



## **Purfleet On Thames Community Forum**

### Meeting Minutes 25<sup>th</sup> July 2017

#### **1. Welcome**

Trevor Batchelor, Vice-Chair, introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Attendees were asked to make sure they signed the register and if anyone had not recently received an email from the Forum to add their email address to the signing in sheet so that the email list could be updated.

#### **2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Chair John Rowles, Christine Rowles and Housing Officer Sharon O'Shaugnessy.

#### **3. Minutes**

The question was asked if all present were receiving emails from the Forum and whether they had received the minutes. All did.

Minutes from the meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> May were agreed and signed off.

#### **4. Matters Arising**

Deferred to AOB.

#### **5. Guest Speaker, Simon Brown, Special Project Manager, ArtReach**

Our published guest speaker, Healthwatch, was unable to attend and replaced by ArtReach, an art development organisation who are looking at the development of arts culture within the borough, and who have been commissioned to produce a strategy for arts and heritage by the council. The vision and aims which come from the consultation will provide the basis for the strategy, and the aims will include using culture to change perception.

Simon reported opportunities around marketing, the Thameside Theatre development, and that there are a lot of visual artists in the area who they may be able to support by showcasing their work.

From the floor:

Q: St Stephen's has run art projects for the last 13 years combining music with art, film making, recording. Will you be looking to support small groups with hands on help or are you more about forward thinking vision and key priorities for the area?

A: There might possibly be some involvement in the long term, but it remains to be seen.

Q: What is your timeline/processes/how will you put forward your recommendations?

A: For the last three weeks ArtReach have been consulting with community groups and key stakeholders, including the ROH, and this will continue for one more week. ArtReach have been finding out what is already in the area/what could be promoted and developed and attract more creative industries and jobs to the area/how to get more young people involved/find out what stops involvement/gaps and opportunities/venues and

events/placemaking and culture to help with image perception. Strategies used in other locations, e.g. Luton, where they have produced a 10 year vision, will be explored to see if they are relevant for this area, following which recommendations will be written up and an open presentation made around September/October.

It was voiced that Thurrock already has a lot of art and culture, but entrance fees often apply yet we are situated close to London where museums are free.

Q: Will ArtReach take into account things like transportation issues/free entry/provision of items such as picnic benches at events? As the train fare to London is prohibitive would the council be looking at funding train tickets to London? What opportunities are there for groups to come together to make bids – would there be support through funding?

It was mentioned that nobody attended the Thurrock Art Trail exhibition in Purfleet, that not many residents are members of the ROH Community Chorus and that various local events are not widely known about. It was agreed that communication and marketing is an important factor and a strategy that should be given consideration by ArtReach.

The Luton Carnival Arts Centre run lot of workshops bringing different cultures together and displaying their art, and it was suggested it would be good to showcase events across our borough to help bring cultures together locally.

Simon was made aware that within regeneration plans there is a proposal to make the waterfront an arty area and it was suggested ArtReach get in touch with PCRL.

When members were asked what they might like to see happen, the amount of funding available was queried to try and ascertain whether a large project was viable. It was suggested that the graffiti on the millennium circle be removed and that the beacon on the green be refurbished.

## 6. **Matters Arising/AOB**

No matters arising.

### **New Thames Crossing**

At the Road Users Group in June it was stated that detailed plans will become available in Spring 2018; there will be a consultation; any new road crossing the A13 will take a couple of years to complete.

### **National Grid**

Due to failing and leaking gas pipes major works are being undertaken until 1<sup>st</sup> September along London Road, Grays between West Thurrock Way and Mill Lane. There is two-way traffic with temporary traffic lights. Should Lakeside experience issues, a one-way, westbound route will be instigated. Further works will take place for a period of 14 weeks between May and October 2018 due to medium pressure pipework requirements.

### **Events**

ROH Big Screen Event was much enjoyed.

St Stephen's Community Fun Day was well attended.

High House Community Group enjoyed a picnic on site.

Charity quiz night, 3<sup>rd</sup> August 20:00-21:30 in aid of young carers at The Sandmartin, Drake Road, Chafford Hundred.

Gurkha Day, 6<sup>th</sup> August at Purfleet Heritage Centre.

Netball tournament family fun day, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 11:00-16:00 at Belhus Park Lane, Aveley.

Country music night with Hayden Allen and Amy Westney, 23<sup>rd</sup> September 19:00 at Stifford Clays Social Club, Crammaville Street.

### **Various**

Good wishes were offered to Andy Hudson who is moving to Thundersley after 13 years in Purfleet. He will be conducting his last service this Sunday.

The ROH Community Chorus will be recruiting for new members mid-September, keep an eye out on social media for details of a two week try out. Members can audition for an ROH production in Camden, sing at the ROH at Easter and at other community projects.

Website update – link has been sent to John.

Pictorial history of Purfleet being compiled by Trevor Batchelor - if you have any pictures please get in touch with him.

Any suggestions for guest speakers would be welcome – let John know.

The new Harris Academy is to be named Riverside.

All the regeneration plans are required to be received by the council by February 2018.

Thurrock Gazette have no plans to increase circulation. The Enquirer can be obtained at Purfleet Station and at The Hub. A new newspaper, Thurrock & South Essex Independent, is on sale at 40p, hopefully this may soon become a free paper.

Traffic light failure at Tank Hill Lane junction was reported yesterday and supposed to be fixed the same day, but still not working.

Motorbike issues were reported in Caspian Way and alongside the railway track near the station.

### **Updates from Cllr Oliver Gerrish**

#### **Tower Blocks**

Following the Grenfell Tower fire much work has been undertaken by our council regarding the 15 tower blocks in Thurrock. Cladding in Thurrock is type 'O', the safest type, and therefore Thurrock is not a Government high priority. Every tenant has received a letter from the council. The council are now cracking down on parking close to the base of tower blocks to ensure emergency services have access.

A question was asked as to when the council will notify tenants, of other buildings than the tower blocks, that their buildings are covered with resin as opposed to cladding.

#### **Fly Tipping**

This remains a huge issue with council inconsistencies regarding cleaning up/billing residents for rubbish removal without prior notification. A motion has been put to Full Council to complete a review of all fly tipping policies.

#### **Council Performance KPIs**

Failed on bin collection, recycling, potholes, street cleanliness.

#### **Thames Crossing**

Engaging with Highways England on the detail.

### **Parking and HGVs**

Conversations are ongoing concerning school parking and are to include HGVs to encompass a broader scheme. Oliver voiced disappointment at the speed at which the council are dealing with HGV mitigation measures and said a review is underway to see what can be done. Once again, the charge of £5.80 per day for the car park was stated to be too high for the area and that people are now starting to park on the green near the school.

### **Sheltered Housing Charges**

Originally cited to be £15 per week. Cabinet took the decision to charge £10 per week despite Full Council voting against the charge. The charge will increase from £5 to £8 to £10 by March 2019.

It was pointed out that there was no mention of a charge when some people bought their homes and it was asked how will the council make sure that these occupants are not charged. The Scrutiny Panel have suggested that only new tenants are charged.

More detail is being requested as to the 32 different council services which can be accessed by tenants living in sheltered accommodation.

Another issue raised concerns phone lines having to be put in for tenants who only use mobile phones – who will pay the line rental and installation charge?

### **Roundabouts and Traffic Islands**

Still awaiting a response, delayed due to the election.

### **Apologies for Next Meeting**

The councillors gave their apologies in advance for the September meeting as they will be away at the Labour Party Conference.

### **7. Date of Next Meeting**

26<sup>th</sup> September 2017, 19:30, St Stephen's.