

DERBY ROAD FUND AGM 2019
24 APRIL at 7 pm

MINUTES

Present: David Moro (Treasurer), Paula Benham (Minutes Secretary), Sean Mitchell, Gillian Vooght and 26 residents.

Apologies received from: Shirley Rennison, John & Lindsay Mullaney and Adam Osman

Chairman's welcome

In the absence of Ian Lawson, who had resigned as Chairman due to ill health, the meeting was opened by Paula Benham.

Acceptance of the Minutes of 2018 AGM

Frank Acton, Chairman of Michaels Chase Residents Committee, pointed out that the question as to whether a flat rate charge, plus a contribution for the number of cars, had not been carried forward under Matters Arising. He volunteered to form a working party to look into what he hoped might be a fairer system than the one in current use and was duly invited to attend the first Committee meeting to discuss the matter further (see below).

These Minutes were seconded by Helen Lambert and accepted as a true reflection of the meeting and voted in accordingly.

Financial Report

David Moro had distributed copies of the Audited Accounts for 2018 and mentioned that total contributions received amounted to £14,116, with interest of £23. All Expenditure items were clearly listed for 2018, amounting to £5,043. The Fund stood at £37,082. However, this was not the actual figure in the bank and he referred members to the second sheet showing amounts raised and banked at £30,576 with contributions receivable as £6,866 (monies outstanding to the Fund by non-payers). This includes amounts rolled on from 2017 of £5,668, but an improvement on the 2016 figure of £3,000.

For 2017 non-payers were down to £2,500 outstanding fees for the whole road, but this year had shown a downward trend with approximately £1,500 outstanding to the Fund. DM stated that more money had been collected this year, despite having to increase the charge.

The figures on the third sheet accurately reflected the amount held in the two Fund accounts as of yesterday. There is quite a difference between these two amounts and is why we are so keen on everyone paying their share. These are funds then not available to spend on the road.

The amount at the bottom is equivalent to what we would have if everyone paid.

DM answered questions from the floor regarding how many potential

contributors there were to the Fund (257 residences) and what percentage had paid (95%). This is from all the roads. He clarified that there was a mixture of non paying owners and landlords and that QAS and Mander Court were large scale contributors who paid consistently.

He confirmed that landlords were responsible for paying the fee but the Committee did not know of individual agreements between landlords and tenants. If the annual charge was not covered/perhaps we didn't have details of the owner then the tenant was approached to request they forward the invoice to the owner of the property.

Julie Mills complimented David on his frugality.

The Committee was unable to reduce the contributions without good reason, despite requests for half the fee for single person residences. The Committee had read through the legality of the covenants and DM mentioned the fee is associated with the land and not with the number of people and cars at each residence. DM drew attention to the plans displayed, showing the covenants on the land encompassing DR now and from 75/85 years ago. Each parcel required owners of the land, but not necessarily the house, to contribute to the Fund and to maintain frontages.

DM mentioned that each time queries had been investigated there had been considerable expense, both in time and money, but on each occasion we had recovered original deeds on parcels of land to legitimise the Committee requesting payment.

With regards to a query from Peter Foster about council houses, it was stated there were only four (1-4 Moss Close) still under the local authority which were rented out and were omitted from the requirement to pay the Fund. This was due to a long standing agreement that, in exchange for this, we did not receive an invoice for electricity for street lighting. Compliments were given for the improvement in the street lights and DM assured the floor that we were trying to spend money in the right places. However, any grievances and suggestions should please be forwarded to the Committee.

DM clarified that the Fund's remit was limited to the road surfaces, gullies and soakaways, signage, lighting and maintenance of the gates at the Peppard Road.

DM confirmed the breakdown of payments from QAS as equivalent to 41 residences along the road and the same for Mander Court. These two figures were incorporated into the total numbers of residences listed at 257.

The Accounts were seconded by Jamie Harcourt, voted on and approved.

Helen Lambert proposed a vote of thanks to David for all his hard work which was much appreciated. He received a round of applause from the meeting.

Further to the query by Frank Acton, DM confirmed that this had been raised last year and discussed at Committee. However, it was felt it would be just too difficult for the fee to be broken down to size of frontage, number of cars per household and that GR had a different system. GR weren't the mix of homes, including the number of rentals, together with all the developments off DR. He felt it was hard enough to get money out of people as it was, without additional formulas.

Mr Acton stated that before retiring he had been CEO of many organisations and

recognised that committee members worked hard for their community.

However, he felt strongly that the current fee system was fundamentally unfair and he was prepared to take this item up and find a way of making it not so. He put an offer on the table to set up a working party and asked for two others to join him. DM asked for volunteers: but it would come up as a committee item.

As mentioned above, Frank was invited by DM to attend the next Committee meeting, which he was pleased to accept.

In response to a question from the floor with regard to this unfairness, Mr Acton pointed out there were three classes of people in key areas: some of the tributaries had been wholly adopted by RBC to cover roads and lighting at a total cost of £55 p.a. It was also mentioned that both Ellesmere and Moss had not had any work carried out by RBC for many years.

DR residents get their road paid by the Fund and lighting by council, so they pay the same as the tributaries. DM said we have to maintain trees on our frontage. Adopted roads don't have trees.

Election/re-election of committee members

David Moro, Paula Benham, Sean Mitchell, Gillian Vooght and Shirley Rennison all stood for re-election. Simon Scaddan, Jamie Harcourt and Julie Mills nominated themselves for the Committee.

PB appealed for nominations from the offshoot roads, thereby giving a better feel for what people wanted.

All were duly elected by a majority vote.

DR Facebook

Julie Mills agreed to take over as administrator and PB would put her in touch with Clare Quinn with regard to a hand over. An appeal was made for a mediator but no-one was forthcoming.

Gill Vooght thanked QAS and particularly Thomas Lange and two students for all the help they had given her setting up the all singing, all dancing DR Web Site. She asked for any suggestions for uploads. The site is www.derbyroad.co.uk

Julie volunteered to combine and two roles.

Suzie Harcourt asked for our thanks to Thomas be minuted.

Pinch Point

Requests for additional signage at either end of the road to advise motorists using the road that it was closed had been received. It was agreed that a "Private Road" sign, together with one saying "Road Subject to Frequent Closure" should be put in place. DM confirmed that four signs would cost approximately £250.

DM commented that in the four months the PP had been in place he had noticed a significant decrease in traffic. He felt that cars having to come down and then turn round at the PP had acted as a deterrent. Jon Lloyd thought there was a

safety issue with cars coming down unnecessarily and then turning round at great speed, with damage to the road being counter productive.

Concern was raised at the damage caused to verges around Field View and Fry Court with vehicles turning round. However, it was agreed to give the trial more time to discourage motorists. FV was a mud bath on occasions with parking on the grass. DM stated there was no ideal solution.

Ami Roy raised her concerns with the PP, particularly the feeling that we were trying to exclude people for a very small personal outlay, but Sean Mitchell mentioned it was agreed at last year's AGM to give the PP a six months trial period which would then be reviewed. He confirmed a letter would be sent out mid June to all residents to ask what they wanted done. The answers would be collated and reported on.

GV mentioned that on the first day the PP was in operation 200 cars were monitored in the first 2 1/2 hours coming from both directions.

When asked about narrowing the PP, DM clarified this could not happen to allow ease of access for bin lorries, etc. We could not reduce the size any more without compromising deliveries.

It was confirmed that residents who don't pay their fees would not receive advance notification of the PP closures.

A discussion took place with regard to the GR gate closure, which had resulted in friction between the two roads as the system in place just did not work.

Letter from Mr & Mrs Mullaney re PP and road maintenance issues

This letter was read to the meeting and SM confirmed he had written to them with regard to the PP closures and the questionnaire to be sent out in June. In answer to their query re surface water, they would be notified that improvement measures were being looked into and that the DRF would cover the costs.

Letter from Katrina Baugh

Jon Lloyd, Katrina's husband, outlined their proposal for a pavement along Derby Road to make it safer for buggies, walkers and wheelchair users.

DM confirmed he would make a request to the Tree Officer in regard to another point raised by Jon inasmuch as the roots and overhanging vegetation obstructed walkers. DM felt the main reason for the road not having a footpath was because of the TPOs on the trees on the road.

The owner of 33 DR (Brian Cairns) stated that the real appeal of the road was the gravel paths.

At the request for a show of hands, only five were raised to explore the feasibility and it was agreed to take this back to the AGM next year.

Another point raised was the poor street lighting: the sodium lights had been replaced by LEDs and prior to 2016 the cost of replacing the old lamps had been looked into. SE had quoted £14,000 to replace the ten lamp posts, not including the connection fee. They had surveyed the posts and declared them unsafe and said they could not be converted to LED. This had been disproved through the

efforts of Gill Vooght.

To double the amount of lights in DR would be in the order of £20,000.

Some felt that the original lighting was part of the charm of living in DR, whilst others wanted road users to be considered more. The heritage and beauty of the road needed to be maintained whilst evolving with the times. It was agreed that options would be explored.

Trees definitely needed to be trimmed and the June letter would include this.

Peter Foster

Peter asked for more 15 mph speed signs on the road and it was agreed that one should be erected half way down DR to begin with. He also suggested smaller and narrower humps and it was agreed that costs would be looked into. Ami Roy suggested a series of breakers.

DM pointed out that the existing four humps equated to £5,000 and that the signs would cost £25 each.

Letter from Adam Osman

His item (1) regarding the PP had been dealt with above and item (2) re emergency services had been covered on the DR FB page.

In his item (3) he asked for parking measures around the PP but DM stated that yellow lines could not be done. With regard to item (4) and the request for white posts to prevent vehicles turning on the grass, it was pointed out that the management of the verge plus pollarding of the trees fell on the owner of 1 FV. Unfortunately they did not accept this obligation.

The recovery of the Deeds of Covenant regarding FV were in hand which would prove their responsibility for maintenance.

Peter Foster asked how much 10 posts would cost, but this would need approval.

Item (5) asked about our funds and DM clarified that the two signatories were needed for payments up to £1,000 (DM, SM, PB). Each item of expenditure was investigated for the most economical, e.g. the PP. Any item over this figure had to be put to the residents for approval at the AGM, e.g. footpath and extra lighting.

Sheila Goldsmith

Sheila asked for support from residents with her request to RBC to remove the three large trees in front of Ellesmere Close. They were so large that the overhead telephone cables had become entangled. RBC would crown the trees to allow more light into the properties but, when approached by DM, said they were healthy and would not remove them. Some of the trees on the road had been damaged by the gas main works.

Road Repairs

The road surface around a manhole outside 17 DR was in urgent need of repair and the surface at the entrance gates had been pushed up due to use by cars,

preventing them from being closed properly. The AGM was asked to authorise funds for these. Approval was given for the sum of £5,000. Three quotes had been received and GV would negotiate for a superior finish. The old surface would be removed and resurfaced with a more durable finish. It was hoped to carry out the work during half term so as not to inconvenience residents.

Jamie Harcourt felt the road contractors should be responsible, but unfortunately they hadn't provided a 2/3 year warranty for their work.

Suzie Harcourt mentioned that the edge of the road fell away badly around Mander Court and it was agreed this would be looked at.

Julie Mills asked if the gates needed to be closed and it was pointed out that they needed to be so as to retain our private road status. Peter Foster asked if they could be just chained together but it was pointed out that when this was done last, someone undid the chain and had left the gates open. Meaning the exercise had to be repeated.

Derby Road Fund Fees

Approval was carried for an increase of £10 for the annual fee (making it £65 p.a.) and the retention of the £10 late payment fee.

The meeting ended at 8.55 pm and residents were invited to the buffet table and refreshments bar.

Please note:

Due to time constraints (QAS had asked us to vacate the hall by 9.30 pm) the item **Derby Road Constitution** had to be held over.