

ERITH TOWN FORUM AGM AND ORDINARY MEETING

Notes of the 85th meeting of the **ERITH TOWN FORUM** held at VETS Club, Park Crescent (junction with Glebe Way), Erith on WEDNESDAY 23rd May 2012 at 7pm.

Present: Doreen Ives (Chair)
Joan Armitage (Bexley Civic Society), Bill Brookes (Erith Playhouse Theatre), DJ (Erith Riverside Res. Association), Fred Finck (Erith Yacht Club), Andrew Grieve (BATS), Ray Hudson (Bexley Neighbourhood Watch Assoc.), Jerry Martin (Chair, Local Police Panel), Alec Tapper (Forge), Dennis Roberts (Baptist Church, Erith), Rosemary White (CSAZ), Councillor Chris Ball, Councillor Edward Boateng, Julie Clark (Minute/Admin officer)

Members of the Public:

L Finch, D Brodie, E Brodie, P West, T Middleditch, M Beadle, J McCarthy, J Baxter, R Raddcliffe, R Durrant, J Baker, C Wakeman

Speaker: Carl Shuben

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Forum Members: Mike Dodsworth, Chris Broadbent, Rena Papa, Alison Fisher, Chris Betts, Les Hoskins, Cllr. Margaret O'Neill

2. PRESENTATION BY CARL SHUBEN COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR – SOUTH LONDON HEALTH CARE TRUST

Carl began by informing the meeting that the South London Health Care Trust was formed nearly 3 years ago and it was the trust for the 3 hospitals – QE, QM and Princess Royal Bromley. He said everyone knows these hospitals around here are very busy. He said we need to improve patient's experience. He said patient's safety has had some fantastic improvements. He said our hospitals are among the safest in the country, adding that a survey showing infections people pick up in the hospital showed QE and QM at 2.1% the national average in the country was 6.5%. He also informed the meeting that our hospitals are among the top 5 in the country for the lowest mortality rate. He continued to say a new car park has been opened at QE hospital which has improved parking for patients. Carl continued talking about the concerns over closures of maternity and A&E services at QM hospital, and said they are moving towards bigger units which are better resourced with more senior consultants in order to improve the quality of care. He said the plan is to have QM specialise in non-emergency surgery with separate waiting lists and separate consultants. He said it is planned in 3 years to have a radiotherapy centre linked with Guys and St Thomas' developed on that site. Ray Hudson brought up the problem of extra travel. Carl wouldn't comment on Ray's particular circumstances but said there are cases where people have to travel further and some less, but patients will be getting a better quality of service.

A member of the public said that QM no longer has the stroke unit. Carl said stroke care was re-organised and rather than patients being treated on general medical wards they set up special stroke units – paramedics stabilise the patient and then they are taken to the nearest stroke centre. Jerry Martin asked whether it is the intention to bring in full radiotherapy provision at QM, and Carl said the intention is to start with basic radiotherapy and build the services around it.

Chris Ball said that there is some confusion whether there is an A&E at QM and that there is a deficit of £6 ½M and said something will have to give. Mr Shuben agreed the finance issue is really tight. He said there is not 100% consensus but said we have joined forces with the local politicians and are united in wanting good quality services provided locally. Cllr. Ball said he could not fault the principal but was not sure if it would be financially viable as there is only one pot of money. Mr Shuben said you could argue who has the pot of money but we are working closely together to develop the QM campus. He said more services will be run in GP's and community centres. Terry Middleditch said he thought by moving a clinic from QM to QE would make waiting lists worst. Carl said by putting money in the hands of GP's would make GP's think harder about who they refer to hospital. He said there are issues to be addressed. Carl Shuben summarised by saying

1. Money is an issue
2. Patients' experience and waiting times are both issues.
3. Patient safety. (Substantial improvements have already been made)
4. QM can have a good future and locally we are very united.

The Chair asked what power South London Health Care has. Carl responded by saying we have to deliver our objectives and we are judged on quality of care, waiting times, money.

The Chair thanked Carl for giving the Forum a true picture and asked him to keep her informed.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

1. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair welcomed everyone to the AGM. She commented on all the presentations at meetings, and reminded those present that they could find all Forum correspondence on the Forum website, www.erithforum.org.uk and said thanks go to Alan Boakes for this.

She commented on the support given to the newly established Friends of Riverside Gardens Erith (FORGE). She said we managed two issues of Town and Around during the first half of this year but uncertainty over future funding prevented us producing any more since January. However, she continued, with Chris Betts' good news that Frogmore are once again supporting us, she said it is hoped we will get a Summer newsletter out early in August. Doreen said she is hopeful about funding from Cory Environmental, having recently spoken to the Chief Executive Peter Gerstrom and Andy Sykes who manages the Belvedere site, at the official opening of the facility by Princess Anne.

She said together with Mike, Jerry and Rena, she had attended most of the meetings of the Police Panel and she said the Riverside Resource Forum had met four times during the year and either Ray Hudson or herself had attended on behalf of the Forum. She said again the Forum have organised two events for senior community members, the Christmas entertainment afternoon and the summer outing to the coast. She thanked anyone who helped in any way with the two events.

The Chair confirmed that with funding secured from Frogmore the Forum does not need to make any changes with regards meetings and venues. She reminded those present about Councillor Ball's quiz night fund raiser coming up on 7th July and encouraged all members of the Forum and public audience to get a team together.

2. TREASURER'S REPORT

The Chair confirmed we have £943 in the bank that is without Frogmore's £1,000. She said we therefore have £1,943 which should take us through for another year and we could do a Town and Around. She said we may get the money from Cory and will get some money from Cllr. Ball's Quiz Night. The Chair said there is £1,170 left from the Selkirk Fund which they are planning to use for a memorial on the river front

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

The following appointments were moved, seconded and agreed without dissent

Chair – Doreen Ives, Vice-Chair (Business) – Lorraine Davidson, Vice-Chair (Community) – Dennis Roberts, Treasurer – Joan Armitage,

The Chair asked Terry Middleditch if he would step in, until further notice, to cover Chris Broadbent. due to personal circumstances

Management Committee Members remained the same – Rena Papa, Chris Broadbent, Ray Hudson, Jerry Martin, Councillor Margaret O'Neill, Les Hoskins, Joan Armitage

Rosemary White stood down as Secretary and the Chair thanked her for all her work over the years. This position has not been filled.

CONSTITUTION CHANGES

There were no changes to be made. **(Note since meeting: Rev. Rob Ratcliffe of St Johns Church to be added to the membership list of Erith Town Forum)**

ORDINARY MEETING

1. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING (MAR)

Riverside Festival

Joan McCarthy said that they were not going to close the road for the Riverside Festival on 3rd June but the Festival would go ahead. She said there would not be as many stalls but would be an arena and concessions along where Thames 21 are. She had leaflets to hand out at the meeting.

Rats on Riverside Gardens

DJ said that Orbit did send a contractor onto the estate and set some mouse traps but they put them in the wrong place but they are going to come back again. He said it is very bad. DJ asked if the Councillors could help. Cllr. Ball said they will just say whose land is it. There is not much they will do unless there is an obvious infestation.

2. RIVERSIDE SHOPPING CENTRE

The Chair spoke about Iceland opening on 30th May at 9am. She said there is only 1 empty unit now. She said how pleased she was to get the letter from Chris Betts about the money.

3. FORGE

Alec Tapper confirmed flowers have now been planted in the gardens. He said we have some colourful hardy annuals and need to control the growth of perennials. He said we have a balance of wild meadow flowers. He reported that 26 truck loads of overgrown bushes and shrubs were removed and the flats have now got a clear view of the flagpole site. Alec informed the meeting that they have entered the Bexley Environmental Challenge competition, have got landscape architects preparing provisional plans, and have been given gardening tools by Wilkinsons. He said they have an arrangement with a lady gardener who they are paying £15 an hour and she comes as and when needed. Alec informed the meeting that there was a copy of the breakdown of expenses on a board at the back of the meeting. He said they had £1,125 in the bank at the moment and confirmed they have 660 members. He said they had sent out 400 letters @ 38p totaling £152 but he said we also brought some further 2nd class stamps to beat the deadline before they went up. Alec read out a note from the newspaper about last Sunday's clean up. He said we are 95% clear of debris now alongside the riverside gardens.

The Chair said it was good Alec had shared with the Forum the breakdown of FORGE's expenses and thanked Alec for putting them on show at the back of the meeting. The Chair expressed her disappointment that the Chair and committee of the Riverside Festival had not been so forthcoming about their income and expenditure. Joan McCarthy commented to the Chair that she doesn't ask any of the other groups on the Forum for a breakdown of how they spend their money. The Chair said she had secured money from Bexley Council for the Riverside Festival in the past and to do this again, detailed accounts are needed.

Alec reminded everyone about re-newing their membership of FORGE.

4. SENIORS SUMMER OUTING

Dennis informed the meeting that they would be leaving from Queen Street Baptist Church on 11th July at 9.30 to go to Hastings. He said it is £9 and there are 13 seats left. Call Dennis on 01322 341913 for tickets.

5. JUBILEE COMMUNITY LUNCH

The Chair confirmed it would be on Sunday 3rd June from 12-3pm. She said she had tickets for members of the Forum. She said Representatives from Christ Church, the Rotary Club, the Baptist Church and St Johns were hosting it. The Chair confirmed it is a free event but by ticket only. She said there will be 300 tickets available and it will be a family affair.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) Olympic Torch Church Activities

Dennis Roberts confirmed his church would have a bouncy castle, big screen and tea and coffee etc. The Chair confirmed Christ Church would be serving tea and coffee cakes and a barbeque. Fred Finck of Erith Yacht Club said he was not sure of exact timings but Aaron Reynolds of the Yacht Club would be the torch bearer. DJ said he would get some posters printed to advertise the different events.

b) ERITH COMMUNITY SAFETY PANEL

Jerry Martin had attended the AGM of the Community Safety Panel on 24th April and he was voted back in as Chair. He said the priorities set prior to 24th April were:

1. Burglary
2. Drugs
3. Fly tipping

He said there were good reports about detection and arrests for burglary and drugs.

He confirmed the next priorities set were:

1. Drugs possession and supply– (encompassing burglary and thefts from cars.)
2. Car thefts.
3. Fuel thefts from Morrisons' petrol station

Jerry said he attended a meeting with the new Borough Commander and said he was quite impressed particularly since he said he would attend local panel meetings. Jerry invited him to Erith for the meeting on 3rd July. Jerry urged those present to attend because he said it is very rare to get the opportunity to ask the Commander questions. Jerry will confirm the venue with the Chair. Jerry said they now have a full neighbourhood team. The Chair said the new PCSOs are visiting Churches to meet the community after Sunday Church services. Jerry confirmed the contact No. for DJ as 0208 721 2048. Dennis said he thought it would have been good if when the police came into church they had had a pen and pad to jot down problems to get back to people not just say ring this number. The Chair agreed.

c) CORE STRATEGY BOOKLET

The Chair showed a booklet to the meeting – The Core Strategy for Bexley – and said if anyone wanted to borrow this copy which is the Forum's then let her know..

d) LARNER ROAD

Rosemary White said that with Caroline Field they have met with the architects for Larner Road and there is an open invitation for anybody to come and look at the plans on an evening and a Saturday in the next few weeks. Rosemary said she was very impressed and they have listened and got some good ideas.

e) FOOTPATH

A member of the public was unhappy about a pathway from the Sports Centre and said it was in a disgusting state. Cllr. Chris Ball said he would discuss this with him after the meeting.

7. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Chair said she wanted to change one proposed date from 26th September to 3rd October due to the collation of the new vicar at Christ Church on 26th September at 7.30pm.

Date of next meeting: 25th July 2012 at the Vets Club

Dates of future meetings: 3rd October 2012, 28th November 2012, 30th January 2013, 27th March 2013, and 22nd May 2013 (AGM)

The meeting closed at 8.50pm