

Record of Meeting of Friends of Nutsford Vale Wednesday 26th April 2017 6:30pm at the Blue Bell Inn

Attendees:

Alan Gibson,	Pauline Sergeant,	Frank Pollitt,	Ally Fogg,
Grantley Vernon,	Barbara Moore,	Daniel Heathcote,	Mavis Holt,
Christine Prunty,	John Prunty,	Bob Lomas,	Jean Wood,
Kath O'Rourke,	Chris O'Rourke,	Maureen Riding,	Mark Lucas,
Rita Edge,	Claire James,	Barrie Edge,	Bruce James,
Bernie Cree,	Steve Cree,	Keith Sloane,	Wan Sloane,
David Sloane.			

Apologies:

Janet Muldowney, Denise Riding, Cllr Suzanne Richards, Cassie Spinks-Lewis.

Welcome:

Welcome everybody & thanks to Rita & Barrie for organising the Easter Egg Hunt & to everyone who came to the Street Party.

Matters Arising: from Previous Meeting on 12th April 2017

Following on from the email we sent to our councillors re their Lack of support, we are arranging a meeting with them to discuss this and feel we need the group to provide a set of questions to be asked. To avoid intimidating the councillors and keep a tight rein on topics discussed we propose only a few of the members attend the meeting. Who, has yet to be decided. We understand, having received an email from Cllr Sheila Newman, that the councillors will have all the answers. If they cannot answer, then we should give them 7 days to provide a written reply.

Note also that Afzal Khan volunteered to speak to Richard Leese about the problems we were having getting information and he reported back to us that Richard Leese had not been told or seen anything about Nutsford Vale. As a result, Bob contacted the new Chief Exec (Joanne Roney) and had received a reply that the matter had been passed to their legal dept.

Suggested Questions were:-

1. On what date was Nutsford Vale proposed as a possible site for the new 1800 place school and by whom?
2. Why did it take so long for it to be reported (on 6th December 2016) to the chief education officer?
3. Are you aware of the EU law, article 176, states that the polluter pays for cleaning up land contamination and any compensation that may arise, including the negative effect on house prices that may occur in the area?
4. Why was any work allowed to commence before formal approval by the City Council?
5. Why has the MEN had a block on our campaign?
6. Given that it was the City Council that commissioned the various reports to be done, why are they not available via freedom of information requests? Why have we not been given access to the recent traffic census information or the toxicology reports?
7. Why did we not see proper plans of the proposed new school and it's layout until March 16th when they were available on the 3rd January?
8. Bearing in mind that a spade cannot be put in the ground to start building a new

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school until a sponsor is in place, what arrangements are being made to short-list sponsors and what time-scale applies?

9. How big is the contingency fund if things go wrong?
10. We would like to have a meeting with the relevant Executive Committee before the planning application is submitted. Can you arrange that?
11. Having regard to the Manchester Corporation Act, why is it that the Councillors have either not been informed by the Executive of the proposals within their ward or they have been reluctant to disclose to their electors within their ward what they have been informed of?
12. As Nutsford Vale has now been chosen as the preferred site, can you now tell us what were the other 2 sites on the "desktop analysis" as they are no longer commercially sensitive?

Main Meeting:

Mavis asked, if the school was built, who would be responsible for whatever subsequently happened, i.e. subsidence, unexplained illness, etc. The Sponsor (whoever they were) would be responsible. We don't know who that will be yet.

Mavis was very concerned that a meeting with the council should have been with all of us, not just 3 people. No numbers decided yet but 3 councillors. It was pointed out that we needed the meeting to be focussed and to the point with specific questions and requests from the group as a whole. It was also considered that the meeting should be recorded to avoid any future ambiguities that might arise.

It was acknowledged that the councillors may not be able to answer some of the questions raised and because some of the information would need to be obtained from the Officers, purdah may get in the way. We should therefore ask for written replies within 7 days where relevant.

Ally suggested we ask our councillors to do things for us, like cc us in emails they send where Nutsford Vale is involved so that we can be informed about what is being done, and ask again for a meeting with the executive.

It was noted that Cllr Suzanne Richards had nominated Nutsford Vale for the Spirit of Manchester Award – Best Community Space. Everyone had already been emailed about this and asked to get their nominations in before 30th April 2017.

The Full Page Spread in the Big Issue has been prepared but not yet been published. We hope it will be soon.

Nothing back from the MoD re dumping of munitions in Nutsford Vale – Claire to follow up.

Please let us have copies of any outstanding emails/letters sent for our evidence folder.

Mavis has had a response from the Woodland Trust and she is providing additional information to them such as the age of the trees and when the planning application is expected to go in. The RSPB has not responded so far – Mavis to follow up.

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Free legal support – Jess Mayo on Saturday said she was still looking into it for us but had nothing yet.

Claire reported the bad news that on our paper & e-petition only 834 signatures met the councils criteria even though submitted 1050. Someone from the council will be contacting Cassie to discuss what can be done. Unfortunately, we don't know what criteria has been used.

Bob explained that once a planning application is submitted, it can take up to 7 days to be verified as being valid. Once verified, the application and all relevant documents will be available for viewing at the Town Hall or via their website. There is then 21 days to submit objections. There is then a further 14 days before it can be listed and go to the planning committee. An application of this size would have to go before the full planning committee.

There was now a discussion concerning when the application would be submitted and when the planning decision would be made. When the next public consultation meeting would take place, what sort of build time Laing O'Rourke would require and would this impact on the proposed school's opening schedule.

Wildlife seen - 3 geese flew over the Vale yesterday, no sign of any bats so far.

Feedback was requested on the Hustings on 22nd April 2017. Only 2 questions were raised about green spaces and one of them was Ally referencing Nutsford Vale. George Galloway, Afzal Khan, Jackie Pearcey & Jess Mayo all said they fully supported us in our campaign. All the other questions were about world politics.

Rita noted that during the walk on the Vale on Tuesday 25th April 2017 with Paddy Ashdown, Jackie Pearcey & Jane Brophy, they spoke about George Galloway, Afzal Khan and the others, but not a word about Jess Mayo. After we explained about our campaign and what concerns we had, Paddy was very concerned that we were not getting appropriate information from our FOI requests and was quite stunned when we told him how much space the school would require and how many trees would be destroyed.

Ally suggested that after the Mayoral election we contact the Mayor and remind them of their promises concerning green spaces.

Rita noted that whilst we were having a by-election, the focus was on Gorton, but now it has become part of the general election what happens in Gorton will be an also-ran news story.

The group was informed that Rita and Barrie had been interviewed this week by Kesha Ellis-Hanse, a university student who happened to be the niece of Wayne Fontana. She had also won the Gorton's got Talent competition.

A.O.B.

Steve & Bernie have produced a number of statements to be displayed round the Vale once they have been laminated.

Bernie explained that she had sample T-Shirts for sale at £6.50 each in sizes of small,

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medium, large or extra large and needed to get the order in tonight as some people had already paid for theirs. It will be possible to order more later. It would be great if we all wear the "Team Shirt" when we go on the Vale for Litter Picks or other Events and 50p from each t-shirt will go into the Friends of Nutsford Vale campaign funds.

Bob asked if there had been any progress on the shopping bags – Claire advised she had been away but would follow it up.

Mavis thought that in addition to legal support we might benefit from a professional planner who could scrutinise the planning application and highlight any holes in it. Ally offered to try again to find someone who could help.

Mark asked should we contact the National Lottery regarding the the money that was invested in the Vale and would there be repercussions about what's proposed now. Ally felt that it probably had a 5 year monitoring process on it so wouldn't be of interest now. Rita advised that Hilary Wood from City of Trees is investigating this avenue.

Claire pointed out that some schools round here have adopted the late school day start for teenagers because they are not ready to work effectively at the normal 9am start.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday 3rd May 2017 at the Bluebell Inn at 6:30pm

Next Event:

Mayoral Hustings: FoE event Friday 28th April 2017 6:15pm 'til 8:45pm at Friends Meeting House, Mount Street, Manchester, M2 5NS.

Save our Schools: Saturday 29th April 2017 12:00pm – for a Demo Walk from Chapel St, Stanley Grove, Cedar Mount meeting at Crowcroft Park at 1:00pm

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)