

RICHINGS PARK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
Tuesday 21 April 2015 at Richings Park Sports Club

PRESENT: Wendy Matthews (Chair), Muhktar Ali, Maureen Atkinson, Alan Barrett, Lindsey Beagle, Matthew McEvoy, Judy Teader, Jan Wiseman (Minutes), Maureen Worrall, Graham Young

IN ATTENDANCE: Paul Griffin (District Councillor), Ray Sangster (Parish Councillor), Ruth Vigor-Hedderley (County Councillor)

This is the first AGM in the new Sports Club building and Wendy thanked the club management.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Maureen Worrall, Tina Heath, Paul Dunham

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST AGM, 24 APRIL 2014: there were no amendments.

3 ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES: the Minutes were agreed and signed off. Proposed: Ruth Vigor Hedderley; Seconded: Tony ?

4 MATTERS ARISING

Sewage flies are back. Please continue to report them – see www.richingspark.com. The Residents' Association bring all known occurrences to the attention of Thames Water and the enforcement officers at South Bucks District Council. The sewage works are in Slough but the prevailing wind generally carries the flies to Richings Park. However a newspaper article has recently reported that Slough also have a sewage fly problem.

5 STATEMENT AND ADOPTION OF THE ACCOUNTS: Graham urged all to pay their annual subscriptions: £5 per household. Copies of the Annual Accounts to April 2015 were circulated. There was one-off income from the first event organised by shops in Richings Park and this would be handed over to them. There has been a new website and new software but less expenditure on stationery in relation to Heathrow. The accounts were agreed and adopted: proposed Tony Brown, Seconded Mike Quincey.

Wendy thanked Graham for his hard work as Treasurer.

6 ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE

No-one new wanted to join. The re-election of the entire committee was agreed. Proposed: Sue Puttock, Seconded: Lis Dunham.

7 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Wendy summarised the challenges which have faced the association during the year. A map was displayed on screen showing the proposed developments likely to impact on Richings Park. Details are given below although it was noted that the map does not include Heathrow's Third Runway.

Heathrow: the extension of the current runways brings the end of each nearer, and therefore noise is likely to increase. We are not able to establish the results of any current Heathrow noise investigation, nor the impact of the proposed surrounding wall which could make noise worse. This will go to public inquiry in mid-June.

Heathrow Third Runway: the Airport Commission are close to completing their report which will be handed to the next government after 7 May. We have seats on a number of Heathrow committees, eg the Noise Forum and Heathrow Community Forum, so we are represented in discussions and we report back to residents.

If Heathrow Ltd get a third runway, they will knock down Grundons' waste management plant and move it to Old Slade Lake. At the end of the new runway there will be a water park but everything currently on that land will have to move: Richings Park and Thorney are under threat. Heathrow Ltd have also identified an area between Iver and Richings Park as a works site during runway construction. Access would again via our local roads. We have stressed they must think again about infrastructure.

M4 widening and Smart Motorway: it will take 10 years to complete the whole project and work on our section will take place between 2017- 2019. Old Slade Bridge will be taken down for 2 years. During consultation in the Village Hall their literature looked at putting a depot on the recently vacated Aggregate site. However we have since had a meeting with Department of Transport who have just confirmed that this site will not be their depot.

Heathrow HS2 Spur: an item of good news: this is now in cold storage and will not form part of either phases 1 or 2 of HS2. Thorney Park is no longer under threat from this development. However see the next two paragraphs:

Heathrow Hub Proposal: north runway plan. This links the plan to extend and divide the existing runways with a proposal for a hub (sixth terminal, retail park, lorry park etc). The suggested site for the hub is Thorney Park and there would be connecting roads onto the M25 and our local road network. This would be a disaster for our area. However, representations to the Davies Commission have borne fruit and they have now agreed to separate the hub proposal from the runway extensions. The north runway proposal also diverts the Colne river and sump for flooding to the Old Slade Lane area. Heathrow consultants do not know about previous flooding in the area and we will ensure that they made aware.

Heathrow Logistics Area: Thorney Park is under threat from a related source. In small print in Heathrow Ltd's submission it has been identified as the site for a logistics area. We have objected because of HGV issues

Crossrail: work to replace the bridge on Thorney Lane is running behind schedule. It is not clear when the new bridge will go in - obviously not over Easter as initially planned. Good news: the Office of the Mayor of London has agreed to replace our station building and will ensure disabled access via lifts and a ramp. We will approach them to discuss putting a car park on the north side – parking problems in Richings Park, and particularly near the shops, will be made worse by Crossrail (see item 9 below).

WRAtH (Western Region Access to Heathrow): this project to link the Great Western mainline to Heathrow is government supported, funded and well underway for a development control order next year and then for work to take place. A large boring rig will be brought on site initially to determine the subsoil underneath. We hope that this project will provide for the bridge at Mansion Lane to be rebuilt to allow HGVs from Iver's business parks to exit via this route. This would free up our local roads.

HS2 Heathrow Express Depot: another government project which impinges on our plans for Mansion Lane. An alternative site is needed for the depot and the old Langley Oil Depot site has been earmarked. However this directly interferes with the WRATH proposal. HS2 do not see any need to provide an alternative access so it will be a big problem. HS2 will happen before Wrath and is a direct conflict of interest which we hope will be resolved. The HS2 depot would be working mainly overnight.

Cemex: (not shown on the map displayed at the meeting). Cemex propose to put a large gravel pit across the same area and we will object as strongly as possible. We would urge everyone to object, see www.richingspark.com.

Stobart: a biomass proposal which causes huge problems in terms of noise, HGV's and toxic wood dust. Please object online at www.richingspark.com.

A powerful film was shown highlighting the proliferation of HGVs on local roads and the consequences for residents.

As residents we must work as hard as possible and object to all proposals which threaten our local area.

8 LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE TEAM REPORT: the report was given this year by Gary Ashton.

A sergeant and 3 PCSOs are based in Iver High Street, next to the Council Offices. The Local Police Authority (LPA) area is Chalfont and South Bucks.

Good news: the latest figures show a drop in crime and fewer victims; crime in the Thames Valley is at a 25 year low. In the LPA, domestic burglary is down by a third over a 3-year period. There are good reductions in crime all round.

Gary compared the crime figures relating to Richings Park for January and April this year and last: reported domestic burglary went down from 24 to 15 and non-domestic burglary is 23% down, with theft from vehicles 14% down. We use Thames Valley alerts in our local area and anything specific to Richings Park goes on the website.

Gary spoke more generally about the work carried out across the area which has led to a downturn in offences. PCSOs are out and about dealing with for example vehicles with items left on show and this has cut down on car crime.

Questions from Residents:

Question: now there is a new sergeant will PCSOs be able to give out tickets as the old sergeant had been reported not to sanction this.

Answer: there is no change - PCSOs can ticket only for obstruction. They have no jurisdiction over yellow lines – Bucks County Council enforce highway code offences. Steve Price is the new Iver sergeant and Gary will brief him on our parking concerns. Lucy Price and Jill Fox are inspectors based in Taplow.

Question: are the crime figures reliable?

Answer: data is collated from jobs that come in and these are categorised and put on the Thames Valley police system. However we have to prioritise as the numbers of

PCSOs fall. Emergencies are given priority but all crimes reported are attended to as soon as possible.

Question: what is the law regarding parking in the bus stop layby in Langley Park Road?

Answer: this is obstruction and should be reported to Iver police: ring 101 or come into the police station. Bangors Road South and North in Iver are policed regularly and offending HGVs are ticketed as these are restricted roads.

Question: PSSOs are not seen in Thorney Mill Road, which is a race track.

Answer: all Iver police are trained to use the speed gun and if you come to see me Thorney Mill Road can be highlighted operationally.

Wendy thanked Gary and hoped he would soon be back on active service.

9 QUESTIONS ON PARISH, DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

Parish: there are no parish elections on 7 May as no more councillors are needed: we have Jackie Brying, Karanveer Singh Bembey, and Wendy Matthews,

District: Ruth is in purdah (ie issues are generally not open for discussion because of the elections on 7 May).

Questions from Residents:

Question: there was a proposal to divert the M25 through Richings Park as part of the new runway development. Is this likely to happen?

Answer: it is no longer happening.

Question: the new shop on the Hair Flair site in Richings Park has an orange frontage and shutters. It is out of character for the area. What can be done?

Answer: Wendy responded. She will raise the matter with the Planning department at South Bucks District Council.

Question: what is happening about parking problems throughout Richings Park? This is the fourth year and nothing has been done. It cannot still be under consultation. And what about the impact of Crossrail?

Question: I need a parking tool kit to introduce a parking scheme but despite emailing I have had no response.

Answer: Ruth responded. Parking is acknowledged to be a major issue and we carried out an informal consultation for Richings Park, Iver Heath, and Iver some time ago. I am now in purdah. Wendy met with Bucks County Council officers last week. Our Richings Park parking scheme will go to formal consultation shortly. Officers were out last week engaging with local residents and shopkeepers. We need to keep our shops alive but have to balance this with the problem of limiting commuter parking. 70 – 100 commuter cars park daily in Richings Park and the local area so we do need to help shop-keepers and residents. Commuters do not bring much business and ideally we need a 'park and walk' to the train station.

The parking scheme discussed two years ago was a one off-scheme with one-off funding. The current scheme is completely new and covers commuter parking. Ruth is happy to look at issues raised by the old scheme.

Question: Costcutters shops has been here for 14 years and there has been a major change in local parking. Commuters come from further and further afield for free parking. There are restrictions but cars are often parked all day and block deliveries. Something must be done.

Question: Skip lorries cannot get through Bathurst Walk by the shops. What about emergency vehicles? And speeding? We are running out of patience.

Answer: Ruth responded that she is supportive of putting measures in place to enable emergency vehicles to get through. She will put all the information she can on the website. Ruth has met Network Rail about WRAtH. We must support WRAtH as there is significant dialogue on a relief road. Once that is in place we can put prohibition orders on roads in Iver and Richings Park.

Question: Cemex want to put a gravel pit on land in North Park. The notice was published on 24 March with a deadline for objections of 16 April. It is so quick that there has been a lack of consultation. But that land was farmed by the Rayners. Could the Residents' Association check when the mineral rights were transferred to Cemex and does Cllr Rayner have a vested interest still?

Answer: Wendy responded. It is a scoping paper not a full application. It is a request to Bucks County Council for advice on environment issues: what would you need us, Cemex, to do if we were to put in a full application? Cemex owns the land and Cllr Rayner rents it. We understand that this has come forward because of WRAtH, as it is in conflict.

Question: the issue of gullies was raised at a District meeting last September and they are still full of detritus. Why has nothing been done? In some areas the drains have collapsed. This situation leads to flooding. North Park and Richings Way have been resurfaced without drain work being done. At the same meeting 3 dangerous trees in Richings Park were reported and refuge furniture on traffic islands which is still waiting to be replaced, These are still outstanding despite the fact that there is a duty of care under the highways act.

Answer: Ruth responded. £1m has been spent on ditching but Richings Way has a serious flooding issue with collapsed drains and a blocked culvert. Ruth will make sure it is done and thought it had been. There should be a cycle for emptying drains as currently local side roads are done and not main roads.

Question: Somerset Way has no footpath and this should have been given priority. Building work has impacted and destroyed pavements and verges. House owners should be held to account.

Answer: Ruth will check Somerset Way. Bucks County Council has a legal obligation to deal with category 1 potholes. Across Iver, footpaths have had very little attention but budget restrictions allow work on only two footpaths in each Councillor's ward.

Question: parking on grass verges should be allowed. Logs on verges are dangerous.

Answers: responses came from other residents: I have logs on my verge and will keep them. Homeowners are responsible for verges and need to prevent deterioration of the local area. In Bathurst Close we have to walk in the road as the pavements are too muddy. Police can only step in if there is an obstruction but if an entrance is blocked police can issue a ticket and recover the vehicle, so report it. Cars on footpaths can be given a ticket if a baby buggy cannot get past. Again report it.

A show of hands at the meeting showed that local residents do not support parking on verges.

10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Communications: we keep the website updated:

www.richingspark.com

We also have a new on-line discussion forum so please look at it:

<http://richingspark.today>

Each month we publish a summary of current issues in 'In and Around Iver'

Thanks: to Lindsey Beagle for setting up the on-line forum and putting notices through doors. To: Robert Crouch who has looked after Kingfisher Garden in Thorney Mill Road for us this year. To: Alan Barrett who deals with issues in Thorney Mill Road. To: Jan as Secretary, Graham as Treasurer, the Committee and Wendy Matthews as Chair.

Wendy thanked all for attending. The meeting ended at 9.40 pm. The next monthly meeting will be held on: **Tuesday 19 May 2015**. All are welcome to come for the first fifteen minutes and raise issues of importance to them.