

Menston Community Association

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 7 May 2014

Present: [Committee] Steve Ellams (SE) – Chair, Alan Elsegood (ADE, Acting Sec'y), David Manson (DM), Liliias McCulloch (LM), Cllr. Dale Smith (DS), Chris Hartley (CH),

Members of the public incl. Sue Rix, David Rhodes, Philip Moore, 4 other Menston residents.

Apologies:, Glyn Martill (GM), Peter Ward (PW), Quentin Mackenzie (QM), John Houlihan (JH).

1. Welcome and apologies

Attendance and apologies as above.

2. Minutes of last meeting (2 April) and Matters Arising

The previous meeting's Minutes had been prepared by ADE and circulated. Approved as written.

3. Correspondence

The Telegraph & Argus on 11 April had carried an article about the Menston Business initiative, which was noted with approval.

The Local Government Ombudsman had responded to the complaint by SE to the effect that there was insufficient injustice to warrant a full inquiry, and that on a reading of Bradford MDC's Planning Officer's Report relating to Bingley Road, it was not apparent that the process had been defective. SE has referred the matter to Philip Davies.

4. Menston in Bloom Report

QM reported that the Yorkshire in Bloom Spring Judging had taken place on 3 April, and the judges had given encouraging informal comments. The Summer Judging was scheduled to take place on Thursday 10 July, and it was expected that residents and Bradford's Parks Dept. would make a similar effort in advance of the judging to enhance Menston's prospects of an award.

5. Parish Council Report

QM reviewed the Parish Council meeting of 24 April. The Police had reported another low number of crimes. A discussion had been held about the threat of closure of the public toilets at Kirklands, and it was proposed that the Parish Council should evaluate whether it was practicable for MPC to take over the maintenance of these facilities from Bradford Council rather than see them closed. There were several practical and funding issues to consider before referral to the next Parish Council meeting.

No feedback had yet been received relative to the Bradford Core Strategy/Local Development Framework. The noise monitor on Meadowcroft was now operational.

There had been a fruitful meeting about the Children's Centre. There would be events during the summer to test out schemes for future operation and support. A Business Plan would be prepared.

6. Update on forthcoming Forum (3 June)

We were already beyond the deadline date for material to go into the next edition of "Menston News", but there had been no input from Paula Truman (Shingley Area Coordinator's Office) re. the Agenda. ADE had spoken to and emailed Paula and she was awaiting communication from the Ward Councillors on what they wanted to see on the Agenda before she could advise us. It was hoped that Simon D'Vali (Highways Officer) would be in attendance so that we could have some feedback on the "consultation exercise" which had taken place on 25 February, and comment on other traffic-related issues. Menston issues on the Forum Agenda might include the IT Project, the Business Initiative, WW1 Commemoration and a children's event ("Menston by the Sea") at the Fairfax Club.

7. Update on Notice Boards & Business Promotion initiative

Sue Rix reported that interest had been strong at the initial meeting and another meeting was to be held on Wed 14 May. Matters were progressing relative to the Notice Boards and Information Centre, and the issue of how those items would promote businesses and how they would be funded (for installation and subsequent maintenance) was progressing through a Working Party.

8. I.T. Project

Roger Livesey had notified of his inability to attend this meeting and inform as to progress, however the indications were that we could obtain (by sponsorship) some 6 Apple iPads and that there were several young people willing and competent to assist with getting older residents "IT savvy". Discussions were proceeding as to a location for training to take place.

9. Local Government Ombudsman

Reported above under Correspondence. Comments that the whole Ombudsman process was a sham and a waste of effort.

10. Planning: flooding & drainage issues

Prof. David Rhodes had submitted his report on flooding and drainage to BMDC 4 weeks ago, but had not yet received a response. He had tried to get the report 'peer-reviewed' but had been unable to find anyone with the necessary skills, competence or familiarity with the issues. It was evident that Bradford was not the only Local Authority which did not have the expertise available to evaluate flood risk and drainage issues – it was a national predicament.

Professor Rhodes was encouraged to address the forthcoming Forum by way of informing those in attendance of the present situation and to summarise the risk factors peculiar to Menston. The meeting agreed to promote the publication of Prof. Rhodes's report through the village websites and by other means, including making a copy available to anyone who might want to study it.

It was commented by LM and Philip Moore that a notice had appeared on Hawksworth Drive which appeared to be a formal Planning Notice by BMDC, yet it contained alterations and referred to the out-of-date Planning Application for housing on Bingley Road fields. It could not be verified as a genuine item.

11. Menston Vehicle Show (5 May, Bank Holiday Monday)

The Show had been a great success from the participation point of view, with around 70 vehicles on show, and the village packed with visitors. The evidence was that all the businesses serving food and drink had been busy. The ice-cream van had given a 10% commission on sales to the MCA funds and this had amounted to £94. The Morris Dancers, Terrier Racing, the roundabouts, fairground organ and other side-shows had been well-supported. Overall, however, a deficit of £110 had been incurred, principally owing to having to pay £265 for the availability of St. John Ambulance first aiders. ADE made a request to the meeting that MCA should make up the deficit in recognition of the benefits which the Show had brought to the businesses and Menston generally, and this was approved.

It was noted that the T&A had run a feature yesterday (6 May, pages 16 and 17) on Menston Motor Show. It was agreed that we (MCA) should publicise the success of the Show on the websites. It was suggested (CH) that other events, such as an Agricultural Show, were successful elsewhere and might be considered for Menston in future years. SE responded that the organisational effort which had gone into the Motor Show, both at the Jubilee in 2012 and on the recent occasion had been so great that it could not be contemplated doing the event (or another event) more regularly without greater resourcing and increased practical assistance. We had, however, learned some valuable lessons from it.

ADE was writing to thank the organisations which had donated prizes and/or provided facilities.

12. World War 1 Commemoration

A first meeting to decide how, when and where the Centenary of the outbreak of WW1 and the sacrifices of the participating nations might be commemorated had been held and good progress made. There would be a follow-up meeting on Wednesday 4 June at the High Royds Memorial Chapel.

13. Any other business

Several residents had attended the meeting to make a specific point about the speed of traffic on Buckle Lane. The speed limit was 40mph, but the road was narrow and sight-lines restricted. For two vehicles to converge at a combined velocity of 80mph in such circumstances was a recipe for a serious accident. Although the meeting agreed, Cllr. Smith observed that the road was classified as a country road and the Council had set a speed limit on the basis of advice and professional assessment. It was appropriate to raise these concerns at the Neighbourhood Forum, at which it was anticipated that the Local Highways Officer would be in attendance.

Also on the subject to traffic, concerns were raised about traffic being parked in Menston by residents of Otley (in particular), so as to access Menston Railway Station. As the car park at the station was always full, these intending travellers were parking on village streets, not just around the station but on Main Street, the top end of Cleasby Road and near the junctions, blocking a clear line of vision and generally making it difficult to get to the shops by car, and/or to cross the roads. Again, these were felt to be valid concerns and it was suggested that these matters be impressed upon Simon D'Vali at the Forum.

14. Next meeting – NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Tuesday 3 June, 2014, 7.00 pm at Kirklands Community Centre.

MCA meetings are open to all Menston residents.