urban & Rural Renaissance Initiative: Paul Anderson presents Environmental Schemes.

Paul Anderson explained that the URRI is a new programme of regeneration for small towns and villages in County Durham. The URR Team works in partnership with all district councils in delivering the URR Initiative and in the case of Bowburn have been working with Julie Anson of Durham City Council. There is funding for 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 for Bowburn. There are three potential schemes for Bowburn:

Area A outside Romaine Square and the Hare and Greyhound;

Area B repaving both sides of Durham Road from the library and north of the Church to the south end of Oxford Terrace and pave grassed area south of Ash Terrace;

Area C resurface car park outside newsagents on Prince Charles Avenue, resurface footway and repair walls outside the Co-op and landscape/plant open space adjacent to Edward Avenue and Prince Charles Avenue.

Budget estimates for the schemes were circulated and if there is agreement to progress then accurate accounts will be drawn up. Matched funding would maximise the schemes as follows: £100 000 from the County Council plus £100 000 from the Regeneration pot.

Member: Noted that two schemes were privately owned and asked what would happen if the area was refurbished?

PA: Understood how the member might feel about money going to private land, but it was understood that this was an area identified in need of tidying. If the scheme was agreed the land could be dedicated to the Council and maintained by the Council, or retained by the owners for upkeep. The new construction work should last 10-15 years before needing attention.

Member: One business had already been turned down for the Community Chest therefore it would not meet the criteria of the Regeneration Pot.

Chair: The application had been for the interior of the shop because of loss of business due to demolition.

Member: Asked if any area of Parkhill had been identified because they had not been informed of the meetings.

Member: Parkhill had been informed. All schemes had been presented to the Partnership with an attempt to prioritise by Ease to do, Complicated by ownership, Cost, but there was no order as to which would be done first as it would depend on the funding available. These private areas are 'grot spots' and in my view need cleaning up. It would increase the value of private properties but regeneration is all about that. Philip Avenue has suffered greatly but is benefiting now as is the whole of the village.

PA: If Parkhill ticked the boxes then it could be included if it was seen as a priority by the Partnership.

JT: The Areas identified are in the Masterplan as priority spots and could gain this type of funding.

At the meeting it was thought that commercial sites could not obtain Regeneration money.

PA: Part of the funding would be County Council money coming into Bowburn.

Member: Asked if the Chinese Delight was included and if businesses had put nothing in then they could not have a say in the design.

PA: Would check the prices and details. He hoped that when the improvements were made it would encourage businesses to upgrade their properties, but felt that in his experience if an area looks neglected it is lost and the district dies.

Member: Asked why money was being put into Henry Avenue.

PA: That is a Highways maintenance scheme. URRI money comes from the sale of land in Aycliffe and £3M has been allocated to small towns and villages in need of renewal of which Bowburn has been identified as one.

JT: Conditions can be built into the release of £100 000 from the Regeneration Pot, and Paul could look at the suitability of other schemes.

Member: Asked if the money could be spent solely in Durham Road.

PA: Would be delighted if that was the case. He would leave the plans to see if it was moved forward; go to consultation; and before 31 March 2008 concentrate on Durham Road. Then look at the other two areas in the following year.

Member: Would be pleased if Durham Road was tidied but why give Highways £100 000 when it could be used to clear 'grot spots'. They are privately owned but that is outweighed by them remaining in public use.

Member: Members had agreed to spend money on multiple businesses and if the Co-op area went ahead it would provide 12 parking spaces, which would benefit the area.

At the meeting it was felt that the money should only go to Durham Road as the other two schemes are not in the criteria.

PA: County can spend money on a public highway and Regeneration money on other areas.

Member: Felt that it would be a waste of money to tidy the co-op area. What was needed was a bigger store.

Member: Coxhoe Co-op could be closing and if this happened in Bowburn, again it would be a waste of money.

Member: Wondered what was to happen to the verges.

PA: If edges can be hardened for parking that will be done. But a ramp cannot be put leading onto the side road from the bus stand at Romaine Square, for safety reasons.

It was agreed to decide the outcome of the proposal at a special meeting on Monday 23 July in Marlene Avenue Communal Centre at 6.30pm.

Paul Anderson agreed to attend the meeting on Monday and was thanked for coming to this meeting.

4. Masterplan Final Report:

The Partnership has been asked by Brian Spears to look at the Executive summary and if they feel that there are any corrections to be done he would like them for 1 August.

A member explained that it is a summary of the whole Masterplan and we have to ensure that it is an accurate summary.

Masterplan Updates – John Tindale and Project Leaders

Highways: Work on the Wheatley Hill link road has started. Efforts are continuing to get the Western Spine Road accepted in the Local Transport Plan, Mark 3. Enquiries are being made as to the feasibility of traffic lights or a roundabout at the Jet filling station. P Nixon has had the Settlement Renewal funding confirmed and should be advising on the minibus scheme. Agreed to ask Durham County Councillors to support the Rail Freight Terminal.

Parkhill – present application:

J Tindale, on behalf of Parkhill Residents Association, presented the Parkhill Play Area Project and selected relevant sections for discussion. Section 5 – Remove seats and bins to Community Chest funding; Section 17 – The City Council is the applicant and can recover VAT to minimise costs; Section 20 – The City Council will maintain play equipment, landscaping works, gates/fence. Planning permissions was submitted on 26/06/07 and 29/06/07; Section 21 – VAT is being recovered by the City of Durham Council; Section 22 – £15 500 funding has been secured, and they await decisions from Sport England, Local Network Fund and Big Lottery Fund Children's Play.

JT said that this is a similar application to Bowburn Park. It has some match funding and there is no problem with land ownership so it is eligible for Regeneration Pot funding and would put this to the members.

Maggie Robinson declared an interest.

A member asked when an answer was needed and JT suggested that further discussion may be needed.

Another member asked if the 'we' in Section 20 referred to the City Council and this was confirmed, but a parish councillor pointed out that the Parish pay for upkeep of the swings and BMX track.

Because planning applications have been submitted for the Central Green and Play Area, but none for the Community Pavilion building, a member suggested that about £100 000 could be deducted from the costs. It was thought that all the plans had been discussed. The Parkhill representative explained that the community building was in Phase 3 but would like the scheme approved as a whole.

A question was asked if the interest would be used on the project. The Chair suggested it would be the same as Bowburn Park and that if there were extra contingencies then the interest could be spent on that.

A member noted that the VAT Recovery was not for the cost of the scheme because it was cancelled out in Sec 21.

A member agreed to the scheme in principle but with only £15 000 funding Parkhill would have to find the rest of the match funding before approval was given and JT agreed that approval would be conditional.

A member was concerned that there was no mention of any disability access, but it was said that all the areas were planned with disability access in mind. A member replied that there was no mention of this in the costings, but Parkhill stressed that it had been discussed in reference to all works. A member felt that it would have been useful to include disability accessibility more explicitly and the only Equal Opportunity Policy referred to was from the City.

Parkhill rep described the 'Meeting Places'; they do not have lights but are not in the dark.

Following this discussion MS moved to approve the application subject to conditions, seconded by RW and approved by the meeting. The detailed conditions would be discussed at the Trustees' meeting.

Heritage Room: Nothing to report.

Youth and Community Centre: There have been discussions on knocking the buildings down and replacing with purpose built facilities. The funders thought the only option was a joint building. Julie met with both management committees about a major refurbishment for the Community Centre and a minor refurbishment for the Youth Centre. However funders may look unfavourably on this and may still want a combined scheme.

Youth Centre: Opens Tues/Wed evenings, to over 60 young people since April. 15 young men completed a drug awareness project to gain a Duke of Edinburgh access award; the girls gained 2 sections of a youth achievement award; both nationally recognised. The NEET group meet on Tuesday afternoon 12 till 2pm and a Connexions advisor comes every first Tuesday of the month. Tuesdays, 4-5pm, dance class for 13 to 19 years. Awaiting for an Internet connection and will then have an IT/Homework session on Monday evenings between 4-5.30pm. Bowburn Youth Project has again gained Investing in Children. During the summer there will be activities every week.

Church: Nothing to report.

Environment: Already discussed in Item 3.

Centenary – Bowburn School: There is a meeting at the Infants' School on 12 September to start planning Bowburn School's Centenary celebrations. A representative from all groups is invited to attend.

Park Project: The PARC group and secretary are working on funding applications for up to £5000 from Banks and £50 000 from Biffa. The Children and Young People Fund (August) is for £7000; Esh (September) for £10 000; Big Lottery has expressed an interest in giving £50 000; and funding details should be known from the FA next week.

Unadopted Roads: Lansdowne/Neville/Grangepark has formed a residents group to raise funds. Cllr M Williams has donated £3000 towards the scheme. Remedial work is necessary and materials can be supplied by Tarmac.

5. Minutes of last general meeting and matters arising – 19 June 2007 and matters arising:

When the grammatical error in Item 11 was corrected the minutes were accepted as a true record.

Matters arising: Item 2 - Inspector Dodds replied that the police will continue to work closely with the Partnership and target areas and individuals that cause problems within the village.

Item 3 Parkhill - JT replied that a representative from the City would attend each Partnership meeting in future.

Item 4 - The Partnership could address the Council Committee. The mounds of earth had been removed from the Tail upon End site.

Item 7 - The Johnston Comprehensive School criteria is unchanged for 2008/09; consultation takes place later this year about the criteria for 2009/10; Cabinet meets in the Spring. A member said that discussion had taken place at the Junior and Infant Schools resulting in a joint letter being sent expressing concerns.

6. Report of Trustees' meeting - 26 June 2007 and matters arriving:

It was agreed to reduce the 1st prize for the quiz to £20 with no money for selling the winning ticket because takings had dropped. It was agreed to contact D Marrs and CDO's to put forward our suggested involvement in the tendering process of Bowburn Park. The PARC group declined to participate in a joint letter. It was agreed to ask members whether the Partnership should make a representation about the Tursdale Road/Rail link.

7. Correspondence:

> Letter from City of Durham giving permission to speak on the Tail upon End planning application.

> Email from City of Durham advertising Durham Community Citizens Award 2007 for September.

> Email from Ian Hunter Smart advertising Community Champion Scheme in the Autumn.

> Email from Durham Racial Equality Council advertising Family Fun Day on 7 August from 11am to 4pm in the Community Centre.

> Letter from D Marrs giving the Partnership involvement in the tendering process for Bowburn Park.

RW was pleased with the offer of involvement given as follows:

I Receiving the proposed list of tenderers, following initial evaluation by officers.

II Contribution to the preparation of the evaluation criteria and scoring matrix.

III Contribution to the evaluation of tenders against said criteria and selection of the preferred contractor.

IV Involvement in pre-commencement discussions with eventual main contractor.

Because of his experience, and if his employers agree, RW will be the representative for the Partnership at the tendering process meetings with the City of Durham Council.

8. Items of Any Other Business: Register title of issue for item 13

Query about Football teams.

Queries concerning state of trees in OQ and Parkhill Woods; condition of paths from OQ and in Croxdale Round.

9. Treasurer's Report and New Quiz:

Income to the end of June was £2222.38. It was noted that there is only £130.12 in the Unrestricted General Funds.

The new quiz is titled 'Food and Drink' with a closing date of 31 August. Please note the changes in Item 6.

10. Community Chest:

There was one application from the Parkhill Residents Association for 4 seats plus 4 litter bins.

The Partnership awaits a quotation from the City of Durham Council.

As there were no objections, once the quotation arrives, the invoice will be processed for payment.

JT asked the partnership to reconsider the element of applications to the Community Chest from retailers.

This could be considered at the extra meeting on Monday 23 July.

11. Reports and matters arising:

> Regeneration Working Group(05/07/07) /Walkabout – plus questions for next meeting:

Haslam now have six apprentices; 3 Bricklayers and 3 Joiners.

Items discussed were: URRI proposals, demolition, long grass, fly tipping, low-loaders unloading in Philip Avenue and the impending collapse of the road. The road closure issue is a rumour. It was announced that: the Cape appeal would not be held in Bowburn; Tail upon Lane would go to Development Control Committee.

Cape Public Enquiry (10/07/07): The chair expressed the Partnership's views at the enquiry, and was thanked for sitting through the whole of the appeal process. Esh Group and the City of Durham Trust were for the application, but the Inspector gave no indication of the final outcome, which will be announced later this year.

Tail-upon-End Lane Site: There were 20 objectors and 1 in agreement of the application. The chair read out the letter expressing views of Partnership which would be taken to the Committee meeting on 19 July.

A member thought that if Cape was refused then the Tail upon End greenfield site was more likely to be built on, but it was said that Cape was turned down because it was Industrial land, and as Hallam Land Management own the land then they can make an application.

A member was concerned at the loss of trees. Even though they have been left in the application it was thought inevitable that they would be taken out, especially as there is no Tree Preservation Order on any of the trees.

Parish Council: No report but the minutes are on view at the Community Centre.

Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS): The existing Local Plan refers to Durham Green Business Park and the Tursdale Rail Freight Terminal. These proposals were considered during the examination of the RSS. The Green Park remains but the freight terminal was taken out and this recommendation was upheld by Government. The Partnership can send comments to the Government by August 6.

There is a need to weigh up the benefits of less pollution from rail plus jobs, against the loss of a large open space and an increased built up area for Bowburn.

JT stated that the City had been in discussion with private developers for some time to bring up to 5000 good quality jobs to the area; however it does eat into Greenfield land.

It was noted that the Highways group supported the freight terminal. A member thought there was an economic benefit in supporting the scheme.

Noticeboard: No progress.

Quarry Liaison Committee: Awaiting a model before arrangements are made for a presentation.

LSP: No report.

12 Villages Representative: There is a presentation of certificates for Dry Stone Walling at Quarrington Hill to successful candidates on 26 July. There is a taster session in September for Planning, and a Watercolour Painting course has been asked for – anyone interested?

12. Group Noticeboard:

>Banner: Had an enjoyable concert on the Eve of Gala plus a good day at the Gala itself.

>BVC: Next Interchange is in September; please pass on any articles for submission.

>Football Teams: Once again there are concerns about the maintenance of the football field when so many teams are using the pitches. There is to be a presentation to 16 Nursery School children on Thursday.

It was suggested that the objections to the maintenance should be taken to the next Park Working Group meeting.

>History: The AGM is on Thursday and will be followed by a talk on 'Pit Ponies'.

>Website: No report.

13. Any Other Business: It was asked if there were start dates for the new pitches; where do the teams go to when there is; and why has Crowtree FC not been informed. – There is no start date but the teams will go to Kelloe, QH and Coxhoe Sports Centre. Martin will update members nearer the time.

The lopped trees at OQ were left looking a very strange shape by NEDL. A member from OQ had been consulted in February and was concerned that the trees were lopped in the nesting season even though NEDL have a statutory right to do any necessary works. It was suggested that the MP be made aware of the situation.

In Parkhill Woods it looks as if trees have been felled officially but it was questioned who had done this and why?

There is also concern about the very overgrown footpath at OQ. The bridleway on the way to Croxdale is extremely boggy and a member said the Parish were writing to the owner about improving the area.

14. Date and Time of Meetings: General Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month.

Next meeting is on 21 August 2007 at 6.30pm