



## **Woodford Community Council**

### **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 2015**

#### **WCC members present:**

Paul Rodman                      Chairman

Helen Buszard                      Secretary

David Buszard, Ken Coxey, Bryan Leck, Rev David Russell, Morag White, Maxine Wood

#### **Apologies**

Robin Berriman, Treasurer

#### **Guest Speaker**

Carl Taylor, Redrow Homes

A further 50 residents and visitors attended the meeting, including Cheadle MP Mary Robinson and local councillor John McGahan.

#### **1. Chairman's Opening Remarks**

The Chairman opened the meeting by extending a warm welcome to residents and visitors and to guest speaker Carl Taylor and Liam O'Sullivan from Redrow Homes Ltd. He noted that Cheadle MP Mary Robinson would be arriving slightly later after attending an earlier meeting in the constituency.

#### **2. Minutes of the previous AGM held on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

The Secretary reported that the draft Minutes of the 2014 meeting had been available on the WCC website since the beginning of the year and no corrections or amendments had been submitted. Mr Coxey proposed that the Minutes be approved. This was seconded by Mrs White and carried unanimously.

#### **3. Chairman's Annual Report**

The Chairman began by explaining how the role of the WCC differed from that of the other local organisations Woodford War Memorial Community Centre (WWMCC) and Woodford Neighbourhood Forum (WNF). He then gave a brief summary of WCC's activities over the past year. It had taken a major role in the liaison between residents and Harrow, contractors Forshaw Demolition, SMBC officials and local councillors, and WCC representatives had attended monthly meetings with Harrow, passing on residents' concerns on matters such as

unacceptable levels of vibration, noise, dust, etc, and receiving updates on the progress of the demolition. A watching brief had also been kept on other areas of development that would affect Woodford, in particular, the completion of the A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road, the proposed residential development at Handforth, plans for the Poynton Relief Road and other plans and policies proposed by Cheshire East Council. He noted that there had not been the usual WCC *Keep Woodford Tidy* day that autumn, but felt that the litter problem seemed to be improving, with more activity by SMBC operatives in Woodford.

He concluded by thanking the current committee members for their support, in particular the Secretary for keeping the website up to date and David Buszard for organising the eNewsletters and Newsflashes throughout the year.

#### **4. Treasurer's Report**

The Chairman presented apologies from the Treasurer and introduced the Financial Report for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2015. A copy of the Report was shown on the screen and a brief summary of the salient points provided. There were no questions arising.

#### **5. Report from Woodford Neighbourhood Forum (WNF)**

The Chairman invited David Buszard, who was the WCC representative on WNF, to give his report.

Mr Buszard began by noting that WNF had been established two years ago and now had 72 members, 18 of whom sat on the Management Committee, together with two co-opted planning experts. Earlier in the year a small Planning Team, led by Roger Burton, had been set up to work on the development of the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan. He emphasised that WNF was not an action group, as the now disbanded Woodford United had been. Its aim was to promote and improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of Woodford and facilitate the integration and transition that would be necessary as the Redrow development proceeded.

He went on to explain how the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan had been proceeding. The most important aspect was consultation with residents. The information gathered and analysed to date had arisen from the following.

- A first consultation with residents in August 2014 via a questionnaire sent to every individual on the extended electoral register for Woodford.
- A Forum Workshop held in December 2014 with the subsequent report prepared by external consultants, Kirkwells.
- A Public Exhibition of draft Vision and Objective in June 2015.
- Additional questionnaires for business and charities.

From this a vision for the Plan had been produced:

***“The Vision for the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan is to manage and support beneficial change whilst retaining and enhancing the village’s rural identity, character, quality of life and sense of community.”***

This statement was supported by six Objectives as follows.

#### Environment

***To protect the area's Green Belt and preserve the open and rural character. To protect the landscape and important views.***

The actions to support this included a wildlife study to be carried out by Cheshire Wildlife Trust, supported by a local habitat study led by Evelyn Frearson. A landscape study would be undertaken by consultants AECOM, as well as mapping of historic buildings.

#### Community

***To preserve and enhance recreational assets and open space to promote a healthy community.***

Woodford was blessed with a wide range of facilities – the Community Centre, playing fields, clubs and their facilities, cricket grounds, open landscape, footpaths and bridleways. The question was how to maintain and enhance these for the future. Actions include identifying assets, green spaces and iconic views.

#### Development

***To provide variety and mix that meets local needs and manage limited infilling including residential, employment and community uses.***

Green belt policy and planning applications were always likely to be controversial. The Plan therefore needed to have credibility and relate to national and local housing policy. WNF had therefore commissioned an independent expert study on Woodford's housing and future needs in relation to SMBC and the local area, undertaken by AECOM. Its findings had included a recommendation that Woodford's housing needs in the period 2011 – 2026 would be in the range of **20 to 25** additional dwellings. Further consultation on this aspect would be carried out.

#### Movement

***To create safer roads, streets and lanes and increase public access to countryside by foot, cycle and bridleway. To encourage sustainable transport.***

The provision of footpaths and cycle paths, road safety and public transport all featured highly when residents were asked what the Plan should encourage. Traffic through Woodford was likely to change on completion of the A555 and Poynton Relief Road, but there would be a greater volume of internally generated traffic. A report had been commissioned to address this aspect and the outcome was expected shortly.

#### Employment

***To seek to protect and support local employment.***

This was currently under discussion.

#### Integration

***To ensure integration and linkage between the existing village and the aerodrome development to achieve an enhanced enlarged community.***

Whilst the Aerodrome development lay outside the Neighbourhood Area, it would nevertheless have a major impact on the existing village. Feedback from the Workshop and Exhibition had confirmed that the integration of the new and existing parts of the village should be encouraged and the challenge would be to find the best way of achieving this.

Mr Buszard concluded by explaining that the next action would be for WNF to bring these initiatives together to create a draft Plan, on which further consultation would be undertaken. This would then be revised as necessary and submitted to SMBC. From that stage onward, the formal Neighbourhood Plan process would be led by SMBC.

Finally, Mr Buszard referred attendees to the WNF website – [www.woodfordneighbourhoodforum.co.uk](http://www.woodfordneighbourhoodforum.co.uk), where useful background information and relevant documents could be found.

## **6. Election of WCC members**

The Secretary noted that the existing members of the committee were willing to serve for a further year. In accordance with the WCC Constitution, up to five vacancies were available for new members to join the committee. She invited nominations from residents present, but none was forthcoming.

The Chairman suggested that anyone interested in finding out more about the work of WCC should contact himself or the Secretary after the meeting.

## **7. Development of the Woodford Aerodrome Site**

The Chairman introduced the Guest speaker, Mr Carl Taylor, Senior Project Manager, of Redrow Homes Ltd.

- Mr Taylor began his presentation by outlining his own role and describing the structure and responsibilities of the Project Team for Woodford. He went on to explain how the remaining demolition work would be scheduled and presented a Master Plan showing the various phases for building across the whole site.
- Detailed plans were shown for the first phase of 145 dwellings. The proposed layout comprised four different areas, each with its own characteristics, built around the Village Green, which was a large area of open space providing an attractive major feature for the development. Illustrations of the various house types that would be built on the site were projected.
- Some 19 proposed areas of play or public open space would be spread across the site and where possible would utilise existing features to create a link to the heritage of the site.
- Details were given of the affordable housing that would be built on site and it was noted that a contribution of £4m would be provided for offsite housing within Stockport Metropolitan Borough.
- The education provision on site would consist of a single form entry primary school. A scheme would be submitted to the Council on or prior to the 50th occupation and the school would be ready by the 450th occupation.
- Phase 1 of the offsite highways work was scheduled to take place between December 2015 and April 2016. This work was being undertaken by the SMBC highways contractor and involved the construction of the new roundabout at the east entrance to

the site, as well as drainage connections, new kerbs and channels, footways and cycle ways, new street lighting and carriageways resurfacing. Illustrations of the types of paving stones, blocks etc were shown.

- Finally, attention was drawn to various timescales for the development. In particular, the phase 1 sales area would be completed and opened by March 2016, the first occupation was anticipated by July 2016 and the completion of Phase 1 by September 2018.

The Chairman thanked Mr Taylor for an illuminating presentation and opened the floor to questions. A lively discussion and exchange of views ensued.

Particular points emerging from this included that fact that no-one present liked the name Woodford Garden Village, since it seemed to differentiate the new development from the existing Woodford. Mr Taylor assured residents that it was intended to be used only for marketing purposes and he showed on screen a list of new postal addresses that simply referred to *Woodford, Stockport*.

There was concern that the construction of the access roundabout and associated work would continue seven days a week. Mr Taylor explained that this was a decision taken by the Council contractors, not Redrow, although he pointed out that since this work was already a few weeks behind schedule it would be beneficial for all concerned to complete it as soon as possible.

Concerns were also expressed that more heavy traffic would be generated when Phase 2 building started and it was queried whether there would be designated routes for this through the village. Mr Taylor felt that this would not be a problem, since by then all the demolition work, which generated the most traffic, would have been completed.

Another pressing traffic issue was raised by residents of Church Lane and Blossoms Lane. They noted that there was already an increase in the traffic using these lanes as a cut through to avoid the junction of Moor Lane and Chester Road and described a number of recent incidents and near accidents. It was recognised that these were narrow country lanes, used frequently by walkers, cyclists and horse riders and not suitable for through traffic use. There was concern that the situation could only worsen when work started on the A555 roundabout at the junction with Bramhall and the planned introduction of traffic calming measures on Moor Lane could also exacerbate the problems for Church Lane and Blossoms Lane. It was agreed that WCC would follow up this issue by collating comments/suggestions and forwarding them to local councillors for action.

Mr Taylor was asked to confirm a statement he had made earlier in his presentation that the remainder of the site – ie land that was not subject to the building shown on the Master Plan, including all the land that came under Cheshire East - would be returned to agricultural use. He agreed that this was the case.

Mr Taylor also confirmed that the Bridle Road entrance to the development would only be open for pedestrian and cyclist access, except in emergencies. He also commented that the chain link fences around the boundaries of the site would be replaced by appropriate wooden fencing.

The complete set of slides used by Mr Taylor during his presentation may be viewed here - <http://www.woodfordcommunity.co.uk/documents/2015/Woodford-garden-village-presentation-nov-2015-final.pdf>

## 8. Closure of Meeting

Before closing the meeting, the Chairman invited Cheadle MP Mary Robinson to say a few words.

Mrs Robinson spoke about her first few months as an MP, indicating how interested she was in local issues and how privileged she felt to be able to represent the constituency at Westminster. She noted that there was also a national and international dimension to the role of MP, which gave it an added importance and seriousness, particularly now in these troubled times.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Robinson for her interesting insights, Mr Taylor once again for his presentation and everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

*Minutes Approved, on behalf of the Community*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Taylor', written in a cursive style.

Chairman

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> November 2016