

MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 14TH MAY 2008 AT ASPINAL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Present:

Terry Perkins - Chair
Jenny Watson - Secretary
John Eccles - Treasurer
Gordon Guest - Committee Member
Ronnie Watson - Committee Member
Heather Kingdom
Damian O'Reilly - Sergeant
John Bridges - Councillor
Charles Glover - Councillor

Apologies:

Kevin Watson - Communications Officer

The Chair opened the meeting at 6.30pm by welcoming the Police representatives and the Councillors. Then the Chair said it had come to his attention that certain residents were not entirely happy with the way in which the last meeting had been conducted, eg some residents felt that the Chair had gone on too long about recycling issues. The Chair stated that the Association is a democratic Association and if anyone had any issues about the way things are run, they should take it up with the Chair himself and not with anyone else.

The Treasurer reported that nearly all the grant money for Athol/Goulder had been spent. And the alleyway was really looking good with all the plants, trees and arches and benches.

The Secretary reminded everyone again how important it was for residents to inform her of any incidents that needed to be logged in the Incident Log. It is vital that incidents are recorded so that the Association can take matters up with the Police and have evidence to back it up. Please give a record of all incidents to the Secretary.

Although the Communications Officer couldn't make this meeting, he did however send some news.

The new stationery for the Residents Association has now arrived from the printers and it looks excellent!!

The newsletter is under construction at this moment in time. In it will be all the latest news about what is going on in this particular area, along with all the relevant phone numbers and contacts that residents need to know, eg council departments, councillors and police and police support etc. There will also be photographs taken of the alleyway between Athol and Goulder. And photos of the trees in Athol Street.

Every resident in the Association's area will be given a copy of this newsletter.

Neil Flynt, Headmaster at Aspinal Primary School, has asked us to try to get the children more involved in the Association. So with this in mind, the website will have a Blog, where any resident with a computer can log onto and leave messages. The children can also gain access to this Blog and leave their own comments.

(A Blog is like a diary.) The website address is www.aspinalresidents.co.uk

The Chair then began to give updates on previous agenda issues.

- Although bins have been supplied along Reddish Lane, there is still no bin at the bus stop near to Athol Street. Councillor Glover promised to look into this.
- The trees that have been planted on Athol Street are beginning to bloom and look really good.
- Red Rose are liaising with the school over the children planting bulbs around the base of the trees.

- Unfortunately, the Association has been informed that Chatham Road and Goulder Road cannot have trees as the pavements

are not wide enough.

- Cranbrook Road can have trees, but they have decided to try to get their alleyway done first and go for trees later.
- Chatham Road are awaiting the extension of their gates before tarmac is laid down the whole of the path.
- There will be new signs concerning dog fouling going up in the streets.
- It was mentioned that because the area is improving, people are acting differently now and talking to each other. People are getting more community minded.
- Next on the agenda was the Chapel in Gorton Cemetery. Friends of Gorton Cemetery want to save this beautiful old building, but the council want to demolish it. Councillor Glover suggested we get together with Friends and agree on a viable use of the building in order for us to get a grant to do something with it. Very important that we agree on its use.
- The Chair stated that recycling was to be put on the agenda for the next meeting.
- The Association have £200 towards a Family Fun Day. If anyone wishes to volunteer to organise this Fun Day please talk to members of the Committee. Councillor Glover again offered to help with anything in connection with this.
- The residents were informed that at some time in the near future, the council were going to send letters out to all residents about wheelie bins that are left outside. Strictly speaking it is an offence to leave your wheelie bin in the alleyway as this is still council property. Your wheelie bin should be kept on your own property, ie your backyard.
- The last update was about the ungated section of the alleyway between Athol and Cranbrook, at the back of the shops on Reddish Lane. This is an ongoing issue. Youths regularly congregate there making nuisances of themselves. And the entry is filthy with broken glass and rubbish being left there on numerous occasions. Apparently, because of the the fire risk to one flat over the shops, this cannot be gated. But Councillor Bridges promised to look into this with a view to somehow shutting it off.

The Chair then threw the meeting open to the residents to ask the police or councillors about anything they were concerned about.

- A resident from Goulder Road told how at 7.15pm on a Saturday night a stolen car had gone right through the wall of her front garden, demolishing it. Apparently, Goulder Road has suffered a number of similar incidents with cars, bikes over the years. The Councillors were very interested in all of this and wanted to know what the police were doing.
- Heather Kingdom took all the notes down and Sergeant O'Reilly accepted there was a problem in this particular area as it borders on 3 different police divisions. The criminals seem to be favouring the area because of this bordering. However, he promised to take note and see what can be done.
- Councillor Glover said there was a traffic calming programme coming up and he would see where this area was on that programme and promised to get back to us. Maybe chicaines might be effective, but the road is quite small.
- A resident complained about the shop on Reddish Lane that openly sells by the back door, ie selling things to children in the alleyway at the back of the shops. Sergeant O'Reilly said this has been raised on a number of occasions to the police. People have said there were stolen goods there, but when police have gained a warrant and entered the premises, nothing was found. The police continue to monitor this situation and are co-ercing with Trading Standards. There have been issues in the past with fireworks which have been confiscated in the past. Now the owner of the shop is complying to the minimum rule and has a certificate to sell them once again. Sergeant O'Reilly told the meeting that if anyone has any concrete evidence please tell the police straight away.
- There was an issue raised about card cloning, possibly involving the local bookies and late shop. The police promised to look very carefully into this.
- Another issue was a resident who had called the police after a large group of youths were making a nuisance of themselves on Reddish Lane outside Aspinall Church. After quite a long while, a police car came with one police woman who spoke to the youths for a few moments then drove off and left them. The youths only broke up and dispersed after some time, when a fight broke out. Fortunately, no damage and no-one injured. But the resident said they felt demoralised - what was the use of calling the police when they did nothing at all??
- Sergeant O'Reilly explained that in some areas of policing they were clamping down on certain offences but the minor offences were being left. The police seem to be giving out £30 tickets to youngsters more and more, but these can only be given to youngsters over the age of 16. Younger ones just get warnings. And sometimes contacting their parents can be quite a job. Sometimes parents are not at home or just don't want to know.
- Someone mentioned that the PCSOs didn't seem to be around as much as they used to be.
- Sergeant O'Reilly said that after 2 June this should improve. There was a new re-structuring coming into force. In 2000 Gorton only had 7 officers covering the whole area. Other officers were dealing with other jobs in Longsight. It was largely left to the PCSOs to deal with the work load. But from June 2nd, there will be 1 Inspector, 3 Sergeants and 20 PCSOs. In this area we will have 2 dedicated officers, PC Vernon and PC Bishop. Inspector Bowers is totally dedicated.
- The issue was raised about teachers parking their cars on the street and not using the school car park. The Chair promised to

take this up with the Headmaster. Councillor Glover agreed we should liaise with the school. Find out what the problem is then we can all work on a solution.

- It was raised that drug dealers are operating along the canal path. The canal path is an easy access escape route for criminals. A motor bike revs up and down there every night around 11pm. There have been muggings on that path too. Youths come over the cemetery from Ryder Brow causing a nuisance and houses being burgled.
- Police stated they are aware of the problem on Dean Road but didn't know about the late night ones. They promised to look into it. Councillor Glover said he would check the situation with Inspector Bowers and let us know the outcome.
- An Athol Street resident told of youths jumping on parked cars in Athol Street. The resident rang police who said someone would come. When police did eventually arrive the youths had split up and run off. There were about 50 of them. Sergeant O'Reilly said that the police had been ultra busy that night. He advised NOT to go out to youths. This was highly dangerous. Hopefully the new system will be better.
- Number 25 Goulder Road wanted to know why the council, who had been laying a new pavement in Goulder Road, had stopped short of her house? Councillor Glover said he would take this up with the council and let us know.
- The meeting was told about someone dumping rubbish in the alleyway of Cranbrook and Athol. This is a gated alleyway so can only be a resident. One of the back walls has fell down and a big tree has grown over all the entry. The rubbish dumping has been going on for about 2 years. Councillor Glove and Councillor Bridges have promised to look into this and see what can be done. Heather Kingdom said she would try to find out who the landlord is, with a view to sorting this out.
- A resident asked the question of what is the Resident Association doing about youths? We are so quick to condemn but have we got any plans about how to help them?
- The committee answered by saying at the moment we cannot do anything, we are too small to organise anything, but we might be able to in the future. The councillors said that the council website has details of things going on for youths. But the residents said there was nothing in this area.
- Councillor Bridges and Councillor Glover said they would try to find out if anything was going on at Debdale Park for youths. Maybe some future events could be held here at Aspinal School.
- The councillors suggested the Association make a long list of things we want and they would look at everything with a view to help if they could.

The Chair thanked everyone for coming including the Police and the Councillors. The committee would let them know the date of our next meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.