

Present: Dave Hutchinson Cllr Joan Atkinson Delia McNally Miriam Hardie Grahame Tobin Mervyn Butler Phil Payne Howard Lawrence Roy Wilburn Lesley Younger Peter Arthurs Jane Arthurs Howard Becke Sue Shilling Matthew Hammond Sue Balmer	Apologies: Kirstin Richardson Cllr Jane Carter Viv Davies Joe Thompson Maureen Skevington Ron Forbister Gillan Gibson Rev Paul Barker
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Welcome from the Chair

As Kirstin was unable to attend, Roy acted as Chair and welcomed all to the meeting.

Matters arising from meeting on 8 March 2021:

No matters arising. Minutes of last meeting agreed.

Council consultation on Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan

The deadline for responses to the Council consultation is Friday April 23rd. Although members may have responded to the Forum's own consultation in the autumn, it is important that they also respond to the Council's consultation, as these comments will be reviewed by the independent Examiner. Members were asked to try to encourage people to respond. A reminder to members will be sent by email and a countdown to the deadline will feature in posts on Facebook. Those who responded to the consultation in the Autumn could repeat their comments.

Some concerns were raised about the complexity of the Plan and associated documentation, and the need to make messaging around the Plan as straightforward as possible.

Even though we have tried to explain the process to produce a Neighbourhood Plan succinctly and clearly, we are hearing that some residents are still confused and are confusing our Neighbourhood Plan with the Council's Local Plan. Some confusion is

caused by the fact that responses must be made to the Council's local plan email address and not to the Forum. The Council has suspended their Local Plan, so there should be no confusion, but it may be necessary for the Executive to publish a press release to clarify the process again. We need to check whether the Council are going to publicise the consultation in the press.

Action:

- The Secretary to email Forum members and those who had responded to the autumn consultation with a reminder to respond the Council's consultation.
- Cllr Atkinson will share information about the consultation and the email address on the Residents' Facebook page.
- Comms will draft a press release in case it is needed.

Leaflet deliveries

Leaflets have not yet been delivered to some businesses in the Forum area. There are sufficient leaflets to cover the number of businesses in the Forum area. Some have been delivered in the normal rounds. Roy offered to deliver those still needing leaflets, particularly those in the Cleadon Lane Industrial Est.

Action:

- Dave to email out list of businesses to check which have not received leaflet.
- Roy to deliver to those businesses.

Network Rail: track stabilisation work affecting Boldon Flats Local Wildlife Site

Delia reported disturbing changes in activities of Network Rail from earlier explanations of the project e.g. workmen are scraping vegetation from the surface rather than laying a covering over the land to protect it whilst work is going on. Network Rail are aware of public concern about environmental damage to the area. The Forum is a formally constituted body and as such we should pressurise the company to give priority to reparation and improvement to the site. As this is such an important site; it was decided to make Kate Osborne MP aware of the project by copying her into a formal letter to Network Rail, voicing our concerns and expectations.

Action:

- Members to monitor activity on site, take photographs and keep a record of progress.
- Delia to draft a letter to Network Rail for submission from the Forum

Northumbrian Water – Boldon Flats drainage

Another example of Forum dialogue with a utility company and the tenant farmer to secure a good outcome for the Forum area. A collapsed sewer on Boldon Flats was noticed and reported to Northumbrian Water by Delia. It will be repaired in May.

Antisocial behaviour (Moor Lane):

Antisocial behaviour continues to be logged in the Forum area, particularly in Moor Lane and on Boldon Flats. Kicking over cones is mischievous and annoying for motorists who have to put them back in place. It was clarified that the only part of the Flats designated as an SSSI is the area of meadow near Broadlands. The rest is designated as a Local Wildlife Site under the management of the Council. Horse grazing may be beneficial to the area but young people have been seen galloping on horseback near to nesting birds. When challenged, they referred to the Flats as a “horse field” and said that they were allowed to ride there. Some of the nesting and visiting birds are rare and should not be disturbed. There must be an agreement between the tenant farmer and the Council about the care of the land. The issue will be raised at the next liaison meeting with the Council.

Action:

- Delia will contact Clare Rawcliffe, the Council’s Local Wildlife Officer to report our concerns. Forum members will also explore further options for enforcing protection of Boldon Flats with eg, Durham Wildlife Trust.

Litterpicking (linked to Community Action 2 in the Forum’s Draft Neighbourhood Plan)

Community Actions form part of the Neighbourhood Plan and can be found on the website at: <https://www.eastboldonforum.org.uk/2021/04/12/community-actions/>

Litter picking is an activity which would be covered by Community Action 2 (Enhancing the Village Environment).

As concerns were raised about increased litter in the Forum area at the last meeting, members formed a group of litter pickers to clean up the village.

We thank Miriam Hardie for acting as coordinator for this effort. Miriam updated the meeting with progress:

- 12 litter pickers were lent by West Boldon Lodge for a period of 4 weeks
- Litter pickers were issued to the 13 volunteers on 13 March along with guidance on safe use.
- Due to Covid restrictions litter picking initially had to be done individually, one household or with one other person.
- The following areas were tackled:
 - Grey Horse car park (6 bags full..)
 - Black’s Plantation
 - Dipe Lane/Bridle Path
 - Top of Boker Lane/North Road/bridle way by the Paddocks
 - Grange Park
 - Western Terrace/Front Street
 - Part of Tile Sheds Lane
- 30th March – 2 group litter picks on Tile Shed Lane and the Grey Horse car park. Within 2 hours the two teams collected 18 bags of litter which the Council later collected.

- 8th April – 36 bags provided by the Council were filled along with an assortment of larger items e.g. rusty wheelbarrow and roadwork furniture from 3 main areas – Tiledshed Lane, Cleadon Lane and Sunderland Road to the Cricket Club
- Another volunteer with some work colleagues plus a passer-by tackled Moor Lane on 9th April and gathered 40 bags and several other items.
- In total, and not counting individual litter picks, over 80 bags of litter have been collected from East Boldon by this initiative.

The feedback from residents has been positive and supportive of the community action taken on the litter picks. 160+ likes on Forum's page and over 230 likes on Pride in East Boldon page, plus 87 comments. In addition, more people have offered their support as pickers.

Miriam suggested options for further action:

1. Establish a community litter picking group. The last few weeks have demonstrated that people are willing to take action. The Forum would need to consider if it wants to purchase its own equipment, if so, what equipment is needed, taking account of whether it will go for a cohort of volunteers to regularly pick, and/or special groups (e.g., schools, Scouts, Guides, FoEBP etc), and the route of funding.
2. Organise public litter picking sessions utilising the Council's equipment, this would be dependent on Covid rules and when the Council could restart loaning out their equipment. The Council has 40 available for use.
3. Alternatively, the Forum could promote and encourage residents to take their own action against litter by publicising national campaigns such as Keep Britain Tidy, or do talks in schools and other community groups.

The Chair thanked Miriam for organising the litter pick and updating the Forum on the results.

Action:

- Further discussion of possibilities to be discussed at future meetings, including the possible involvement of the Council.

Meeting closed 8.12 pm

Date of next meeting: Monday 10 May at 7pm via Zoom