

S.G.R.A.

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MINUTES OF STYVECHALE GRANGE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

LOCATION – Grange Farm School

DATE – 1 February 2024

PRESENT – John Archer – Chairman, Councillor John Blundell, Mick Fitzpatrick – Treasurer, Sheila Weare – Minutes Secretary.

Plus 22 members of the Association.

WELCOME – John A thanked everyone for attending the first meeting of 2024.

APOLOGIES – Judith and David Cule, Peter Dixon, Councillor Mattie Heaven, Graham Mason, Anant Patel, John Proffitt, Manjit Singh.

MINUTES – The minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2023, having been posted online and circulated, were accepted.

MATTERS ARISING – **Review of Ward Boundaries** – the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) are looking at changes to some Ward boundaries in Coventry. It is proposed to move Styvechale Grange from Wainbody to Earlsdon Ward. This is to even up electorate numbers across Wards and is based on projected electorate numbers for 2029 supplied by the Office for National Statistics. The proposal was advised at very short notice. The closing date for the submission of objections was 22 January 2024 and a decision will be announced on 7 May 2024. The LGBCE website is not easy to navigate and is not user friendly. Submissions by some SGRA members do not appear on the website but it is thought they will be posted at the same time that the decision is given. John B advised that two submissions had been made by Coventry City Council. The Conservative Party have been supported by the Labour Party and both parties want Styvechale Grange to remain in Wainbody Ward. The use of the A45 as a geographical dividing line was discussed but as this road varies in its different sections, it is therefore not valid to treat all surrounding residential areas the same.

PRESCRIPTION ORDERING DIRECT (POD) – Prescription Ordering Direct (POD) will cease on 31 March 2024. John A and Mick had attended a workshop at Stoke Aldermoor Library to discuss the NHS App which will replace POD, especially how it would assist patients to order their medication. The idiosyncrasies of the App were discussed at length at our meeting and it was agreed the App was not easy to use. Each surgery will develop its own way to help patients who do not have access to the internet. A meeting has been arranged at Phoenix Family Care for 7 February 2024 at 10.30 am to discuss their way forward. NHS Pathfinder will not change.

COUNCILLOR JOHN BLUNDELL – Coventry City Council will set their 2024/25 budget on 20 February 2024 although changes to Council Tax may be announced before then. A petition will be presented to the Council prior to the budget, objecting to their move to abolish free parking for the first three hours at the War Memorial Park. The park is currently very popular and such charges would have the effect of people trying to find alternative parking on local roads. If visitor numbers decrease, the café's revenue and other attractions would be adversely affected.

A further petition will call for the Council not to remove the subsidy for buses serving **Bishop Ullathorne School**. The Council does have reserves of funds and also has £1.4m of government money. Both petitions will be presented to Cabinet Member Richard Brown on February 5, 2024. The Council must issue a Section 114 Notice if they cannot balance their budget. **No.19 Bus** – John B is asking for the reinstatement of this service or the diversion of another service to include this route. He has suggested more buses on the route would encourage usage. He has attended a meeting with West Midlands Combined Authority and National Express to present a petition. **Mantilla Drive** was again discussed at our meeting and our Councillors will keep the pressure on the Council to have the remaining half resurfaced. It is nearly five years since the first half was resurfaced. Members living along the unrepaired section of Mantilla have reported that buses are transmitting vibration to their properties. Our meeting found the situation totally unacceptable. John B had hoped that a Council officer would attend our meeting, but our request was declined. **School Streets** - the meeting discussed with John B the closure of roads near schools which is being trialled in Coventry. Templars Primary School was the first to try this. John B advised that closing Dewsbury Avenue at school pick-up and drop-off times would involve a long and complicated procedure. Learner drivers on Dewsbury and surrounding areas would appear to be adding to the congestion problem around Grange Farm School.

West Midlands Mayor Andy Street has asked the Home Secretary to merge the role of Mayor with Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). This would be in line with London and Greater Manchester. West Midlands Police are currently placed into special measures because of poor performance.

LOCAL POLICE UPDATE – Sgt. Darren Betts reported that Wainbody has the lowest crime figures in Coventry. There is no public access to Canley Police Station and it is now only used for meetings and training purposes. **The Police Museum** is to be housed in a room in the Council House. Hopefully it will remain in Coventry and not be relocated to Birmingham.

STREETWATCH – the team carried out three patrols in January 2024 and all was quiet. They have one less member so now there are only three in the group. New members would be very welcome.

TREASURER'S REPORT – **Finances** – after expenditure we have £411.13. Mick confirmed receipt of a £50 donation, for which SGRA is extremely grateful. **Website 96 Users** - Mick is disappointed that no feedback about the website is received. If anyone has any items to be included, please forward to him. **Facebook Followers 157** – Mick would appreciate more comments being made and sharing would enable more people to see posts on Facebook. Please let him know of any difficulties encountered.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS – **Trees for Streets** is an initiative by Coventry City Council to enable residents to have a tree planted outside their house. A tree planted in Mantilla may be cause for concern as it grows towards maturity. Since the meeting John B has forwarded an explanation from the Council's Tree Officer stating that the 'space is suitable' **Bus Stop adjacent to No.2 Peveril Drive** – the resident has sufficient photographic evidence showing school children on his property, to enable him to submit an appeal to have the bus stop removed. He describes being subjected to verbal abuse and advises that one of his vehicles has been damaged. The children often do not catch a bus at the bus stop but are merely 'passing through'. The general consensus of residents is that the bus stop should remain. Transport for West Midlands have carried out a survey and reported that the bus stop will not be removed as there is no suitable alternative site.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Thursday, 7 March 2024 at 7.30 pm.