

Record of Meeting of Friends of Nutsford Vale Wednesday 3rd May 2017 6:30pm at the Blue Bell Inn

Attendees:

Alan Gibson,	Frank Pollitt,	Barbara Moore,	Christine Prunty,
John Prunty,	Bob Lomas,	Jean Wood,	Maureen Riding,
Mark Lucas,	Rita Edge,	Barrie Edge,	Bernie Cree,
Keith Sloane,	Wan Sloane,	David Sloane,	Cassie Spinks-Lewis,
Marie Convery,	Karen Hewitt,	Susy Bristow,	Sarah Ahmed.

Apologies:

Janet Muldowney, Denise Riding, Cllr Suzanne Richards, Ally Fogg,
Brian Osbiston.

Welcome:

Unfortunately Claire had another engagement and wasn't able to attend this meeting, therefore Rita took the "chair", supported by Bernie.

Matters Arising: from Previous Meeting on 26th April 2017

Mavis had written 3 extremely good letters to the RSPB, the Woodland Trust and Richard Leese. They are now in our evidence folders if anyone wants to see them.

Ally has also got us a mention in the Big Issue – a very good article highlighting the issues with landfill sites when both schools and houses are built on them. It was noted that the article had also gone online on Levy-Massive.

Claire has had a reply from the MoD referring her to the National Archives at Kew.

Claire has been able to get more information about shopping bags – hundreds of sites and different sizes. She is aiming for basic but durable. Stupid Tuesday's Bag Stall seems favourite. It as agreed we should have one colour for logo on them. Suggested sale price £1.75 or £2.00 to make a small profit for 100 units. The group thought that 100 units would be about right and should go ahead and get them – we can always go back for more if needed.

Bernie advised that the T-Shirts would be arriving either Saturday or Monday.

Alan, when reporting on EU Laws relating to "The polluter pays" he had unfortunately referred to "article 176", it should have been "article 174 paragraph 2". "the polluter pays" is also referenced in EU Law dc2004/35 paragraph 2.

There was a discussion about relaxation of "purdah" following a high court judge ruling that purdah was a convention and not a law and therefore should not affect our commitment in terms of air quality.

Bob drew attention to the various freedom of information requests he had made including the Romboll map dated 3/1/2017. He had had a reply concerning these indicating that too many reports were involved to answer by email, but the traffic survey was not mentioned at all. The reply also confirmed that the date the decision was made for Nutsford Vale to be

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the preferred site for the new school was the 13th February 2017 even though at subsequent meetings we were told that no decision had been reached. He felt that until they were threatened, no progress was made.

Main Meeting:

Rita advised the group that we had received a further email from Jane Dudley (MCC) giving details of additional work they were planning to do on the Vale over the next 2 months. This included bird & bat surveys plus ground stabilisation tests. The email also confirmed that there would be a Public Consultation Meeting in June after the elections – date to be confirmed. They also plan to submit the planning application in June as well. The email states that no heavy machinery will be used to carry out these additional tests.

John had seen some of the men doing work on the Vale and asked what they were doing. He got the impression that they had been told not to say anything. Marie pointed out that it is possible to do ground testing by monitoring the particle sizes in soil samples in a laboratory. Concerns were raised that the planned ecological & bird surveys might be adversely affected by some of the new tests they were making.

Rita told the group that the previous night we had met with our 3 Councillors and put the questions/points that had been raised by the group. However, we don't know much more than we did before. The email that had been sent to us last Friday, they claimed not to have received copies of it or had notification that the additional work on the Vale had been arranged. At the end of the meeting Cllr Julie Reid sent photo copies of the questions to Cllr Sheila Newman and John Edwards – Director of Education - (he's apparently finishing on Friday – to be replaced by Amanda Cochran).

They had no knowledge of a contingency fund, or the school in Reddish. Apparently, it is the usual practice for work to start on their behalf before formal approval. One term that kept coming up was "If it goes to planning" and they all affirmed several times that they 100% behind us.

They agreed to arrange a meeting with the relevant executive after the elections. The general feeling was that they didn't know anything or they weren't saying anything and they weren't accepting responsibility for anything.

Cassie advised the group that the council had discounted 216 signatures on our paper petition. Therefore, she had emailed the council representative who manages (Sean McGonigle) this process to better understand what criteria is being used, so that for future petitions we would not lose 20% of the signatures submitted.

Bob suggested that it might be a good idea to request the information required via a FOI request which provides a route to elevating the issue and or complaint.

Rita broached the subject of reducing the frequency of the full group meetings, which can be quite draining, suggesting that we had a core group who managed the day to day business and the full group meeting would be once a month when they could feed back to the full group details of what had been happening. How did people feel about that? The group felt that perhaps every 2 weeks would be better. The group finally agreed on the full group meeting to be on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays each month from now on so the next meeting would be on Wednesday 17th May 2017.

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Does anyone want any more T-Shirts? Bernie & Steve have ordered more than have been paid for so will be able supply them from next week.

A.O.B.

Rita advised the group that there had been a "Save our Schools" rally in Crowcroft Park protesting against the cuts that are being made. Several very good heartfelt speeches were made by children from some of the schools. It was very well supported and Andy Burnham, Afzal Khan and our councillors were there.

Rita told the group that she had emailed the Viewpoints page of the MEN tonight, suggesting that renaming Nutsford Vale Country Park to The Sir Gerald Kaufman Country Park in memory of Sir Gerald as a tribute to a well loved representative of the people of South Gorton.

Update: The email was published in the paper on Friday 5th May 2017. It has been posted on Facebook. Needs to be put on our website.

Alan suggested that the questions and answers from the Tuesday meeting be published on our website and we consult a solicitor to help in getting some the information we need. Rita proposed that we approach Afzal Khan to see if he or anyone he knew could help us.

Cassie wanted to know how the group felt about naming the pathways in Nutsford Vale so that highlighting a location in the Vale would much easier and accurate. We would need signage at each entrance to the Vale and at pathway junctions. The naming of the paths or areas could become a community thing, encouraging engagement and ownership. Bob suggested we approach the Grange School and ask that the children there suggest names, perhaps of local dignitaries. Ally was going to contact the Grange this week but unfortunately we don't know whether he has. Rita will follow up and advise him of the suggestion.

There was now a very involved discussion concerning the possible date of submission of the planning application.

Bob advised that from 9th June, they would have to advertise the public consultation meeting date and allow time for the objections/feedback to be processed before submission of the application (assume 14-17 days). The application would then have to be verified which usually took 7-10 days. It would seem that it will be very difficult to submit the application before the 29th June planning meeting. Once submitted, there has to be time to allow objections to be raised which is usually 21 working days, however if the planning application is advertised in a LOCAL paper, then only 14 working days will be allowed for objections. The most probable date that the application will come before the planning committee therefore is likely to be 27th July 2017.

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Next Meeting:

Wednesday 17th May 2017 at the Bluebell Inn at 6:30pm

Next Event:

Scruff's Greenbank Fun Dog Show: Sunday 14th May 2017 12pm registration.

Litter Pick: Saturday 6th May 2017 from 10:30am

(Meet at the Bickerdike Avenue entrance to the Vale)

Big Lunch Event: Saturday 17th June 2017 from 1:00pm 'til 3:00pm

Gorton Carnival: Sunday 3rd September from 10:30am 'til 3:00pm

(Timings to be confirmed)