

Record of Emergency Meeting of Friends of Nutsford Vale Wednesday 5th April 2017 6:30pm at the Blue Bell Inn

Attendees:

Charles Glover,	Ally Fogg,	Cllr Suzanne Richards,	Mark Lucas,
Mike Matthewman,	Frank Pollitt,	Karen Hewitt,	Rita Edge,
Barrie Edge,	Daniel Heathcote,	Jean Wood,	Cassie Spinks-Lewis,
David Sloane,	Keith Sloane,	Wan Sloane,	Bernie Cree,
Bob Lomas,	Steve Cree,	Barbara Moore,	Maureen Riding,
Claire James,	Ros Janes,	Mavis Holt,	John Prunty,
Kath O'Rourke,	Chris O'Rourke,	Brian Osbiston.	

Apologies:

Alan Gibson,	Janet Muldowney,	Denise Riding,	Cllr Peter Cookson,
Bruce James,	Christine Prunty.		

Matters Arising: from Previous Meeting on 29th March 2017

1. Alan's email - Info Point 1. About the "polluter pays" I have taken this from The Treaty Establishing the European Community (EC) Article 174 Paragraph 2 which says "EC policy on the environment shall aim at a high level of protection taking into account the diversity of situations in the various regions of the EC. It shall be based on the precautionary principle and on the principles that preventive action should be taken, that environmental damage should as a priority be rectified at source and that the polluter should pay."

I've put this in so that we can quote "chapter and verse" to the Council otherwise they have a bad habit of ignoring groups like FONV.

Info Point 2. Date of planning submission.

We do not know what date the Council's proposal will go to the Planning Committee. Thurs June 1st is a possible date. There needs to be a Presentation in Gorton South Ward possibly at Sacred Heart Church. Since Planning documents have only 21 days to comment on, this means that the latest date for such an event is Thurs 11th May (Thu 4th May is GM Mayor Election).

Info Point 3. Date of Gorton By-Election and GM Mayor Election is on Thursday 4th May 2017.

Info Point 4. "Open Spaces Society"

It was pointed out by C. Brandwood (and another) that we should not join this just yet as we only get 30 minutes of a solicitor who is knowledgeable on the matter. As for me, I would await any decision on Open Spaces Society this by FONV. If they are not thought suitable, then It is possible that the subscription for £33 may in future be reused on other matters that help to save the Vale. I've posted a LIST of environmental laws so we know what they are although I still have to list the paragraphs in detail. What we need / may need is a Solicitors letter to set these out in a suitable manner to the Council. The Council MUST reply to a solicitors letter whereas they do not usually bother to reply to groups such as FoNV.

2. Jess Mayo – the reference to the 4 year old boy who died in an old landfill site was not in America as indicated in the minutes, but in Chertsey, Surrey.

Jess has not found a solicitor who would offer free legal support yet but will keep looking.

3. Bernie - FOI request from Environmental Agency – information given to Rita

4. Claire - No feedback from the MoD re dumping of munitions yet.

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Main Meeting:

Claire asked for any replies to letters / emails be made available for our "evidence" folder.

TfGM claimed they had no records of the recent traffic count. However, they provided a detailed report for Nov 2013 – 12,000 vehicles recorded on Mount Road – 25% of which exceeded the speed limit. Claire advised that she will undertake another traffic survey herself tomorrow to see what differences there are between school & holiday periods.

In discussion with the council we were advised that even though LaingORourke carried out the survey work on the Vale, the report is the property of the commissioning council. Toxicity report should therefore also belong to the council. As a result, they will try to obtain the traffic census reports and let us have them asap. Suzanne taking things back to the councillors.

Rita requested any completed paper petitions be handed in now, today was the deadline. Claire enquired if anyone still had leaflets to distribute and which areas had been done. Claire had done Mount Road down to Barlow Road. Both Charles & Steve have some left to cover Caremine Avenue area. Also the area around Deepcar Street down to the Stockport Road had not been leafleted so far. John made the point that a lot of the pedestrian traffic down Matthews Lane don't know anything about our campaign so could be approached.

Steve had received a letter from Cllr Sheila Newman that the re-instatement work on the Vale was being undertaken. Also, that we need more secondary school places in the Central/East of the City and there are not many sites that the council already own that we can use. This implies that Nutsford Vale is NOT the only site available for a school!! A company called Ground Control from Ingleton have been seen on the Vale rotavating and re-seeding areas near the pathways.

Cllr Suzanne Richards (Longsight Ward) indicated she was supportive of our campaign and she would follow up on some of the issues brought up in the proposed letter to our own councillors. However, it can be very difficult to obtain information during a consultation period.

Afzal Khan – if he gets elected he will take up our cause. Bob has invited Afzal Khan & George Galloway to one of our meetings. Bernie advised that Afzal had been canvassing in the area and called at their house and enquired about the Nutsford Vale poster. She was given time to explain about our campaign & concerns and if elected he would try to improve communication across ethnic groups.

The meeting Cllr Peter Cookson had discussed with Bob, inviting our ward councillors, Cllr Sheila Newman & Sir Richard Leese does not appear to be taking place but a further consultation meeting will take place after the elections, probably in Gorton. Rita informed the group that we have asked for the minutes of the meeting just before the Chapel St Consultation meeting and been advised by Jane Dudley that she will find out what's happened to them. Cassie pointed out that she had a personal record of the meeting and would be happy to prepare a set of minutes if required. This detail has now

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been passed on to Jane Dudley.

Everyone was happy with Ally's the draft letter to our councillors expressing our concerns about their lack of support over the last few weeks.

Save the Greenbelt Rally – mainly against houses being built on green places – why not use brownfield sites? However, be careful because brownfield may not be an appropriate description of some sites. – We were interviewed by the BBC and this may be broadcast sometime after the elections. Manchester Shield have approached us and have been re-tweeting some of our posts in support. As an inner city group we've had a lot of support on our website & Facebook page and garnered quite a few petition signatures. Around 40 individual groups attended the Rally and were very supportive and we may be able to use this strength further down the line.

Mellands trees – Claire had spoken to Ian Jarvis, the Area Planning Officer about the loss of approx 100 trees. Mavis advised that the council have had an appalling, dismissive attitude to trees since 1987. She noted that Radio 4 claimed there were 65,000+ tree types but the Tree Warden service for the City, set up in 1990, were not interested.

Bob made the point that for every planning application the applicant has to compensate for any damage made to the environment on a tree for a tree basis. Is this going to be policed?

Steve made the point that we want the truth instead of facing obfuscation, fabrication and lies. Why should it be so hard? We will continue applying pressure. There is strong evidence along the bottom path from Matthews Lane of the "old" landfill coming to the surface from the boreholes in the form of orange coloured foamy residues and pieces of material, indicating that the existing landfill cap has been breached. But the council are still going ahead.

There is still a question over what method the build might have, a concrete raft or concrete piles. LaingORourke seem to be relishing the challenge. If they establish a reliable & safe method of building on a landfill site they would be able to sell it on.

Bob pointed out that LaingORourke and their associates all have vested interests in providing the right information for the council.

This is why we need a meeting with the Council Exec because they were the ones that chose Nutsford Vale as the preferred site over we don't know how many others.

Bob noted that the main companies that are involved in the development are not registered in the UK. LaingORourke are registered in Nicosia, Romboll in Denmark. Ground Control are based in Essex.

Cllr Suzanne Richards advised that in her conversations with Cllr Newman & John Edwards, their main issue was with time pressure around ensuring the school spaces needed being available at the right time. She agrees that Nutsford Vale is not the right site and we should keep up the pressure and maintain the momentum.

Charles wondered how a decision to build an 1800 place school on a landfill site when they didn't know what had been dumped there and couldn't be sure of the consequences if

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toxic waste was discovered and affected the health of pupils. Claire pointed out that we had asked on what criteria the site had been chosen and we were told it was the money. We have also queried this with our own councillors to be told Sir Richard Leese has the answers.

Bob reminded everyone that this week we have a new Chief Executive. We also have a completely new set of staff to support him, meaning there is no continuity at all in the Chief Exec's office.

At this point, Rita passed some posters advertising the Easter Egg Hunt on 8th April 2017 to put in their window, library, local shop, hairdressers etc.

John made reference to a house in Loscoe, Derbyshire, where a house was blown up due to a build up of methane gas below the floor following a rapid and large change in air pressure which was ignited by their gas boiler. Could there be parallels here?

Steve had talked about a conspiracy around our campaign. Rita advised that MEN had done 2 interviews about our campaign and various letters had been sent to them but nothing appeared in the paper. That's Manchester TV had approached us and then didn't turn up. There does seem to be a block around Nutsford Vale.

Ally advised that there will be a Mayoral Hustings on the Friday 28th April organised by the Friends of the Earth from 6:00pm to 8:30pm. The topic is "What about the Environment".

Mavis advised that some union members are able to get free legal consultation through their union – Teachers union & Unite might be a way to obtain free legal support.

Cllr Suzanne Richards advised the group that there would be an event from late afternoon to early evening with food in Crowcroft Park on Saturday 17th June 2017 to recognise the end of Ramadan and the anniversary of the death of Joe Cox.

Claire asked for a show of hands to let her know who was interested in purchasing a Tee-shirt or a cotton bag. Rita asked if using just the groups name on the bags, would we qualify for a NIF grant and Suzanne thought yes.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday 12th April 2017 at the Bluebell Inn at 6:30pm

Next Event:

Litter Pick: Saturday 8th April 2017 from 10:30am

Meet at the Bickerdike Avenue Entrance to the Vale.

Easter Egg Hunt: Saturday 15th 2017 April from 11:30am 'til 1:00pm

Street Party: Easter Monday 17th April 2017 from 3:00pm 'til 5:00pm

Big Lunch Event: Sunday 18th June 2017 from 1:00pm 'til 3:00pm

(Date & time to be confirmed)

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

(Timings to be confirmed)