

Menston Neighbourhood Forum

Minutes of a meeting held on Wednesday 4th February 2014 at 7.00pm

Present: Steve Ellams, Alan Elsegood, Cllr Dale Smith, Quentin Mackenzie, David Rhodes, Lillas McCulloch, Philip Moore, Inspector Sue Sanderson, John Houlihan, Peter Ward, Lizzie Hughes (Burley and Menston Children's Centre), Chris Schofield (Schofield Sweeney Solicitors) and approximately 70 members of the public

1. Welcome and Introduction

Steve Ellams welcomed everyone to the Menston Neighbourhood Forum meeting.

2. Menston and Burley Children's Centre

Lizzie Hughes, the Manager at the Menston and Burley Children's Centre gave a presentation about the Centre.

The Menston and Burley Children's Centre is located to the rear of Kirklands in a purpose-built centre funded by the local authority. The Centre opened three years ago and provides help and advice to the families and carers of children aged 0 – 4. The Centre is currently run by a number of a part-time staff who work with midwives, health visitors and Menston Pre-School. The Centre has three key targets for 2013-14: families on a low income, maternal mental health and grandparents. The Centre has been very popular with families in Menston and Burley – 96% of children aged 0-2 are registered, 82% have visited the Centre in the last year and 62% have made three or more contacts with the Centre in the last year (the average figure for Bradford District is 43%).

Bradford Council has announced that the District's Children's Centres need to make a service reduction of £2.4m. A recommendation to achieve this level of service reduction is the re-designation of the centres into three categories:

- Core – the Centre is staffed with a budget
- Satellite – the Centre does not have any staff and is open on a part-time basis
- Outreach – a member of staff will be available to open the Centre to other user groups.

Bradford Council has used the Index of Multiple Deprivation to categorise the 41 Centres throughout the District and the Menston and Burley Centre has been designated as Outreach, with associated staff based at the Highfield Centre in Keighley.

A consultation exercise for the District's Children's Centres has been carried out, including an online petition. A report is being considered by Bradford Council's Executive, and this will probably be referred to the full Council meeting on 20th February, when the budget is finalised. The Schools Forum has allocated £3m towards mitigating the effects of the transition process – this may serve to delay the implementation date of the proposed changes.

The Management Board of the Children's Centre is considering an alternative proposal to establish an independent centre in conjunction with the Ilkley Children's Centre.

Q. Are Midwife and Health Visitor Clinics held at the Children's Centre rather than at Doctors' surgeries?

A. Yes.

Sue Rix thanked Lizzie Hughes for her presentation, particularly the targets which were identified. Sue Rix commented that she has found that all the staff at the Children's Centre are very attentive and genuine, and it is hoped that Menston will be able to continue to benefit from this excellent service.

2. Crime issues and home safety

Inspector Sue Sanderson gave an update on local crime and safety issues. A total of 17 crimes were reported in Menston from November to January. This included three incidents of domestic burglary – in each case entry was gained through the Europrofile locking system. Inspector Sanderson advised the meeting that the police are able to give advice about secure locking systems, particularly for uPVC doors and recommended contacting PCSO Darrin Thompson to arrange a visit.

There were also three cases of burglary to a garage – this follows a pattern in the Wharfe Valley where sheds and garages are targeted for the theft of mountain bikes and racing bikes. Inspector Sanderson recommended registering any bicycle serial numbers on bikeregister.com or similar sites.

The police have noticed an increase in the number of offenders travelling into the area to commit crimes and Inspector Sanderson recommended that local residents should contact the police should they see any suspicious vehicles or people.

There were no incidents of anti-social behaviour reported in Menston.

Inspector Sanderson also gave an update on the current police restructuring exercise. The police are also subject to budget reductions, but there is a commitment to maintain the current level of frontline service so there will be staff reductions at higher levels. The current Neighbourhood Police Teams will become Safer Neighbourhood Teams and these will be constituency based. Menston will be covered by the Shipley Safer Neighbourhood Team headed by Inspector Hugh Robinson. Inspector Sanderson will be heading up the Keighley Safer Neighbourhood Team.

Inspector Sanderson thanked the people of Menston for their support – particularly for PCSO Darrin Thompson.

Q. Are the Europrofile locks also vulnerable to “bumping”?

A. 99% of illegal entries are gained through snapping the locks. A local charity called CASAC (Community Action and Support Against Crime) is police approved and will fit replacement locks.

Q. Double parking on Cleasby Road has affected the 967 bus from Otley to Menston, are the police able to deal with this?

A. Yes, PCSO Darrin Thompson is aware of the problem and will keep a check on the area.

Steve Ellams thanked Inspector Sue Sanderson for attending the Menston Neighbourhood Forums and for her support and advice.

3. Update on the meetings at Leeds Bradford Airport

Alan Elsegood gave an update about a meeting of the Leeds Bradford Airport Consultative Committee which he had attended on 12th December. An item about the noise nuisance from aircraft flying south of the agreed noise preferential route or swathe was discussed at the meeting. Unfortunately only Menston and Burley are affected by the problems with noise nuisance, so other organisations on the Consultative Committee have little sympathy for this issue. More information about the meeting is available on the village website.

Following complaints about the noise nuisance, Alan Elsegood and a number of Menston residents attended a special meeting with representatives from Leeds City Council on 23rd January. Leeds City Council monitor noise levels and tracking as a condition of the airport's planning consent. The data collected is then sold to Leeds Bradford Airport. The data currently available is not presented until it is six months old. Leeds City Council agreed look at ways to provide more timely data. A revised Noise Preferential Route has been proposed to the Civil Aviation Authority – this tracks from Otley Chevin in the direction of Ben Rhydding before the aircraft turns, and would allow a steeper rate of climb after take off – which should reduce noise levels over Menston.

Menston resident have reported noise problems at two distinct times of day: from 6.30 – 8.30am and from 4.30 – 8.30pm – due mainly to holiday flights taking off and landing. There are two permanent monitoring stations in the village – at Park Field and adjacent to the Burley Road roundabout. Following complaints from residents on the southern side of Menston, it is proposed to install a temporary mobile monitoring station close to Hawksworth Drive. It is hoped that the meeting will lead to the establishment of a better relationship with Leeds City Council's Monitoring Team.

Q. Are you able to give us the names of any representatives at the Airport or Monitoring Team?

A. Yes, Dave Cherry and David Lightfoot

Q. Why has the airport allowed some very late night flights, which have caused noise nuisance?

A. These are Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) flights. Although the airport is licensed for 24 hour operation, there are very strict controls about the numbers and types of night flights. The PIA flights are slow to load and depart and this affects the take off time. This should not happen and action will be taken to halt it. PIA currently use older noisier aircraft – they will be allowed to continue with these flights if they update to newer quieter aircraft.

4. Menston Vehicle Show and Xmas Lights Appeal

Steve Ellams spoke about the very successful Vehicle Show which was part of the Jubilee Celebrations in 2012. Following this event, it was agreed to hold another show in the village on 5th May 2014. Three local businesses, the Menston Arms, the Malt Shovel and the Fairfax Club have agreed to host the vehicles in their car parks. The maximum capacity will be 80-90 vehicles and Steve Ellams suggested using a pre-

registration scheme to ensure that the maximum number is not exceeded. The two pubs and the Fairfax Club have agreed to sell food and drink, and it is hoped that other local businesses will be open on the day.

Nigel Cawthorne who organised the very successful Menston walk for the Jubilee Celebrations has asked for a volunteer to lead the walk during his absence.

It has been agreed to ask for voluntary donations which will be used to sponsor more Xmas Lights on Menston lamp posts.

Anyone interested in taking part is asked to contact Steve Ellams.

5. Business and Cinema Initiatives

Sue Rix explained that discussions at MCA meetings have revealed a need to improve communication about regular and occasional village events, provide support for businesses and services in the village, share other information for villagers and attract visitors to the village.

It has been agreed that there will be a programme to install some notice boards to promote businesses, events and activities in the village. It is intended that the first notice board outside Kirklands will be installed by mid-summer. This will include a current street map, list of businesses and services, current and future village events, village walks and business advertising.

Sue Rix asked for advice and information from all Menston residents about:

- Board suppliers
- Additional finance to fund this pilot and subsequent notice board at strategic points around the village
- Help to create and develop the street map and then develop it to show significant places
- Help to develop a walks map at different scales.

Steve Ellams gave an update about the recent successful application to join the Burley and District Chamber of Trade (BADCOT). More information will be made available later.

Roger Livesey gave an update about the proposed cinema initiative. A questionnaire had been placed on each seat to gauge the level of interest in starting a Film Society. A very successful group has been in existence in Otley for some time and they run a series of film shows with one show each week at the Otley Courthouse. Establishing this sort of Society will need volunteers for setting up, selling tickets and refreshments. Otley Film Society have offered to set up and run an initial show if enough interest is shown.

6. Update on the Green Belt Petition and Habitats Directive

Steve Ellams thanked everyone who had signed the Green Belt Petition and gave a update about the Habitats Directive.

Derry Hill and both sites at Bingley Road have been identified as Sites of Exceptional Importance; they are also part of the South Pennine Moors Special Protected Area. Under Regulation 102 of the EU's Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, the Local Authority cannot cause harm to protected sites through its decisions.

A recent investigation into the feasibility of the sites has shown that the two sites at Bingley Road have insufficient green space in relation to the numbers of dwellings. Recent Police and Bradford Council Highways reports about the sites have been very negative.

7. Future Bradford Council consultation on roads in and around Menston

Philip Moore presented a summary about current highways issues in Menston, including problems with access, parking, traffic volume and speeding. Bradford Highways will be carrying out a Tier 2 consultation into the proposed traffic management scheme to be funded by the s278 monies from the Derry Hill and Bingley Road proposals. The original scheme drawn up by the developers has been substantially revised; the original vertical deflections have been changed to horizontal proposals and the introduction of village gateways has been proposed as a means of slowing traffic entering the village.

8. Local Government Ombudsman involvement with Bradford Planning

Alan Elsegood gave an update on complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman. His original complaint was not upheld by the LGO. He has now made a second complaint about the conduct of officers and councillors and has requested that an independent inquiry is carried out. The City Solicitor responded on 29th January to say that a substantive response would be provided within two weeks. Steve Ellams has also made a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman. Regular updates about the progress of these complaints will be provided at future meetings.

Philip Davies MP had sent the following letter of support to Menston villagers:

“The people of Menston have been let down badly by Bradford Council. Legitimate and serious concerns about the Bingley Road and Derry Hill planning applications have been brushed aside without proper scrutiny and Bradford Council have demonstrated a siege mentality where they seem to have decided that these applications will be approved come what may and irrespective of what the evidence is.

“That is why I will continue to press for a debate in Parliament on this issue to flag up to the Minister the terrible way this planning process has been handled by the Council, and is why I welcome the investigation by the Local Government Ombudsman, even though it is extremely rare for them to find against the local authority.

“Everyone in Menston should be extremely proud of everything that they have done to fight these unwanted and unnecessary developments and I will continue to do all I can to support you”.

9. **Flooding, drainage and the current legal state of play**

David Rhodes provided a summary of the attempts to persuade Bradford Council to seriously consider the factual evidence of flooding and drainage problems in the village, as evidenced by the technical reports and film footage showing the effects of the storms and flooding of 24-25 September 2012.

This information was given to Bradford Council in October 2012.

The Regulatory and Appeals Committee meeting on 4th April 2013 did not receive copies of the information either. This meeting included a condition (Condition 10) which insisted that the development company for each site must make provision for the significant drainage problems. Taylor Wimpey subsequently applied to Bradford Council to replace Condition 10 with a less stringent requirement and this was agreed at a meeting of the Regulatory and Appeals Committee on 10th October. David Rhodes was asked to represent the Parish Council at this Committee meeting but was denied permission to speak.

Copies of the factual information have also been given to Yorkshire Water and the Environment Agency, but neither has commented on the findings.

Since 2013, Cllr Dale Smith and Chris Schofield have been trying to persuade Council officers to engage with this evidence and avoid litigation.

Following a lack of communication on the part of Bradford Council, David Rhodes had instructed Schofield Sweeney to send a 'letter before action' in the hope that BMDC could be persuaded to consider the evidence properly and fully, otherwise he would feel there was no choice but to take out an injunction against them..

Steve Ellams thanked David Rhodes and Chris Schofield on behalf of Menston Village. He also made an appeal for further donations to the fighting fund.

10. **Date of the next meeting**

Steve Ellams announced that the next Neighbourhood Forum meeting in June will be a joint meeting with Bradford Council.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 9.50pm