

**Menston Neighbourhood Forum and Menston Parish Council and
Menston Community Association Meeting**

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10th March 2015 at 7.00pm

Present: Peter Finlay, Quentin Mackenzie, Liliias McCulloch, Cllr Dale Smith, Cllr Jackie Whiteley, Chris Schofield (Schofield Sweeney), Nigel Cawthorne (Shipley Area Office), Sgt Khan (Police), Peter Myers (Northern Rail), Richard Longcake (Bradford Council Waste Services), Roger Livesey (Menston Business Forum) and approximately 50 members of the public

1. Welcome and Introduction

Nigel Cawthorne welcomed everyone to the joint Menston Neighbourhood Forum meeting.

2. Neighbourhood Police Team

Sgt Khan from the police gave an update about local crime and safety issues.

He is part of the Neighbourhood Police Teams based at Shipley.

Overall crime in Wharfedale is low, but there has been a pattern in the Wharfe Valley where sheds and garages are targeted for the theft of gardening equipment and bicycles. Sgt Khan recommended that local residents should apply a similar level of security measures to their sheds and garages as they apply to their houses – improving the locks and also installing alarms.

Both Burley and Menston have been targets of car crime. There have been two recent cases of thefts from motor vehicles where tools were stolen from a van. There have also been a number of cases where insecure vehicles which contain electrical items and sat nav systems have been targeted. Sgt Khan recommended checking that all vehicles have been locked and that nothing to tempt thieves is left on display.

The police are also continuing to carry out Speedwatch in the village and recently caught 29 vehicles exceeding the speed limit on Buckle Lane.

Like many other public services the police are also facing tough budget cuts. Sgt Khan reassured the meeting that front line services are being maintained.

Nigel Cawthorne thanked Sgt Khan for his presentation.

3. Train ticket changes

Peter Myers, Client Stakeholder Manager for Northern Rail gave a presentation about Northern Rail's revenue protection policy and what this means for Wharfedale train users.

Northern Rail has operated a franchise since 2004. The franchise was renewed for an additional two years in 2014 and will now expire on 31 March 2016.

A consequence of the renewal last year was the need to increase revenue and this has been achieved by increasing fares and restricting the evening peak. Mr Myers

commented that, despite the recent increases, the fares barely cover transport costs and the service is heavily subsidised.

Northern Rail has found that there has been a 50% increase in rail passengers in the last ten years and this has led to problems with ticket sales. Ten years ago tickets were mainly sold by train conductors but this is not possible now due to the increased volume of passengers. There is actually a byelaw which forbids travel without a ticket from any station which sells them. Anyone who has boarded at a station with a ticket office and is found without a ticket may be issued with a "Failure to Purchase" fixed penalty notice. Northern Rail has a policy that passengers need to have waited a "reasonable" length of time – 5 minutes at peak times and 3 minutes at off-peak times. Menston ticket office will shortly be open until 7.00pm to allow passengers to purchase tickets for the next day.

Mr Myers commented that there will be changes introduced which will render the cardboard ticket obsolete – these include smart cards, like the "Oyster" card used in London and tickets to mobile phones.

Comments were made by members of the audience about the current flooding problems, the difficulties of access for disabled passengers from Brooklands and the ticket office closures.

Q. Are there any plans to improve conditions at Leeds railway station as part of the franchise?

A. No, as Leeds station is owned by Rail track and there is no space for additional parking or lengthening platforms. Discussions are still underway about a new terminus near Garforth.

Q. Menston station ticket office is often closed for a considerable time at midday for staff changeover. Are there any plans to change this?

A. Staff changeovers should not lead to ticket office closures and this will be noted and investigated.

Q. Is there any contingency for disabled people travelling to Leeds who cannot use the bridge to reach the ticket office?

A. In these circumstances disabled people will not be penalised.

Q. People with pushchairs and wheelchairs have problems accessing the station are there any improvement plans for the station?

A. Network Rail must make all stations accessible by 2022. Current proposals include installing lifts at unstaffed stations.

Q. Are there any plans to tackle car parking problems at Menston station?

A. Yes, West Yorkshire Combined Authority (the successor to Metro) plan to increase car parking in the next 2 – 3 years wherever possible by introducing decking and using land owned by a third party.

Q. The current disabled parking spaces at Menston station are often used by non-disabled people. Are the fines ever endorsed?

A. The ratio of disabled spaces will be investigated.

Q. Are there any plans to increase the evening services as part of the new franchise arrangements?

A. Services on Boxing Day and Sundays will be increased.

Q. The development companies who have submitted planning applications for major developments in Menston have commented that the developments will only result in an additional 10 seats needed at rush hour.

A. This sounds unrealistic. At least one seat per house or one seat per two houses is necessary.

Nigel Cawthorne thanked Peter Myers for his presentation

4. **Ellar Ghyll tip permits**

Richard Longcake, Principal Officer Waste Services from Bradford Council gave a presentation about the permit scheme and Ellar Ghyll.

Ellar Ghyll household waste site was developed on the site of a former incinerator by West Yorkshire County Council. Following the abolition of the County Council in 1986 the five West Yorkshire councils formed a combined waste authority. The combined waste authority continued until 1998 when each local council took back control of its own waste disposal services. From this date Ellar Ghyll should only have been used by Leeds residents as it is located within the Leeds boundary.

The proximity of household waste sites to other local authority boundaries led both Wakefield and Kirklees to introduce permit schemes before 2000. There are eight household waste sites in Bradford and four of these are adjacent to other district councils. Financial pressures – the landfill tax of £80, and the stringent budget cuts facing local councils have led to Bradford Council's decision to introduce a permit scheme to restrict the sites to Bradford Council Tax payers only. The scheme has reduced the amount of waste at the four peripheral sites by 20% (3,605 tonnes) in the two years since it was introduced.

Following Bradford Council's decision to introduce a permit scheme, Leeds City Council decided to follow suit and introduce its own permit scheme.

Mr Longcake commented that he could understand Menston residents concerns, but that Bradford Council needed to take an overarching view of waste collection in the District.

Q. What profit is made from recycling, does this not off-set the landfill costs?

A. Although recycled material does generate some income there are transportation and processing costs incurred which does little to reduce the landfill tax.

Q. Will the permit scheme not lead to an increase in fly-tipping?

A. It is hoped that the incidence of fly-tipping will not increase and that residents will continue to use the correct waste bins.

Q. Is there any update about the negotiations for a reciprocal arrangement with Leeds Council? How can residents express their concerns?

A. Bradford Council has reached a conclusion that it provides sufficient facilities already. Residents can express concerns through their Ward Councillors.

Q. When are the permits inspected?

A. Permits should be available for inspection in cars at the waste sites.

Q. The brown recycling bins get filled very quickly. Philip Davies MP negotiated an arrangement for Menston residents to use the Ellar Ghyll tip some years ago, can this not be re-negotiated?

A. The arrangement negotiated by Philip Davies was only in force until Leeds introduced their permit scheme.

Q. Can Menston residents still use the bottle banks outside the main gates at Ellar Ghyll?

A. Yes

Nigel Cawthorne thanked Richard Longcake for his presentation.

5. Menston Business Association

Roger Livesey gave a presentation about the Menston Business Association.

Menston Business Association was formed in the last year by Christine North as a means of encouraging local residents to use Menston businesses and to offer mutual support to existing businesses and encouragement to new ones.

The business association has produced a leaflet listing the services available and has already sponsored some village events, eg Menston Show.

Mr Livesey ended by encouraging everyone to use Menston businesses wherever possible.

6. Tour de Yorkshire

Nigel Cawthorne gave a short presentation about the forthcoming Tour de Yorkshire.

The Tour will travel through Menston on the final day, 3rd May. It will travel through Menston at approximately 4.00pm along Hillings Lane, down Bingley Road, Main Street and cross into Buckle Lane and Windmill Lane before heading over Otley Chevin. There will be rolling road closures. The race will be preceded by an amateur "Sportif" ride. It is anticipated that the race will generate around one-third of the Tour de France spectators.

7. **Bradford Council's New Deal**

Nigel Cawthorne gave a presentation about Bradford Council's New Deal budget proposals.

Like other public sector organisations, Bradford Council has been faced with severe budget reductions in recent years and this is set to continue in the future. Since 2010 the Council's budget has reduced by £135 million. In the next five years the Council's budget will be reduced by a further £130 million, so by 2020 the overall budget will have been reduced by 50% from 2010.

In addition to the budget reductions Bradford is also facing an increase in the population, particularly the number of children and older people. Bradford Council currently has a consultation exercise asking local people to tell them what matters most and least to them. The Council is also encouraging people to consider what they can provide for themselves and what services could be provided by other organisations like the Parish Council. The consultation website is https://www.bradford.gov.uk/bmdc/community_and_living/new_deal.

8. **Open Forum**

Roger Livesey informed the meeting of a new initiative being run by the Menston Community Association. A grant has recently been received from Lloyds Bank for a team of young people to teach elderly potentially isolated older people to use iPads. The young people have been recruited and the older people will be identified by Menston Cares.

Nigel Cawthorne informed the meeting that Bradford Council is aware of the recent dog fouling issues in Menston and will be taking forward the Green Dogwalkers Scheme.

9. **Development update**

Peter Finlay thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He gave apologies from David Rhodes and introduced Chris Schofield who gave an update about the proposed developments.

Chris Schofield gave a summary of the current position for each of the three sites.

Derry Hill – following a hearing on 19th January 2015, Justice Stewart has given permission for a judicial review to take place on one of two conditions. An appeal has been lodged for a review to also take place on the other condition.

Bingley Road – planning permission had been granted for an outline planning application. Following an independent drainage report commissioned by Chris Schofield on behalf of Bradford Council, which stated that the site is unsuitable due to the significant ground water drainage, a detailed application was refused by the Regulatory and Appeals Committee. The Government's Department of Communities and Local Government has refused to intervene, claiming that local residents should challenge the decisions of local planning authorities.

Second Bingley Road site purchased by Chartford Homes. The Secretary of State is currently considering whether to call the decision in for investigation which would

lead to the application being considered by a planning inspector. Menston Action Group had challenged the application and were able to provide Bradford Council's Planning Department with copies of their own decision notices for the planning application for the Red House Gardens development which stated that this area of land is to be used as a detention basin which would effectively stop the properties in Red House Gardens from flooding. The application has now stalled pending a decision from the Secretary of State.

Peter Finlay thanked Chris Schofield on behalf of the community.

10. Other issues

Peter Finlay gave an update about recent Menston Parish Council issues:

Menston Parish Council will be re-elected this year and if there are more candidates than seats, then the election will take place on 7th May. (The Parish Council has been previously elected in two uncontested elections). Two of the existing Parish Councillors have indicated that they do not wish to stand again. If anyone is interested, please get in touch with any of the current members who will be happy to provide information and advice. Information about the election process is available on the village website and also on the Bradford Council website. Nomination forms are available from Bradford Council's Electoral Services Unit and should be returned to them from 30th March until 4.00pm on 9th April.

In January the Parish Council took the difficult decision to increase the Parish Precept from £8.00 to £15.00 per band D household. This will increase the total budget from £16,000 to £30,000 and means that the Parish Council will be able to develop some ideas of major expenditure: the Neighbourhood Development Plan, taking over control of the public toilet attached to Kirklands, the development of a new walking and cycling route and the potential costs of a parish council election. Any shortfall in expenditure will be covered by reserves.

In the last 12 months the Parish Council has funded the purchase of a defibrillator which has been installed at Menston Methodist Church. Charlotte Montague has organised the purchase and installation of the defibrillator and will be organising some training, although instructions are provided by the device itself in cases of emergency.

Menston Parish Council is also considering commissioning an additional drainage report from Dr Duncan Reed on behalf of the village and may need to make a financial contribution to this.

Cllr Dale Smith presented Peter Finlay with four copies of a retirement book marking his life and career running the village post office. Two copies will be placed in the village library.

Peter Finlay responded by thanking Cllr Smith and the village for the event last October and their good wishes and declared the meeting closed.