

West Swindon Forum
Minutes of Meeting
9th May 2011

PRESENT:

Councillors:

Nick Martin (Chair), Mick Bray (Vice Chair), Michael Dickinson, Mary Martin, Garry Perkins, Peter Greenhalgh, Keith Williams, Steve Wakefield.

Police:

Tom Turner, Steve Yeates

Swindon Borough Council:

Bernie Brannan, Pam Pixton, Liz Evans, Phil Smith

Residents

Brian Hook, Ann Hook, J Hill, Edward Eggleston, Martyn Parrott, Jill Wells, Brian Miller, Lesley Shepherd, Chris Shepherd, Norris Kiddle, Ruth Kiddle, Roger Ogle, Eric Elstone, Elizabeth Elstone, E Wiles, A Parfitt, Paul Shepherd, Kevin Fisher, Claire Walker, Angela Atkinson, 4 residents not signed in

1. Ridgeway Farm and Swindon Core Planning Strategy

The planning application has been placed with Wiltshire Council; there may be a request to extend the planning period due to transport and environmental reasons. We are not aware when Wiltshire Planners are assessing the application. If the application is rejected, it may go to appeal.

A question was asked how could a planning application be submitted despite their being over 300 objections including MPs and Councillors. Cllr Peter Greenhalgh responded that under planning law, anyone can put in a planning application, even on land that they do not own, and the planning authority will have to assess the application following due process. The planning authority will consider formal objections providing they have planning legitimacy.

A further question was raised on whether Tadpole Farm development will proceed if Ridgeway Farms is granted permission by Wiltshire. Phil Smith responded that Tadpole Farm is part of Swindon's draft Core Strategy and is considered a logical development. It was part of the Regional Spatial Strategy. If Ridgeway proceeds, we will have to assess if the impact can be taken into account when deciding on Tadpole Farm. The fall back position is the Structure Plan 2016 agreed by Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire County Council in

2006. This plan refers to 1000 homes to the West of Swindon, which would be satisfied by the Tadpole development alone. This view has been passed to Wiltshire Council by Swindon.

Phil Smith also gave feedback on the core strategy consultation document. The document is available in hard copy in the West Swindon Library, and online at www.swindon.gov.uk/corestrategy. The Core Strategy sets out the planning strategy in Swindon to 2026. The core strategy has a number of changes from the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), particularly around numbers of new homes with Core Strategy recommending 25000 dwellings, which the RSS had 36000.

2. **Issues Raised by Residents**

- a. Mr Eggleston asked about the refurbishment of roads at Worsley Road, Liskeard Way, and Edgehill; some repairs have been poorly carried out and do not make sense. **The Ward Councillor agreed to action this.**
- b. Chris Shepherd – lack of allotment provision in West Swindon and no identifiable sites. **Cllr Keith Williams to action.**
- c. Angela Atkinson – issues with maintenance and use of visitor parking spaces in Hadden Close. Advised to check property deeds to see if this clarified responsibilities, and Cllr Peter Greenhalgh will check whether it forms part of the public highway. Angela informed the meeting that she has recently taken on the role of a learning ambassador, and it was suggested she speak to Roger Ogle to see if the Link magazine will promote this work.
- d. Cllr Mary Martin stated several residents have raised the issue with the condition of the parks and open spaces (rubbish, needles, etc.). PC Tom Turner stated that this has been picked up in the West Week of Action, and is trying to get the Probation Service to help as a regular service through the Community Payback scheme. Cllr Williams stated that if there are any concerns or issues, residents should ring Streetsmart on 445501.
- e. Martyn Parrott stated that we discussed the state of the roads in West Swindon at a forum meeting last year. Whitehill Way has still not been repaired effectively, and requires reconstructing. Cllrs Nick Martin and Keith Williams agreed to discuss this after the meeting.
- f. Cllr Dickinson reported that a meeting is being held on 10th May to discuss parking arrangements for the JLS concerns to keep disruption and inconvenience to a minimum.
- g. Paul Shepherd stated the footpath in Cabot Drive needs tarmacking as there is ASB with people throwing the loose stones at the properties. Residents have agreed to set-up a neighbourhood watch in the area. PC Tom Turner said he was aware of the potential increase in ASB when the schools finish for the summer break, and he is in discussions with the Head Teacher.

- h. Bernie Brannan reported that a meeting had been held with the owner of the fairground following increased noise levels. A positive response had been received and an undertaking that additional controls will be put in place in the future.

Toothill cottages – demolition order has been withdrawn falling some local interest. The cottages will be auctioned last summer. Cllr Mary Martin stated that the overgrown bushes, ivy, etc, and graffiti needs removing.

3. Setting Police Priorities for West Swindon

PC Tom Turner and Steve Yeates reported good success and outcomes from the existing priority policing set by the Forum. Recently there have been seven evictions from properties due to drugs and anti-social behaviour; there have also been a number of committals following robberies in the area. During the current Week of Action campaign working with partners (Council, Police, Health, DVLA, etc.), a number of untaxed vehicles have been collected and crushed. Anti-social behaviour at the Link Centre from young people, particularly Friday evenings, has improved following a system of banning offenders from entry unless their behaviour improves. A dog control order has been issued on an owner with a large bullmastiff.

New priorities agreed by the Forum for West Swindon are:

- Focus on anti-social behaviour in parks, green space areas, and subways.
- Burglaries from vehicles, particularly around finding offenders, awareness raising (unlocked cars, items on display), and crime prevention.
- Drug deal (hot spot areas) in Freshbrook.

4. Youth Provision in West Swindon

Liz Evans updated the meeting on youth provision following changes that were discussed at the last meeting. She reassured the Forum that youth provision would continue at Toothill Farm House and support to Freshbrook Church Youth Club. A team of six staff will be employed, and this will equate to around 2 full time equivalent staff for West Swindon, but will have flexibility to cover for holidays/ absence. The service will focus on a targeted approach and achieving agreed outcomes.

5. Update on Toothill Festival

It was reported that the Toothill Festival held on the 7th May was a great success. Detailed analysis of the feedback was still underway, and this will be published in the Link magazine and a report. The Steering Group and all volunteers were thanked by the Forum for their hard work in making this a successful event.

Date of Next Meeting:

Monday, 11th July 2011, 7.00 pm, West Swindon Library