

Derby Road Fund

AGM 4 April 2018 – 7.00 p.m.

Minutes

Present: Ed Hellings (Secretary – Acting Chair for the Meeting); David Moro (Treasurer); Lynwen Hardaker; Gill Vooght; Shirley Rennison

Welcome and introductions

EH welcomed all those attending. In the absence of a Chairman, he would Chair the meeting.

Derby Road website

Thomas Lange from Queen Anne's demonstrated the new website for the road. He had been supervising pupils from the school who had put the new site together. Although not yet finished, the basic layout had been prepared and the site incorporated many useful features such as automatic updates from local traffic cameras, emergency services etc.

Residents were supportive of this work and asked about including a section on the road's history. Some residents volunteered to send in pieces in about the road's history to incorporate into the site.

Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the last meeting on 30 March 2017 were accepted as a true record.

Treasurer's report

EH introduced David Moro, the Fund Treasurer. DM reported that much of his time had been taken up with dealing with residual issues from the work performed by GPL. As a result, the reminder letters for the annual contributions had been sent late. Additionally, the Chairman had resigned and so he had to devote more time to this than anticipated.

One street light had needed repair in the year ending 2017. New auditors had been appointed for this year.

Road fund collections made up 80% of total monies owed for 2017. The Committee was taking legal advice as to how far non payers could and should be pursued. Current advice was that the Committee had a strong case, and it would like to take a harder line with non payers than in the past, including as a last resort possible action in the small claims court. Residents had mixed views on how hard a line would be desirable. Some felt that legal action should be ruled out, others were supportive but only as long as a more persuasive approach was tried first. All agreed that an increase in the proportion of households contributing was desirable. A suggestion was made that a clear statement on the new website, together with clear communication to local estate agents and solicitors would be helpful.

At the year end the bank balance stood at £22,679. It had subsequently grown through further collections to around £24,500 to date.

The meeting approved the accounts. DM proposed that the annual contribution for next year should go up to £55, which was approved.

A proposal was put to forward to the meeting with regards late payment of the fee.

A question was raised as to whether the charge could be levied as a flat rate, plus a contribution for the number of cars in each household. DM said this would be impractical and difficult to implement without considerably more work by the Treasurer, the Committee would consider this for 12 months' time.

DM stated that late payment was still an issue and payments were still being received for 2017. A proposal was put to forward to the meeting that late payment of the fee should accrue an additional fee of £5.00, this was rejected on the grounds that to serve as a deterrent it should be higher. A proposal of £10.00 was suggested, voted on and approved.

Election of Officers

Before electing Officers, EH noted the contribution of 2 former Committee members. Brian Farnham had borne the brunt of the liaison with GPL and had served as Chairman since the last AGM. Ralph Lambert, the former Treasurer, had very sadly died shortly after the last AGM and before that had served on the Committee for a number of years. On behalf of the Committee and the residents, EH expressed gratitude to them both for their efforts.

EH introduced the remaining Committee members: Lynwen Hardaker, Gill Vooght and Shirley Rennison. All the current Committee were standing for re-election. EH invited nominations for further candidates and for any candidates as Chairman – Ian Lawson was proposed and volunteered to stand as Chairman and was elected by majority vote.

DM requested that any other interested parties wishing to join the committee may do so following on from the AGM. There were no further nominations at the meeting, and the meeting duly elected those standing as the Committee.

Derby Road Fund Constitution

The Committee tabled a draft Constitution document for discussion. After discussion and a number of suggested amendments it was decided not to pursue this at the meeting without further deliberation by the committee and residents before putting it to a vote for adoption. An amended Constitution would be uploaded onto the website for further review by all.

LED lights

DM and LH outlined 4 options for consideration:

- Replace all old lampstands with new lampposts and fittings. Replacing with new LED heritage fittings with Swan necks – cost approx. £15,000
- Replace all old lampstands and fittings with new lampposts and fittings. Replacing with non heritage fittings with Swan necks – cost approx. £7,800
- Replace all old lampstands and fittings with new lampposts and LED non heritage fittings with no Swan necks – cost approx. £7,400
- Replace just the lamps with LED lamps – cost approx. £2,500.

- In discussion and noting that this work is entirely at the resident's discretion and expense, the last option was preferred and voted on by a show of hands. It was pointed out that the deflectors may need to be fitted both to stop light pollution into houses and for safety reasons, to avoid glare for driver's. A budget of £3,000 was agreed by the meeting to carry out the work.

Gate closure

After discussion, the meeting agreed in principle to shut the gates in order to preserve the resident's right to maintain the road as a private road without a public right of way. Legal advice was that this needed to be done at least once every 20 years, but it was thought more practical to do this once a year. The date suggested was August Bank Holiday or Good Friday to avoid congestion at the entrance of Derby Road on weekdays.

The feeling at the meeting was that this should be put to a vote. A majority vote in favour of the gate closure was returned.

The agreement was subject to the following points:

- Closure should not be on the same day as a Grosvenor Road closure
- The gate should be shut from dawn till dusk (6.00am till 8.00pm) and not manned for opening.
- A board could be placed at both the Grosvenor Road and Peppard Road end to warn drivers of the closure.
- Emergency services should be notified in advance of the closure.
- The closure should be publicised on the new website.
- Consultation with Grosvenor Road committee.

Maintenance/road issues

DM notified the meeting that 4 gully tops needed replacement and the soakaway outside number 29 also needed attention. Quotes were being sought for this.

Any other business

Helen Lambert stated that if any residents would like Caversham Bridge (a local newspaper) delivered they should contact her at number 5. Similarly, the AGM of CADRA (Caversham and District Residents' Association) was being held on 7 April – she had details if anyone wanted to attend.

There was a general desire to reduce the amount of public traffic coming along the road. During the discussion two suggestions were made:

- Investigate whether an arrangement with an outsourcing company could be put in place for them to patrol the road and levy fines. The Committee would investigate this but it was felt unlikely that fines would be possible as the offence being committed was a civil one of trespass, not a criminal one.
- It would also be difficult to differentiate between legitimate users and those taking a short cut.
- Installation of a pinch point in the road was proposed by DB and TW. This has been discussed for many years, about half way along DR with it been close for one or two days or even up to a week, as on Grosvenor Road. Some potential problems with this

were raised: it would inconvenience Derby Road residents as well as the public; it could cause problems with lorries turning half way along the road, endangering pedestrians and causing damage to the verges; we may need to be notify RBC, the emergency services who may have objections. Nonetheless, the feeling at the meeting was that this should be put to a vote. A majority vote in favour of installing the pinch point was returned. The decision of location, design and notification would be left to the Committee.

EH thanked all those who attended and the meeting ended at 9.05pm.