

Minutes EWCA Open Meeting

1st November 2012

Baptist Church, Garland Street, Bury St Edmunds

APOLOGIES

Rachel Shaw, Wendy Hooton, Dianne Everitt, Peter Hardman

WELCOME

Tim Page welcomed all to the Open Meeting. He thanked his Committee for all their hard work during his first six months and introduced key people in the room Trevor Beckwith, David Nettleton, Patsy Warby. Unfortunately the new town councillor Peter Thompson was not in attendance.

GUEST SPEAKER – JULIA RACKOWE – BURY IN BLOOM

Julia Rackowe gave a presentation to the meeting – summarised as follows:-

Bury in Bloom was founded in 1986, the founder Sue Tamlyn was present in the room, she was the original instigator following a trip to Norwich. A Committee was formed led by Mandy Balaam with Lucy Clibbon designing the advertisements. Originally the focus was on hanging baskets and there were local competitions. Now Bury in Bloom reflects the changing nation and in the last 10 years the emphasis has been on environmental and on inclusion in the community. Bury in Bloom is a sub-committee of the Bury Society which works in partnership with St Edmundsbury Borough Council. The staff at St Edmundsbury BC (Damian Parker and Caroline Brown) offer their expertise and have provided a Service Level Agreement.

Bury in Bloom has new projects in town, the central reservation on parkway being one. The Risbygate roundabout was funded through Asda, Locality budgets and other funding sources and a sculpture of St Edmund takes centre stage. Westgate Gardens are also another example of Bury in Bloom work. Other major partners are Silver Spoon, Bid4Bury and the Town Council are also significant funders. Bury in Bloom use their money to commission work through St Edmundsbury including traffic management and a degree of maintenance.

Bury in Bloom have achieved; finals of Bury in Bloom 8 times, winning x 3; winners of World in Bloom – taking in a ceremony in Tokyo; Anglia in Bloom x 10 times; 4 Gold Awards including this year

Bury in Bloom makes lots of contact with community groups. On judging day one of the most important concerns is route planning – people they meet and talk to, things they see. This year judges were taken to St Olaves Garden which has been dedicated to Senior Aircraftman Luke Southgate. The children from Howard Primary School maintain the garden. Another place to go to is

Cotton lane allotments and West Suffolk College Springboard garden for young adults with learning disabilities. Guildhall Feoffment is also another popular destination. This year Eastgate Ward produced very good marks. Judges were blown away by the Abbey Gardens and were also able to meet with the Friends of Abbey Gardens.

A major plus this year had been Well Street here a group of had formed a neighbourhood group called "Growing Well". The Group launched in January 2012. The group have supported the two Charities in the street, providing planters, a litter pick and cleared snow. Julia Rackowe had put them in touch with Wood N Stuff, who had sourced a window box for every single house on left hand side of street where there were no front gardens; this had proved a master stroke. The group make and talk movingly about having made friends, talking to people they only nodded to before, helped people help other, plant swops.

Julia considered that "It's your neighbourhood" was the future of Bury in Bloom and she hoped to roll out ethos so that grotty areas could be cleaned up using people power. The scheme was set up in 2005 by RHS Britain in Bloom, it is interdependent.

At the bottom of Well Street there is a "build out" pavement and the group are currently sourcing planters to stand on the area to stop cars parking. David Nettleton considered this to be a good idea and felt that a similar procedure in Garland Street would be beneficial at the build out in Garland Streets.

Tim thanked Julia for all her hard work over the last 9 years, her departure would be a sad loss. Bury Society were looking for a new co-ordinator.

SWAN SURGERY

Swan Surgery has submitted a Planning Application to open a 100 hour surgery, they currently already have a dispensary on site.

EWCA do not currently have an official position on this application.

One of conditions is that open for 100 hours dispense methadone and have a needle exchange, this is a key area of concern for local residents

Patsy Warby will inform the meeting of the Planning Process. Colin Taylor is secretary of the Bury Society and a former Independent Pharmacist and he will provide us with "what it all means". Chip Somers from Focus 12 is present as is Nicholas Cooper from Croasdales.

Patsy Warby advised that at the Planning Meeting held today, 1st November 2012 the item was deferred until the 6th December 2012 (at West Suffolk House) in order to allow the consultation period to finish on the 5th November 2012. Patsy Warby wanted the opportunity to clarify a few points that have been detailed in literature. To date she had received 45 emails only 2 of which were in support of the proposal. Patsy Warby advised that she has to listen to both sides in the discussion before she makes her mind up.

Patsy Warby encouraged all to take the time to have their say. If people wanted to speak at the next meeting they would need to make it known prior to the meeting. One attendee informed the meeting that she had written a letter and this had not yet appeared on the website which was of

concerns. Patsy Warby advised that she has spoken with the Borough about this issue before and has pointed out to them that not everybody has access to the internet. Doug Conran had also sent in an email that had not appeared on the site, he had now sent a subsequent email that had been published on the site

Tim advised that he was happy for emails to be routed through him and he would ensure they were forwarded to Patsy Warby and to David Gibson as he is the officer at St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

Doug Conran advised that he had attended the meeting today but had not been allowed to speak. Patsy Warby advised that this was because the item was deferred until after the consultation was finished.

Speakers are limited to one on each side so Patsy advised that one person is elected to speak on behalf of residents to put forward their objections.

Peter Gaskin queried whether if two people had letters sent in and they had not been acknowledged does this not raise concern. Patsy Warby advised that it could just be a delay in them being uploaded.

THE PROPOSAL –

Colin Taylor introduced himself and advised that he is not personally affected by the plan; he had recently retired as an independent pharmacist in Stoke Park in Ipswich which he ran with his wife, for 25 years, so he had a full understanding of the requirements. It was his opinion that Independent Pharmacists had been “screwed” by the current and previous government and he has seen the income of the Independent Pharmacist squirreled away for use and the greater benefit of other medical practitioners.

Colin explained that there are two types of GP. The individually salaried GP in the surgery, a hard working professional who draws a wage. Then there are the partner GP’s who own the surgery who have very recently had a very nice contract awarded to them that allows 9-5 working with no weekends. These GP’s have sensed the possibilities to make more money if they operate a pharmacy. This would not have been possible 10 years ago as they were not allowed to open a dispensary 10 on a Sunday. They operated with 3 pharmacists to make it work. The school of thought at this time being that with the pharmacies in Asda it would be beneficial to urban areas rather than people having to park in town centres. At this time independent pharmacies offered free collect and deliver service in order to fight back. The Government said there would be up to 50 100 pharmacies in England, Scotland and Wales. This figure now sits at almost 600.

GP’s have worked out that by having pharmacies at their surgery whilst making it more convenient for patients it also means they make more profit.

Can we stop 100 hour pharmacies?

Colin advised that legislation changed on the 1st September 2012 and the question of desirability and need are not considered. The PCT will give the pharmacy a 100 hour licence so it is just planning

permission that is required for change of use of building. Colin was aware that on the current site there was a 24 hour Doctor on Call Service so traffic flowed in and out for 24 hours.

The Pharmacy will have a Sharps Bin, which is a yellow bucket with a sealed lid that medical staff have to put used needles into. All pharmacies in the High Street have a Sharps Bin. Pharmacists work with syringes and needles, people regularly take drugs every day and professionals have a duty of care to take them back as we would not want them laying in our paths, they are then collected and incinerated. Every pharmacy has a number of people who regularly take drugs, these may be for blood pressure, arthritis, drug addiction where they are on a programme to come off over a time period. Colin felt that people will see and pass these people in the street and they will only know if they stand outside pharmacies who the addicts are. Addicts come into pharmacies and are administered drugs, some are allowed and trusted to take them away other come in and take their drug each day observed by the pharmacist. This happens day in day out. There are drug addicts in Bury St Edmunds, we have not greater and no less than any other market town.

In Bury St Edmunds we are lucky to have two specialist organisations who take more serious problematic people and treat them and bring them forward they are to be applauded for the work they do with limited funding.

Tim advised that he had invited Dr Dunne to the Open Meeting but that he had declined the request. Tim said he understood the concerns from the drug side and commercially it was a shame that as a result of the pharmacy it is likely to see the independent firms in town that we know and love struggle and that is a shame.

The way forward is to rationale how to object within the remit of the planning authorities allowed objections. From Colin's analysis the drug side is not as issue and from a commercial perspective restriction of trade is also not a grounds to object.

Tim opened the discussion to the Meeting.

David Nettleton informed the meeting that he was registered at Mount Farm Surgery and his GP was not unscrupulous. He chooses to collect his prescriptions from Boots. He had been pleased when Tesco were allowed a pharmacy as he believes in customer choice. He is not involved in the Swan Surgery application but felt that Colin had provided a fair analysis, apart from his remark about GP's!

He suggested that if people wanted to object that they first read David Gibson's report SE121100 and look on the website. Mr Gibson is recommending approval. With regard to the items missing from the website, he advised that this does happen and he was able to give an example where it had happened internally at the Council. He advised that the list of objections is summarised. He had looked on the site and noted that there was also some support to the application. He further advised that at the meeting on the 6th December the objector will be allowed to speak for 3 minutes only and best practice is for one person to speak. He felt that Mrs Warby had been right to defer. Mr Popham is also scheduled to speak on the 6th December. He had no objects to the application.

Trevor Beckwith advised that he is also on the Planning Committee. He was part of the Mount Farm opposition and they were successful in their opposing however the Planning Inspector overturned the decision. The opposition was based on the impact on the shopping centre – Planning Policy.

John Popham was also involved and Trevor felt he was a good person to have speaking at the meeting on the 6th December.

Trevor advised that the Swan Surgery site is located within a housing settlement on the boundary of Bury St Edmunds and not a shopping centre. Site located within housing settlement boundary of Bury St Edmunds, outside of shopping centre. Trevor advised that it could be viable to argue of the impact on the town centre. Trevor further advised that one of the requirements of a 100 hour surgery is needle exchange and Swan Surgery have put in black and white that they do not propose to have one. Colin Taylor advised that the PCT would not refuse the contract on that basis and that they will still have Sharps Bins.

David Cole who lives at Skylarks on the business park had a copy of Swan Surgery application which detailed the service they are expected to offer and needle exchange was on it despite them saying they have no current plan, he questioned how long was current, until the ink dried on the approval until someone from the PCT reminded them of their obligation. He felt the whole thing was "shoddy".

Tim reiterated that it was necessary, in order to achieve something, to keep things where we can practically object on the right grounds.

David Cole said it was a question of, is there planning around town centre policies, if footfall affected by removing the need to go into town that customer however limited, death by 1000 jabs!! One issue on its own it little but add the issues together and they become significant, added together suddenly the independent chemist closes the next shop has slow trade leading to a progressive lack of commercial shopping choice in the town Centre. Bid4bury ensure that many premises are available in town centre and they can be there for businesses at all times

Tim advised previously when the Borough Council objected and it being overturned by Planning, he understood that there had been recent cases in Swindon and Haringey where the Planning Inspector had supported the rejection. Tim felt it would be interesting to establish what grounds the planning inspector had upheld on. Trevor pointed out that it was the Development and Control Committee who had opposed not the Planning Officers.

Doug advised that his understanding from the presentation put forward today by the Planning presentation was that the reason for the overturn was one of competition with Croasdales and this was not a valid reason to overturn the refusal. He questioned if it would be possible to object on the basis of increased perception of crime if not actual through introduction of services to drug users. Tim felt the keyword was perception. Doug was also concerned for elderly residents nearby.

David Nettleton did not like the reference to elderly people.

In 2009 application there were no objections to it, same 2012 applications until Douglas Cooper sent round his letter saying were we aware of 100 hour service, no one was aware of the implications,

Hazel Jackman advised that she runs the Dance School on the site and worried for the children if there is a needle exchange. She had been reassured by Mr Taylors presentation, however, having

said that they had have had an incident outside their premises whereby 2 drug users came across from doctors sat on the wall and scared the girls so to say it is never going to happen it has happened and this was real worry to her.

Margaret Chalkley advised that there had also been an incident in Northgate Street where a house was set on fire by a drug addict, the fire brigade and police were involved and it had not been nice seeing a neighbour's house on fire.

Chip Somers from Focus12 thanked Tim for letting him speak. He said that it was disingenuous of Swan Surgery to say that they had no intention of providing needle exchange as it is clear they do intend and supervised consumption

He wondered if this could be a cause for the application be rejected as they have denied the needle exchange.

The provision of supervised consumption and needle exchange will mean there is an increase in the numbers of people wanting the service, not a stampede but there will be an increase particularly late into the evening.

Chip said the he was concerned about who cares and treats addicts. The best care and treatment given in this neighbourhood is by the independent chemist who provide one on one treatment and are respectful and decent. Locum's would never develop a relationship with addicts as easily. Addicts are easily manipulated and treated badly, they receive a better service when they are known and good relationship has been developed. Better interaction gives them a better opportunity to help and treat them He did not believe that Swan Surgery would provide as a good a service.

A discussion took place on the grounds to object.

David Cole said that Hazel Jackman and his family live on the development and their residential amenities are jeopardised. Dance school pupils and parents will be vulnerable. Both the Dance School and Hazel's home are across the car park. He has a covered porch and it is the nearest shelter to the surgery and he was concerned addicts, their friends or pushers would hang round their and this could lead to an increase in incidents and the properties be affected. How much wider does it need to go than residential properties being impacted.

He went on to say that the Business Park is also a private area, many of the business own or rent parking spaces and time there are already problems and patients park in spaces not allocated to the surgery. There is no additional land for further parking.

Tim summarised by saying that he would be happy to co-ordinate the putting together of people to attend on the 6th December. Objections need to be submitted by the 5th November 2012. Tim felt that it was sensible if Nick Cooper has Mr Pohpham talking for him to make representation and raise legal aspects and this will take the 3 minutes. Residents issues can be addressed via letters and emails.

It is the Chairman's discretion to allow longer than 3 minutes.

Email chair@ewca.org.uk get list put in touch with each other.

Nick Cooper felt that a critical point had been missed. CRI are a major drug treatment agency in Looms Lane. He said that they were obsessed with putting addicts onto treatment programmes when they are not ready. Methadone is dished out when users are not committed to giving up, therefore the methadone finds its way back onto the streets. CRI want to give the widest opportunity for users to pick up methadone and Croasdales do not operate on Sundays CRI want to secure a place for addicts to go.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Barwell Road open spaces adoption – Patsy Warby advised that this issue had not progressed, she will keep in contact with the County Council.

103 Northgate Street – David Nettleton advised that the property is still unoccupied despite the condition being that it be occupied by 31st October 2012. He would pursue this.

Mark Jennings Lane – the disabled bay is progressing and is in use.

A14 flyover –work has been carried out

Sir Reginald Harland encouraged everyone to go to the Atheneum to view the list of achievements of Bury in Bloom.

Car Parking Charges David Nettleton advised on the proposed increased from 08.04.13 and encouraged residents to purchase season tickets at £1.07 a day.

Mustow Street Crossing – the work has been delayed to 12th November due to belisha beacons being out of stock. The electrical work will not be undertaken until after the Christmas fayre.

11 Northgate Street – Sue Tamlyn advised that the property is owned by the Genesis Charity, the property has been empty for 2 years and on the market for 9 months. It is in a derelict condition.