



Vartry Community Residents' Association

www.vartry.org

GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 4th December 2010

11 am – 1 pm

Woodberry Down Baptist Church

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Guests: Charles Mugenyi (Pastor, Woodberry Down Baptist Church), Chris Bell (Officer, Resident Involvement Team, Homes for Haringey), Cllr Dhiren Basu.

Residents: RS, PL, GB, DB, AB, NB, JF, CC, TC, AN, CN, AC, MR.

Apologies: From residents: Jade Doherty, Carole Gibbons, Deborah Cawkwell, Roger Harris. From our partners: Tom Smyth (Police); Maxine Lynch, Sade Ademosun, Brian Ellick, Claire Kober (Leader, Haringey Council).

AGENDA

1. Welcome and introductions.

2. Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting & matters arising

The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting of 2nd September 2010 were read. An amendment was made that the Start-Up Grant supplied by Haringey Residents' Involvement Team was £475 not £430. A vote was taken that they be accepted as a true record and unanimously agreed.

Matters arising from the Minutes: there were none.

3. Treasurer's Report

The Start-Up Grant supplied by Haringey Residents' Involvement Team was coming up for renewal soon, and this was now in the hands of its team leader, Sade Ademosun. At present it covers our running costs (hire of hall, stationery, web site). The sum remaining (after hire of hall) would be £112.35. Given the current financial recession it was agreed that we must try to find additional funding as a matter of urgency in case we lose our current grant for running costs. DB pointed out that Haringey council would be making massive cuts and that 1500 council staff jobs were at risk of redundancy. Cllr Basu reported that VCRA was very well respected within the council and that they would probably do their best to sustain our group.

4. Residents' issues

AN (Franklin Street) reported that a group of men gathered regularly in the communal garden area to strip wire, and that groups of youths congregated there also. This was an inappropriate use of a communal area. She had contacted the police (SNT?) who had asked if it would help to remove

the seating. CC asked Cllr Dhiren Basu if he could request the council to consider having more street lighting installed adjacent to this communal area. Another resident raised concerns about the number of youngsters congregating in the open-air Childrens' Play Area of the Triangle Centre in Paignton Park; this, once again, highlighted the fact that the Council, which had originally specified that a Youth Club would be included in the Triangle Centre, had failed to keep its word. HF said that she would ask her students whether these youngsters were local. AN reported that there was a problem with drug use and dealers in the Frederic Messer Estate, and that the police had reacted by cutting down bushes and trees within the estate gardens, and wondered whether the drug activity had 'moved on' to these two communal sites. AC (Vartry Road) reported that there was a damaged drain causing water to flow continually over the pavement, and that the resulting slime (and ice) was causing health and safety fears for pedestrians. There was some uncertainty as to who was responsible for the drain as it is sited within the property's periphery. HF offered to write to Haringey Council about this problem, and Cllr Basu also offered his assistance.

5. Vice and prostitution in the area

The police have focussed on Franklyn Street. JF reported that Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) are now patrolling there twice a week. HF asked if we might suggest to the police that they install a dummy camera or do so ourselves - it is legal if the camera does not record. As for the allotment frontage, Maxine Lynch will write to Parks Services to ask them to move the fence forward. CC asked for feedback. HF reminded everybody of the importance of phoning the police to register complaints whenever they see illegal activity of this or any kind, because the police have to log all phone-calls of complaints, and the number of complaints logged would thus build up to a critical mass that could help the police to prioritize action. JF recalled that PCTom Smyth had told us to call Seven Sisters Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) directly (see directory on our website) or dial 999, and to keep a personal note of calls, but argued against dialling 999 as police response could be slower than contacting SNT directly.

6. Dumping and street cleaning

JF pointed out that prostitution and drug waste was a side effect of the previous item, and that he had contacted Haringey Street Enforcement Team (HSET), who are dealing with this and other problems of fly-tipping. DB noted that dumping might come from outside the area, and could also be related directly to renovation works in houses in our streets. The issue of the council charge for collection of bulky rubbish was raised again. Cllr DB proposed that he would ask for the first eight items to be collected free. The 'white goods' collection service remained free. DC would be asked to put a link on our website to the council website listing the local council recycling sites. More general discussion ensued about various related issues.

7. Other issues – open floor

MR raised the problem of the potential damage to the foundations of houses in Vartry Road caused by heavy vehicle use over the traffic calming tables. JF pointed out that there had been no gritting of the area during the recent adverse weather, and suggested that we ask the council to place a yellow grit box in Vartry Road. CM said that volunteers were needed for Xmas at the church and that woollen garments were required. These could be dropped off any time in the church hall porch.

8. Community activities and the Guerilla Gardening Group

There is general enthusiasm for guerrilla gardening and JF proposed that he should set up working groups under the umbrella of our organisation. Jade Doherty would co-ordinate these, and will send an email about these matters to all members. This does not have to have the mandate of a general meeting to be acted on. We can leaflet elderly people about their gardens but HF pointed out that elders may well have difficulties in getting in touch with us as they are often reluctant to leave the house nor do they always have an internet connection. DB spoke about the Haringey Council Cinema Club which was held in the Park View Academy (?). He also mentioned that the Bridge Renewal Trust (BRT) was now running a new 'inter-generational' (?) club (where?). AB asked if this could be used as a platform to set up a youth club. DB suggested that we ask a representative of BRT to our next meeting. MR reported that funding would still be provided by the council so that organisations for elders could continue to use Templeton Hall despite landlord problems. A vote was proposed: "That VCRA strongly supports keeping St. Ann's Library open" and was agreed unanimously. CM brought to the meeting's attention that the church would be running a Holiday Half-Term Activity Week providing workshops in art, drama, dance, etc., and help and ideas were required from local volunteers for its publicity, planning and running.

9. Sports activities

HF reminded members that they should register their interest for a Pilates group on our website forum. AB reported on the 'Run for England' scheme which was currently running a jogging group in Markfield Park on Saturday mornings.

10. New ideas, projects and groups – open floor

JB had found a resident expert in bike maintenance to run a local bike surgery, but there is a problem regarding public liability insurance which we do not have and need to check out. CC raised the possibility of our group joining BTCV so that they could act as our umbrella organisation for insurance for gardening and other outdoor activities at a cost of £35/year. CM suggested that we have a banner or sign of some kind to signal the location of our meetings. AB suggested that if we could locate within council offices a printer that could print B4 paper and a laminator, a sign could be drawn up and printed on B4 paper and laminated at virtually no cost. HF suggested that as we have the money we could pay for a printer to take on the job.

11. AOB

There was no further business.

12. The date of the next meeting

This will be set at the next committee meeting.