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| **Weoley Hill Village Council**  **Minutes of the 95th AGM Meeting**  **Held at WHVH on Wednesday 6th December 2023** | |  |
| 1. | **Welcome & Introductions**  Spencer Webb WHVC Chair, welcomed everyone to the 95th AGM.    Council Members present were: Spencer Webb (SW) Chairperson; Sharon Yeomans (SY) E. M. & S. C rep.; Paul Levesley (PL) Hall Management; Tom Magrath (TMG) Weoley Hill Village News Co-ordinator; Tessa Mitchell (TM) Secretary; Sylvette Flatman (SF) Hall Management; Richard Trengrouse WH Blog.  32 residents were in attendance along with Carol Lowe and Juliet Davies BVT, local Councillor Miranda Perks and Barry Walker BRSK.  Apologies had been received from:Ralph Lawson (RL) WHVC Treasurer; Jonathan Stanton (JS) Hall Treasurer; Wiebiena Heesterman (WH) Environment; Bob and Annette Booth; Rosemary Hay; Barry Ridgway; Kathy Maddox; Patricia Costa; Many Yates & Jamie Tenant. | |
|  | **Minutes of the 94th AGM 6th December 2022**  The minutes were accepted by the meeting as a true and accurate record. Their acceptance was proposed by Tessa Mitchell. and seconded by Tom McGrath. These were duly signed and dated by Mr Webb.  No matters arising | |
|  | **Chairs Address**  Spencer Webb thanked residents for taking the time to attend and BVT staff, Barry Walker BRSK and Cllr Miranda Perks. He reminded all present that WHVC is a group of local residents who volunteer to represent the local community on local matters and to run the hall. This evening’s meeting provides an opportunity to update residents on the Council’s activities over the past year, provide residents with an opportunity to feedback on what is important to them and look forward into 2024 and beyond.  Updates on this year’s activities will be given by Council members as per the agenda. Looking forward to the next 12 months WHVC is looking to apply to become a charity, specifically a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation). This has become a necessity due to the liabilities of running of the hall but will also unlock many potential funding streams. Those present were asked if there were any objections in relation to this proposal and none were raised. Further information will be shared with residents as this proposal takes shape and residents can contact Spencer or other council members with any further questions.  Also, moving forward into the new year, WHVC is sadly losing many years of history and experience from the group with Ralph Lawson and Richard Trengrouse both deciding to step down. Spencer Webb passed on his thanks and those of all the Council members and residents for the time and effort that they have contributed to the community. The Council will miss working with them moving forward. A round of applause was given.  Spencer then moved on to the subject of membership and if anyone wants to join the Council then please come and speak to him or any of the members this evening who will be happy to talk about what’s involved and what positions are currently available. He concluded by thanking all the volunteers who contribute to the village council, through a variety of ways, including the Village News Delivery Team who ensure that the twice yearly newsletter gets to every home on the estate. It’s a great team effort and everyone’s contributions are greatly appreciated | |
|  | **EMSC Report – Mrs Sharon Yeomans**  Sharon Yeomans updated on the work undertaken over the year in partnership with BVTs Estate Management Team along with Juliet Davies BVTs Head of Estate Management.    Unauthorised incursions have remained an ongoing concern. Legal changes have taken place and BVT have been working with residents across the estate on preventative work. Woodlands Park will have small tree stumps added to further deter travellers. Weoley residents will have noticed the skip and van in the parkway entrance which have now been replaced with a tree trunk. This will become a biodiversity habitat. Bug Life are coming to advise and support BVT in relation to this with plans including butterflies in one area, worms in another or mixing them up. Often, issues arise on Friday afternoons and Sharon thanked residents for contacting her quickly with any concerns. It was asked why the gate at the hall isn’t shut? Sharon responded that there is a good informal network who share information and when needed the gate is locked.  The mini forest in the parkway was gifted by Serven Trent Water as part of the Commonwealth Games legacy. Additional volunteers to support the mini forest are being sought. Those already involved use it as an opportunity to get fit and be outside. Richard Trengrouse did a lot of clearing of weeds during the year and it is expected that as the woodland matures and grows it will drown out the weeds eventually.  Concerns about landscaping have also been raised over the past year and a new BVT Manager of Estates has been appointed in Birmingham, Juliet Davies. Juliet confirmed that BVT accept that the service has not been as good as it should have been over the past year and this has been impacted on by significant staff changes. An external consultant has been brought in to help support a full-service review and consultation has already commenced. This includes understanding what’s needed, how this can be delivered and how resident expectations can be met. This is a big thing that people buy in to when living in Bournville. This will also form part of the ongoing Management Charge Review to understand what residents want and are prepared to pay for.  Land management is complex with BVT and Birmingham City Council both owning considerable areas of land on the estate. It is difficult for residents to know who is managing what. The current S114 issue at BCC could make this worse and result in BVT being blamed for work not done by the city council. BVT are looking to improve info on their website with links to BCC, so that it is clearer who is responsible for what and enable concerns to be directed to the correct organisation.  BVT are also developing a new ability on their website to share Service Level Agreements and if something has been missed residents can see why, with an explanation of what other work has been done instead. This should all improve comms and messaging with residents.   A resident asked about the stream in the parkway which is an ongoing concern. Juliet confirmed that BVT are responsible for the banks and Severn Trent the water. Ongoing discussions are taking place in relation to this. Another resident questioned how BVT were tackling  Himalayan Balsam on the water courses? Juliett did not think this was on BVTs radar currently but would take back people’s concerns. | |
|  | **WHVC Treasurers Report – Mr Ralph Lawson**  Spencer Webb presented the accounts on behalf of Mr Lawson who was unable to attend this evening. The income and expenditure for the last 12 months are as itemised and as of 1st October 2022 there was £3,670.24 in the councils 2 accounts. The largest income was £2393.78 generated from the 2022 fireworks event and expenditure of £1,188.25 was spent on the two annual editions of the Weoley Hill Village News and £591.47 on administration which includes the Councils insurances and defibrillator maintenance. The accounts have been examined by Mr J Surtees.  No questions were received and the accounts were proposed by Mr Webb and seconded by Ms Tessa Mitchell. | |
| 6. | **Hall Management Accounts – Mr Jonathan Stanton**  Spencer Webb presented the accounts on behalf of Mr Stanton who was unable to attend this evening. The income and expenditure for the last 12 months are as itemised by Mr Stanton and show a total income of £29,021.30, £3509.86 up on the previous year and expenditure of £8,703.04, down from £12,884.63 last year.  Hall hire income has increased again from £25,511.45 last year to £29,021.30. Expenditure has decreased due to reduced repairs being required and the installation of the new smart heating system which has helped control heating costs as much as possible despite a 180% increase in heating costs.  The Accounts have been audited by Mr David Marlow.  No questions were raised and the Hall Accounts were proposed by Mr Webb and seconded by Mr Tom McGrath | |
|  | **Appointment of Account Auditor / Inspectors**  Mr Webb proposed that Mr John Surtees and Mr David Marlow are asked to audit the accounts again in 2022/23. This was seconded by Richard Trengrouse. | |
|  | **Hall Management Report – Paul Levesley**  Mr Paul Levesley updated that Jane has now been formally appointed as the new BVT Weoley Hill Village Hall caretaker.   Following on from last year’s meeting and resident suggestions, new picnic benches have been added outside the hall which have been a welcome addition. Unfortunately two of the seats were damaged by vandals who put them on the bonfire at the Fireworks event. These have now been replaced. The hall has also seen some graffiti this year but this has been quickly dealt with and removed.  As can be seen from the accounts weekly bookings and party bookings have increased and are now pretty much at their limit as these rely on Council members opening and shutting the hall. Other notable community events during the year have included the Coronation Party which was very well attended, cake sales for charity as well as another very successful bonfire and fireworks event. The hall remains a key centre for Weoley Hill community life.  January will be a big month for the hall with work scheduled to relacquer the hall floor. This will cost around £2300 and is on a 2 year maintenance cycle. Work will also be taking place to improve the kitchen with the installation of new stainless steel units. This will be paid for by the hall. Communal kitchen equipment will also be purchased. Community funding and formal grant applications will be looked into when the council transitions into a CIO to develop future phases and additional modernisation.    New lockers for groups will also be provided as currently some equipment is stored in the kitchen and will need to be moved. A review of the unused toilet in the entrance lobby will also be undertaken to look at creating a janitor’s room and additional storage. Moving forward a new door entry system is being looked into so people so can only enter when they have bookings. The hall could also become a community warm space, providing work and social space. If any residents would like to volunteer to help support and mobilise this please let Paul or other council members know.   Richard Trengrouse asked that thanks be passed on to the Hall Management Committee for the considerable time and effort put into running the hall for the benefit of the community. | |
|  | **Environment – Dr Wiebina Heesterman**  In Mrs Hesterman’s absence this item was deferred. | |
|  | **Election of ESMC representative and WHVC Members – Tessa Mitchell**  Ms Tessa Mitchell confirmed that only one nomination had been received for the ESMC representative and that was Ms Sharon Yeomans. The nomination was proposed by Professor M Kendall, Mr A Collier and Dr C Owens. No ballot was required and Ms Yeomans was formally appointed to the role of Weoley Hill ESMC rep for the next 4 years.  Tessa also confirmed one nomination had been received to join Weoley Hill Village Council from David Tome. Mr Tome was proposed by Jonathan Stanton and seconded by Paul Levesley. David was formally appointed to the Council. No other members were up for election this evening with Ralph Lawson and Richard Trengrouse both having announced their intention to step down.  The Council also want to record their thanks to Liz Edwards and Graham McCauley – 2 longstanding previous council members, who gave a lot to the Weoley Hill community and who have both passed away during the last year.  Mr Spencer Webb asked that anyone else who wanted to join the Council going forward or was considering it should contact him. It is not an onerous commitment with 10 meetings a year and some additional work around managing the village hall and activities. However, without members and volunteers the council, established by George Cadbury himself, will not be able to continue.  Ms Mitchell also thanked Mr Webb for all his work on behalf of the Council. | |
|  | **BRSK**  Spencer Webb welcomed Barry Walker, a Regional Manager from BRSK, to the meeting. Mr Walker gave an overview of BRSK who were established in 2020 and are based across the West Midlands and the North. They are looking to provide a full fibre upgrade across Weoley Hill. This will be achieved through a combination of underground ducts and poles. 350,000 homes are already connected to their service nationwide and this is growing  Where possible BRSK will use existing underground networks and a survey has been undertaken. However, the survey shows that there are no dedicated ducts in this location and therefore BRSK would usually seek to install poles. However, this is not an option on the BVT estate. In the traditional zone, all work is on hold until solution can be found. Mr Walker appreciated the sensitivity and concern and stated a number of times that no work would take place without full consultation with residents, the Trust, councillors and the local MP. Talks are ongoing regarding options. Mr Walker emphasised that he is the Regional Build Manager and the decisions rest with him.  Following the above outline a question and answer session was held enabling residents to raise any queries, concerns or points for clarification.  The first question was that Virgin Media had installed fibre broadband infrastructure via ducts so why can’t BRSK? Mr Walker responded that BRSK would try and mirror what’s currently in place whether poles or ducts. However, the Virgin model is very different to BRSK and it’s not really comparable.  Another resident commented that that the Virgin ducts are very shallow and that they would be in favour of a good network in area with more people working from home.  Another resident queried the survey referred to by Mr Walker and asked why it hasn’t been shared? Mr Walker responded stating that survey is of existing infrastructure and that not all the info provided by Open Reach is accuarate.  A further question related to what street furniture would actually be needed and what speed would be offered? Mr Walker reiterated that it will mirror existing infrastructures as much as possible and will be 1 GB to start with with increases expected but he could not say exactly.  Another resident suggested more engagement by BRSK and more clarity around the offer and benefits of this. This would reduce anxiety and potential backlash from local residents. Mr Walker confirmed that tonight’s presentation is part of this process. The company have only been operating in the area for 8 months and are currently employing more engagement officers to do this.  A resident from Middle Park Close raised that a petition opposing proposed BRSK poles has already been started over concerns about poles and aesthetics. Residents pay a management charge to BVT to preserve the area and expect support from BVT in relation to this and weight given to residents’ petition. Mr Walker confirmed that resident views will always carry weight and it is in BRSKs interests to listen to residents. They are after all a commercial entity and it is not in their interests to upset residents who will be potential customers.  He went on to add that BRSK are in competition with BT who haven’t introduced fibre optic yet. They have been slow. As a nation the UK is about 50th in world in terms of delivery which is very low. There is some existing infrastructure locally but BRSK may not be able to use it as there is no national agreements in place to enable this. Virgin have the monopoly on existing conduits. BRSK are trying to understand the complexity. Birmingham Cable Company put in original cabling but were then sold to Virgin. BT are also already in place and intend to remove all landlines over next 2 years. It’s very much a longer-term project.  A resident queried a pole put up in Witherford Way without engagement and it was established that this was a BT pole.  Another resident commented that they had been with Virgin 15 years but BRSK were much cheaper. However, if BRSK impact on and change the neighbourhood by erecting poles they will not be supported locally.  A further comment was made that there are currently 3 zones across the BVT estate in Birmingham: conservation; traditional and modern. Only the conservation areas are protected. However regardless of the fact that the Weoley Hill Traditional zone is not a conservation area, it would be discriminatory to treat residents differently as all pay management charges.   It was also asked if there is a map of where BRSK are planning to site poles. If residents understood what was actually being proposed it would be much clearer and BRSK could even be supported by residents and asked to crack on. Mr Walker said that unfortunately as these are currently on hold and planning is ongoing these cannot be shared at this time.  It was asked if overhead caballing would cross roads. Middle Park Road currently only has poles on the even side. Mr Walker confirmed that any scheme will have to take these considerations into account.  Another resident asked what are resolution would look like? If BRSK need poles and residents don’t want them what will happen? Mr Walker stated that BRSK will come back with options. They plan to be in the area as service provider of choice. At the end of October 2023 BRSK sent an email to a number of residents which stated the proposed pole installations were not going ahead and since then BRSK have changed their position and that options are currently being reviewed. Mr Walker stated is challenging but talks are going on in the background to try and find an acceptable solution.   It was stated that the email hadn’t said that it was on hold however Mr Walker confirmed that he would be very willing to come back again when the plans are firmed up.  Spencer Webb thanked Barry for his attendance and update. WHVC would be very happy to host a future event to enabale further discussion. | |
|  | **AOB**  Spencer Webb told everyone present that the Council were always looking for ideas for events and activities at the hall and offers to lead these. Anyone with any ideas is very welcome to get in touch with him or any council members. The hall in particular is a great community resource.  Cllr Miranda Perks was in attendance throughout the meeting and offered to take any questions. It was asked if the city council will bring in any prohibitions to parking on pavements as some other local authorities have? Ms Perks confirmed that Birmingham have looked at this and she will ascertain the current stance.   Another resident stated that Hemyock Rd had missed the last green waste collection of the year and was getting nowhere with this being followed up. Ms Perks advised that if bin collections are missed then these should be reported via residents Brum accounts. Records are shared and therefore it is really important to report in concerns. Some roads don’t seem to have collections consistently. It’s a paid for service and if 3 missed in row householders can claim a refund.  Mr Webb closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance and contributions and invited all to join him and council members for refreshments. | |
|  | **Minutes Agreed as an accurate representation**  **Signed …….**  **Date: ……….** | |