**MINUTES OF THE TETTENHALL COMMUNITY FORUM**

**Parish Rooms, Tettenhall**

**28th November 2024**

**at 6.30 pm**

**APOLOGIES**

Marion Reeves

There were 15 residents in attendance including 1 Ward Councillor and 5 residents who were not members of the TCF.

The 5 new attendees were attending specifically to talk about the Rock Junction and their concerns so the agenda was adjusted to deal with that item first.

**STEERING GROUP UPDATE - Including Rock Junction**

For the benefit of the 5 new attendees Robin Hacking (RH) gave a summary of the TTRO and Rock Junction petition and the actions and activities that had taken place in order to prevent the Council implementing the TTRO and encouraging the Council to respond to our constructive and low cost proposals to improve the safety and efficiency of the junction. He then went into some detail about the activities since the second public meeting on the Green which had approved Neal Kelshaw’s (NK) 3 part proposal for further action by a show of hands with no objections. Noting the absence of Regis Ward Councillors NK and RH had agreed that RH would approach the Councillors to understand what we could do to increase their engagement in the TCF’s activities, whether they still supported action against the TTRO and a couple of other minor points. The Councillors quickly agreed to a meeting and recommended a more concilliatory approach advising that their opinion was that the Council was unlikely to proceed with the TTRO but following the determined approach and continued challenging of the Council on their decision, and lack of engagement over the last 12 months with the community, that this has entrenched the Council’s opinion. They felt they could facilitate a meeting with Officers to initiate constructive discussion. A small number of Steering Group representatives met the following day to discuss the Councillors’ proposal and it was agreed that the 3 representatives would be happy to attend the meeting if it could be arranged. This was communicated to the Councillors. They made a genuine attempt to pursuade the appropriate Officials to meet with us but, after due consideration, the Officers eventually declined the meeting.

A discussion took place with input from the 5 new attendees and they gave their views on the problems that the junction was creating and confirmed their objections to the TTRO in its original state. It was pointed out that traffic flow had been adversly affected recently by resequencing the traffic lights at the Albert Road junction with the Tettenhall Road and it was agreed that no end could be seen to the increase in traffic, bearing in mind the substantial developments planned and already taking place to the immediate north of the borough in Shropshire, South Staffs and because of the increased developmentat the i54. Councillor Thompson (WT) bemoaned the lack of a main arterial road to the west of Wolverhampton which she had been pressing the Council to attend to for many years. The disappointment of the meeting was also recorded regarding the Council’s apparent lack of interest and involvement in civil infrastructure opportunities whereby the boroughs to the north of Wolverhampton could potentially be obliged to create funding to improve the infrastructure through or round Wolverhampton and the apparent lack of involvement of the Council in Midlands Connect which is the West Midlands regional body where regional roads infrastructure needs can be identified.

Taking into consideration the support for further action following the public meeting on Sunday 17th November and the fact that attempts for a concilliatory meeting had failed the Forum unanimously agreed, with strong support from the 5 new attendees, that we should continue to challenge the Council on their TTRO plan, their lack of response to our petition and their refusal to share with us the Terms of Reference for their independent consultants on this matter, having prevously promised to do so during a Ward walk early in the year attended by Trust representatives, Ward Councillors and relevant Officers of the Council.

Having appreciated their involvement in the discussion regarding the Rock the 5 new attendees decided to withdraw and leave the Forum to attend to its regular business.

**SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS**

The social media team raised concerns about some recent posts. Notwithstanding the fact that the strategy recently agreed at a previous Forum meeting had been successfully implemented with some significant benefits, namely reducing the domination of low relevance posts and increasing the exposure of matters important to the TCF. However one particular re-post had raised significant concern by the social media team on the grounds that it was considered to be inflammatory in nature and inappropriately re-posted because it was a direct attack on one political party by another. Whereas there was some acceptance regarding the initial post it was considered that the re-posting by the TCF would be overtly political in nature and therefore against our apolitical stance. The social media team were also concerned about posts based on conspiracy theories which, although creating certain excitement, it was not in the interest of the TCF to allow our social media to be a platform for these views. On a show of hands (unanimous) the team were authorised to delete the specific re-post and gave authority for all posts promoting conspiracy theories to be removed as of no relevance to the TCF’s objectives.

**MATTERS ARISING**

**APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION**

We know of no further reservations by the Council following NK’s providing the partial resubmission required earlier and we await further communication from the Council.

**MEETING WITH WMP&CC**

No further information to report on this matter. We are keen to get involved with the Council and the WMP&CC regarding their proposed programme for increased enforcement, scheduled for 2025, since it would further our objectives on the Rock Junction particularly. WT reminded us that the ball camera at the Rock Junction was fully monitored by police at their control room in Birmingham and it would be useful to raise the issue of how we can get more benefit from the information from this camera as part of our dialogue on enforcement, particularly at the Rock Junction, when we meet with the WMP&CC.

**TREES**

Our application for one of the 49 Sycamore Gap saplings submitted several weeks ago and successful applicants will begin being notified between 23rd November and 1st December. We should look out for announcements to see if our application has been succesfull.

The dangerous tree stump left on Upper Green has still not been removed in spite of repeated attempts by Wightwick Councillors for the Council to do so. This was clearly a danger during the switching on of the Christmas lights on Tuesday 26th and we will pursue our attempts to get it removed.

**PLANNING**

Lower Green Health Centre still undecided.

The former Chris Jewkes Fitness Centre now appears to have planning consent and is moving forward.

**WCC LOCAL PLAN**

RH presented a couple of documents extracted from the WCC Local Plan that were of particular interest and relevance regarding open spaces and trees. There was a discussion on this. Most attendees had attempted to consider the Local Plan in its complete form but the sheer scale and breadth of the document was completely overwhelming for individuals to consider a personal response. Jane Meek (JM) had attempted to complete the questionnaire which appeared more relevant to an organisation than to an individual. Most people acknowledged that it was quite impossible to consider such a large document (several thousand pages) in a matter of days over the Christmas period but each member was encouraged to look at the Plan from any point of interest and identify any issues that would be worth discussing and raising. It was agreed we would have a further discussion on our input to the Plan at our next meeting. One of our initial concerns with the draft plan in April 2024 was the number of empty documents filed with the master document. It now transpires that all of those supporting documents appear to be fully populated and attached as part of the main Plan.

**UPDATE OF 910AD BATTLES**

Becky Cresswell was unable to attend but will update the Forum at the next meeting on **19th December.** Everybody’s attention is drawn to an exhibition in the 01902 Urban Rooms, Queen’s Square from 4th to 8th December *“A response to the Staffordshire Hoard by local people in clay, metal and glass”*. Rachel Arnold has been heavily involved in the material for this exhibition and the spectacular banner at the entrance to the exhibition.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Steve Jackson (SJ) informed people about the carol concert at St Michael’s and All Angels on 7th December with the Mercian Regimental Band in attendance.

WT noted that there had been some general and significant failure to empty bins in the recent cold weather. This had been occupying her time chasing the Council. She also identified a road safety issue adjacent to one of the local schools and the need for a road safety audit in these situations.

Colin Whittingham (CW) told the meeting that he had asked a question on a radio phone in programme where the Leader of the Council was explaining about a £2 million+ loss on the council tax collections where collections had apprently not been pursued since the legal costs would exceed the amount collected. A question was asked as to whether the Council could sell on these debts as many commercial organisations do in order to collect the outstanding monies.

Malcolm Rudge (MR) raised the issue of the lines on the roads at Compton Island which were by now totally non existant. Unbelievably the Council had judged that this was only a medium risk issue which will be reassessed in a few months time.

Regular attendees were reminded that the next meeting will be in 3 weeks time on 19th December at the Parish Rooms at which meeting a schedule of meetings for the new year will be discussed and confirmed.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 20.30.

Outline agenda for next meeting:

* APOLOGIES
* MATTERS ARISING
* UPDATE ON 910AD BATTLES
* WOLVERHAMPTON LOCAL PLAN – SECOND CONSULTATION
* STEERING GROUP UPDATE
* ANY OTHER BUSINESS