

Fernwood Residents' Association (FRA)

Minutes of the FRA Committee Meeting
held at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 04 April 2016
Fernwood Village Hall

Present:

Acting Chairman - Parish Council Chairman (JW) Cheryle Mack (CM)
Secretary - Sue Taylor (ST) David Mack (DM)
Treasurer - Barry Smith (BS) Mandy Knowlton-Rayner (MK-R)
Janet Tindall (JT) Jim Gould (JG)

Parish Council Representative: Jim Weale (JW)

Invitees:

1 WELCOME

As acting Chairman Jim Weale welcomed everyone for attending.

2 APOLOGIES

David Heath(DH)
Ken Forbes has decided to resign due to personal reasons.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING – 23rd Feb 2016

The Minutes were accepted as an accurate record.

4. APPOINTMENT OF NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Jim Gould and Mandy Knowlton-Rayner were formally appointed new Committee members.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING – 23rd Feb 2016

Old Website: Reg Robinson acknowledged the request from FRA for the website hosted by Bareflame not to be renewed when due.

New Website: This website is now up and running enabling different people to amend different areas. DH has set up the Committee email addresses.

Community Event: It was generally found to be worthwhile for the Youth Committee and for the Neighbourhood Plan although disappointing that only 80 residents attended over the two days. Views and ideas have been taken on board for the future of Fernwood. The FRA table attracted mainly complaints about parking and dog fouling, although a couple of people expressed interest in joining the committee later in the year.

6. TREASURER REPORT

Change of address and signatories were given to the bank at the beginning of March but for some reason the change of address has not yet been acted upon and current statements therefore not available. BS is following up.

Please see attached report figures taken from the last AGM to 5th April 2016.

FRA Bank Balance: £584.92 (FRA Committee £345.05 + Conservation Group £239.87)

FRA Petty Cash: £240.25 (FRA Committee)

Total : £825.17

Income since last Committee meeting of £70 from Fanfare Adverts and expenditure of £60.58* for the Community Event plus expenses of £113 for the Conservation group.

*Although FRA provided £300 cash for the Community Event, only £60.58 was spent. The Neighbourhood Plan group will be reimbursing £32.13 of the costs leaving the total FRA expenditure for the event as only £28.45.

The Committee agreed that the full amount of Petty Cash should be repaid into the bank.

Secretary's note: Since the February Committee meeting a cheque for £162 has been paid to the Conservation group from the DWH Project Development Fund for the Fruit Trees.

BS has approached the bank for the possibility of a debit card and internet banking on the FRA account. The bank have said it is possible for the association to use this method. The Committee discussed this and referred to the Constitution. Clause 8j would permit but it was felt that a change to the Constitution should be made to reflect this additional method of payment.

The Committee unanimously agreed to internet banking and a debit card for the FRA a/c only.

ACTION

ST - upload to website

BS to follow up

BS to progress

BS to progress

Committee to discuss
Constitution change

7. THE FANFARE

A change of format to A5 size and new layout was discussed. Additional suggestions:

- add Fernwood Parish Council to the heading
- tie in colours, fonts and graphics with those used on the website
- use the area directly beneath the heading to highlight a specific community event or important information.

FPC pay the printing costs which have been approximately £300 for about 1150 copies. DM will speak to Tony Tucker and Prime Print to get best quotes for the new layout.

As the publication is a communication tool and printing is paid for by the Parish Council, the advertising costs should not be too high but consistent with other publications bearing in mind our small circulation. Suggestion was made for CM / DM to use the previously agreed costs pro-rata for the format and gauge the interest.

Production schedule will move back to 4 times a year for distribution end March/May/Aug/Nov and the schedule for 'copy' will be emailed to usual contributors. Craig Bromley from First Port will be added to that list.

A Fernwood street map with number of houses and distribution areas has been handed over and with more residents coming forward at the last residents' meeting to help, distribution should be OK.

The committee unanimously agreed the new format and change of production schedule

8. FERNWOOD YOUTH COMMITTEE

Last Aug/Sep 6 residents and the Police Antisocial Behavioural Officer got together to discuss how to tackle the youth problems within Fernwood by setting up '*something*' for the young of Fernwood to do. Following surveys and leaflet drops it became clear that the young would have completely different requirements for the wide age range being considered which could be split roughly into 3 groups; young, 12 - 14 and 15 - 18. It has been difficult to get parental support but the Community weekend feedback has been helpful. DM gave information that the local YMCA may be able to help as they have a contract to set up and run young organisations.

The group hope that the Parish Council, through NSDC funding, would be able to obtain a 'port-a-cabin' placed in the Village Hall (VH) grounds which could be allocated for this group to call their own and any other youth group that may come along in the future; Scouts, Brownies etc. The VH changing room toilet facilities would be used.

The name of the group has changed to FYI (*Fernwood Youth Initiative*) and a logo is being created. All members would be given a T-shirt with the logo.

This is a small group who need start-up funding to see where, if anywhere, this initiative leads. Without a full constitution and bank accounts the Fernwood Parish Council (FPC) have declined help from the 'Good Causes' fund, so the group have requested to become affiliated as a sub-group to FRA in order that a new application to FPC for start-up monies can be approved. All funds would be held and controlled within the FRA accounts. The group have stated that future funding would mainly be achieved through their own fund raising events which would not only raise their profile but also give activities and structure to the young.

The committee unanimously agreed for FYI to become a sub-group of FRA

9. CONSERVATION GROUP

The affiliation of this small group was under question by FRA following the change of title to include maintenance and notification of intended projects which would ultimately affect residents' service charge to First Port. The group has produced a sample Constitution and sample Policy document which states their mission to enhance the appearance of Fernwood village so that it is both attractive in appearance and is a haven for flora and fauna. The Policy document states that the group would collaborate directly with the land management agency and the developers.

BS & ST gave information of the recent First Port, FPC & FRA meeting where a reporting structure for any projects which affect enhancement/change to the land was agreed. It was explained that anything done to the land however large or small affects the residents' service charge because the site staff would have to be present due to health & safety or continued maintenance would need to be carried out by First Port. The residents' contract with First Port is for 'maintenance and repair only' and therefore if any enhancements are made to the land all residents should be consulted. First Port explained that they were getting adverse comments because residents were not aware that current enhancements (Outdoor Gym equipment / Petanque pitch) had been paid for through lottery funding or other donations and the residents thought they had been charged.

The proposal from First Port that any request should be in writing with details of the project for discussion by themselves, FPC & FRA was welcomed by Fernwood and a project proposal structure was agreed. Proposals should be given to the Parish Clerk and should include costs, funding, how on-going maintenance and repair will be carried out and any impact on nearby residents' dwellings or on the maintenance service charge. The projects will then be discussed and posted for view and comment by residents on the FPC & FRA websites and in the Fanfare.

The Conservation group is still small and ST asked JG what the group wanted to do; stay as a sub-group to FRA which they are welcome to do, be a sub-group of FPC or set up as a separate group responsible for their own funds? Whatever they decide to do, any projects which affect Fernwood Central public open spaces will have to follow the approval procedure.

JG will take this information back to the group and report back to FRA at the next meeting.

ST asked if they needed any funds immediately. BS reported there is still £57 from the donation by Sue Saddington for maintaining the Bug Hotel, £87 left donated by FPC for the Bird Hide & Feeders and £95.87 in the conservation general pot left over from start-up funding donation.

DM gave ideas for the Conservation Group; residents' open garden competition, nature day giving talks, walks and raising funds.

JG advised that a formal opening of the bird hide will be taking place in April.

10. REPORT FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL (FPC)

FPC are writing again to NSDC about the proposal to close Hollowdyke Lane at the Balderton end.

The North Build planning application will be increased to 1050 dwellings and is expected to go to planning in July. JW didn't know whether residents would get a new notification of planning proposal with this change from the developer.

The NHS house on Youngs Avenue is now empty but FPC do not know what is happening. A suggestion was that if this could be obtained by FPC, it would make a very good venue for FYI.

11. UPDATE FROM FERNWOOD MAINTENANCE STRATEGY GROUP (FMSG)

The response to FRA's official complaint to NSDC was circulated previously to Committee members. The FMSG has not met since to discuss and will be considering what action to take which is likely to proceed with our complaint via the Local Government Ombudsman. It is believed there is no cost to do this. The FMSG will propose draft complaint letter and bring it to FRA May Committee meeting for approval. - Please see attached Report from DH.

Secretary's note: Although FMSG is affiliated to FPC, it was previously thought and agreed by FRA that it would not be prudent for FPC to complain to/about NSDC and so this complaint has been progressed via FRA.

ST updated FRA with further information from the recent meeting with First Port:

- a 4 page newsletter will be issued by First Port to all paying residents in April giving written confirmation regarding permission certificates, sellers packs and next year's budget explanations. In future they may use Fanfare to update residents on maintenance within Fernwood. They have been offered up to one page.
- two new balancing ponds will come within the service charge but not until the developer has them in pristine condition. Site staff have been on a training course and the maintenance of these ponds can be completed by on site staff rather than contractors.
- the current balancing pond will eventually be moved due to the 'north build' development and no longer the responsibility of Fernwood Central.
- a complete tree survey will need to be carried out within Fernwood in the next couple of years. NCC are suggesting that all trees in Nottinghamshire are geo-tagged and funding may be available.
- 2016/17 budget was discussed. Slight increases in each schedule are due to increased reserves to ensure funding will be available for major future expenses like new roofing for an apartment block or re-surfacing of a courtyard area.
- Fernwood are still waiting for a proposal of refund figure due to historical accounting inaccuracies. This and the method of refund will be discussed at the next meeting.

12. FRA ORGANISATION - Changes to the Constitution

The Committee were unable to complete the agenda due to the length of time taken over other topics. This agenda item has been held over until the next committee meeting - 3rd May 2016

CLOSE –The meeting closed at 10.00pm.

FERNWOOD RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

As AT:- 05/04/2016

Bank Balance B/D	£1,361.12
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Bank Balance by Group

Committee	£595.65
Conservation	£765.07
Village Projects	£0.40
Petanque	£0.00
Total	£1,361.12

Petty Cash B/D	£26.83
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Total B/D	£1,387.95
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INCOME

Committee	£95.40 (incl. £0.40 from Village Projects)
Petty Cash	£274.00 (Transferred from Committee)
Total	£369.40

OUTGOINGS

Committee	-£346.00
Conservation	-£525.20
Village Projects	-£0.40
Community Event Mar 16	-£60.58
Total	-£932.18

Total Left	£825.17
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AVAILABLE CASH PER GROUP

Committee	£345.05
Conservation	£239.87
Village Projects	-£0.00
Petanque	£0.00
Community Event Mar 16	£0.00
Petty Cash	£240.25

Total	£825.17
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Petty Cash B/F	£240.25
Bank Balance B/F	£584.92
Total Available	£825.17

Update Report for Information on behalf of the Fernwood Maintenance Strategy Group.

Committee Members will be aware that the Fernwood Maintenance Strategy Group (FMSG) has been working on many different aspects of the way in which our Village is maintained and has corresponded extensively with Newark and Sherwood District Council, David Wilson / Barratt Homes and First Port. Recent successes have included the removal of all charges for permission to make alterations to our properties and an ongoing discussion regarding a reimbursement of overcharging due in the main to misallocated invoices. Legal opinion has also determined that many aspects of our contracts cannot be altered. However, one key aspect remains, which is the way in which Newark and Sherwood District Council (NSDC) dealt with the conditions of the planning application for Fernwood Village.

Recent correspondence from NSDC was circulated to Committee Members in which the Council admitted that "It is acknowledged that the Council has no record demonstrating explicit approval or sign off of the management arrangements which are currently in place. However, the Council were aware of what the developers intended to put in place." Written confirmation has also been received from the legal department of David Wilson Barratt Homes that confirmed that there is no record of the developer submitting or receiving approval for the present maintenance arrangements. It is these arrangements that formed the basis of not only how we are charged but the lack of constraints to the arrangements and the charge to Land Registry.

In order to proceed with our complaint, NSDC complaints procedure is that we can now have our complaint heard by the Local Government Ombudsman. There would appear to be no cost to doing this.

The FMSG will therefore be considering a report at their next meeting that will include a draft complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman that will then be brought to the next meeting of this Committee.

David Heath
On behalf of the FMSG