

30th May 2002

Minutes: Meeting at Northmead School 22nd May 2002

The Proposed Community Hall.

Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillor John Hoborough, who sent a message of support. David Johnson attended as stand in for Councillor Hoborough.

1 Welcome and introduction

Made by Acting Chairman Martin Moss. Village & Community Hall Adviser with Surrey Voluntary Service Council

2 STAG - Who are they?

Explanation from Councillor **Fiona White**, Leader Guildford Borough Council.

A small voluntary group who have been working on behalf of Stoughton residents, in a non-political way, attempting to get the best results available from the development at the Queen Elizabeth Park in the centre of the Stoughton Ward.

They are:

John Allford, acting as nominal chairman, was born and bred in Stoughton and after a number of years away, has lived back at the family home in Grange Road for the past seventeen years. John is currently working for a printing company in Knaphill.

Peter Gunner, a project manager for the major refurbishment of the London Borough of Hounslow. Peter was born in Woking and he and his young family live in Stoughton.

Maureen Bell, an Independent Financial Advisor in the City, has lived in Stoughton for some 23 years. She originated in the Shetland Islands and has lived many years overseas working in developing countries.

Cllr Pauline Searle, in particular, and the other Stoughton Councillors, have supported and helped this small group throughout their efforts. Willing assistance has also been provided by a small number of other Stoughton residents

Their achievements were then listed (see Appendix 1)

3 Outline of proposed Community Centre Development

By Maureen Bell.

The current situation: Laing Homes and Linden Homes have a contractual agreement '**to provide a community meeting room not less than 150 sq metres**'. That is approximately two thirds the size of this hall. **This is not nearly large enough to serve this community.**

STAG attitude: STAG feels that although the 106 agreement between the developers and the GBC gives a considerable amount of what is called 'planning gain', there are few benefits for the residents of Stoughton who have to endure the inevitable disruptions during the 3-4 years the development is under construction. Over 3,500 invitations to this meeting have been delivered to every home in Stoughton (every resident is considered to be a member of STAG unless indicated otherwise).

Stoughton ward has the highest density of people in Guildford but sadly has few social amenities. Stoughton has never had a community centre or a village hall and many residents feel the ward lacks community spirit.

We believe we now have a great opportunity to put a 'heart' into the ward by creating a really excellent community centre capable of providing facilities and services to each and every section of the community.

To do this **we need you to tell us what you want.**

To do this **we need your help and commitment.**

Only when we have received all of your ideas, will we be able to provide the architects with a brief so that the building can be designed.

What happens next?

The commitment made by the developers clearly will not provide the capital required to build the size and kind of community centre wanted. We now need to engage in serious fund raising.

At the same time it is our hope to apply to the Lottery for capital from their Community Fund. This is a long and arduous task with no guaranteed results. We are determined that the quality of our application will at least impress the panel of judges and hopefully improve our chances of receiving funds.

The developers have already agreed to transfer the land for the community building to STAG on a long lease, ownership being one of the criteria for the Lottery application.

To make this application, STAG needs to become a charity – Martin Moss then explained the concept

4 Appointment of New Steering Committee

The following were proposed and accepted.

Maureen Bell, Peter Gunner, John Allford, Councillor Pauline Searle, Philip Fowler, Ian Godfrey, Nigel Horton, Jonathan Clark and Philip Knapp.

5 Adoption of proposed resolution.

The following motion was proposed and seconded.

"We present, being interested parties to the proposed building of a community centre in Stoughton in county of Surrey, hereby authorise the persons mentioned in item four above to act as a steering committee on our behalf, to carry the proposed development forward, and if necessary to adopt a Preliminary Declaration of Trust. We also authorise them when necessary to adopt a set of rules and an appropriate Model Trust Agreement and register as a charity".

The motion was put to a vote and carried with one abstention and no vote against.

6 Identification of additional persons willing to sit on various committees or help otherwise.

The following volunteered their services: Edward Tudor, Pat Commerford, Margaret Scott, Teresa Punter, Frank Aparak, and Patricia Morrow. Jane Baker offered that her husband might be willing to help with a community fund (lottery) application. Ian Hollingsworth,

Headmaster of Northmead School, offered the schools facilities for any reasonable activities, whether fund raising or otherwise.

7 Introduction of Lisa Scott, Programme Development Manager at the YMCA, explained her role at the YMCA, and offered assistance with setting up activities for the Community Hall.

8 Questions and Suggestions from the floor (see Appendix 2)

There being no other business the Chairman then closed the meeting – at 9.30 pm.

The approval of these minutes was

Proposed by Councillor Pauline Searle:

Seconded by Nigel Horton.

Approved at a meeting held at.

On.

Signed.

John Allford: Acting Chairman.

Dated:

Appendix 2 :

Questions and Ideas from the floor:

Jennifer Berry; asked. Is the building to be single storey or more?

Peter Gunner replied; 'STAG is pushing for two stories.'

Jane Baker; 'Twenty Six years ago we were promised a community building on Grange Park, but Wimpey built two houses instead. Fifteen years ago there was to have been a community centre built on land previously used for allotments, this also did not happen.'

Councillor Jayne Marks explained that the money on offer from Guildford Borough Council went towards the Youth and Community Centre at Stoughton Recreation Ground, also a sports pavilion had been provided at Cardwells Keep. She added that this was the best chance of a Community Centre for sixteen years and could be the last chance for a long time.

Ivan Ball, Linden homes; stated that the developers had budgeted for construction in addition to the land, to build the originally suggested 150 square metre hall. This money would go towards the building,

Chris Scupham, Guildford Baptist Minister; stated that they would like a hall of around 35 x 55 metres. [I think this should have been feet JWA Chair STAG]

Margaret Scott; asked, have the Committee visited other facilities?

Maureen Bell; replied that she had been to both Fairlands and Jacobs Well. Both these consisted of a main hall complex, plus a separately run members bar club.

Phil Knapp; asked about the Park Barn Centre and why if that obtained money from GBC, could not Stoughton?

Carol Sacha, the Lottery advisor from County Hall; suggested that we should not attempt to design the building at this meeting, but concentrate of what facilities and activities were required.

Teresa Punter; introduced two young ladies who work at a community centre in Liphook. They briefly described the facilities and activities available there.

Jacqui Farley; requested that adequate car parking be provided.

Martin Moss (Chair) replied that he was sure the GBC Planning Department would insist on this.

Jon Vinen; Deeprise Close; noted that the Teenage Meeting point [hard play area JWA] was over twice the size of the proposed village hall and perhaps they should be swapped around.

Pat Warden; Suggested that a Cyber Cafe might be provided.

Ian Godfrey; thought that concept could work.

Chris Wood; pointed out that with computers on site, extra security would be required.

Ian Godfrey; explained that these facilities today consist of several consoles connected to a central unit, which is easier to make secure.

Angela Cornelius; asked what fund raising schemes were being considered?

Ivan Ball; wondered if some of the £300,000 planning gain for environmental improvements could be used to help fund the hall

Councillor Fiona White; stated that the council had not yet consulted the community on how this money should be spent, but were reluctant to see it used towards the hall. [This is a position supported by STAG ^{JWA}]

Cllr Fiona White there is to be a meeting on the Local Community Plan for Stoke and Stoughton, at Emmanuel Church on Tuesday 11th June at 7:30pm.

Pat Commerford; asked what is the time span for fund raising?

Martin Moss (chair) 2 years to raise money

Ivan Ball; stated that the developers would be on site for three years.

Wendy Alison; 'Computer classes had been successful in Westborough and Park Barn.'

Steve {Sorry no surname ^{JWA}}, New Cross Road; asked, who will run the hall?

Peter Gunner; replied that STAG have looked into that.

Maureen Bell; added that a minimum of one paid member of staff would be required.

Ivan Ball; believed that the activities of the centre should be part commercial, part community/charity.

Stella Primrose; enquired, whether Guildford Borough Council should provide some funding, to assist a high-density residential area.

Councillor Fiona White; replied that there are many calls on councillor taxpayer's money. The Planning Gain money has been ring fenced for use in Stoughton.

Ian Godfrey; enquired whether the proposed Park & Ride Scheme for North Guildford was actually of benefit to residents of Stoughton.

Martin Moss, Chair; ruled that this was not a matter for this meeting. However the borough councillors were allowed to state that it was the intention that the next Park & Ride would be for North Guildford. They believe that such a scheme will benefit Stoughton by reducing the amount of traffic on local roads.

John Allford

STAG's Achievements and Disappointments

STAG believe that it has influenced the following issues:

- The widening of Grange Road with additional defined parking along the site boundary, and defined parking bays at its junction with Stoughton road
- An increase of 10% on road parking to be within the site
- Agreement to build a community centre much larger than that contracted in the 106 agreement with Guildford Borough Council
- Improvements to Pig Alley and the Angelica Road play area
- A commitment from the developers for a drop off point for Northmead School and a safe footpath to the school
- Commitment from the Council that the 'planning gain' monies to be ring-fenced to go directly to specific projects in accordance with public consultation - such as improvements to the schools and community facilities (£200,000 has already been allocated to Stoughton Schools)
- STAG has succeeded in having the key worker and social housing spread throughout the site with some of the three storey blocks of flats to be placed further into the site and away from the current boundaries and established housing
- The developers are to improve and maintain boundary fences and will consult with local children about the proposed play areas
- STAG have kept the developers aware of local issues such as the nursery review, the school closures and traffic problems.

However, it has not always been possible to persuade the developers that local concerns may be more important than the commercial viability, e.g. the commercial and community area are now in one area rather than as in the original proposal for an 'urban village' where they were spread across the site.

STAG made recommendations for pedestrian crossings on Worplesdon Road but have learned that following consultation, the traders are objecting, and it is not known at this time what will be the outcome.

STAG were disappointed to lose the Council Planning Committee vote on 19th October 2001 on its recommendation that heavy site traffic should not access the site before 9.30 on weekdays and not at all at weekends, to safeguard local children on their way to the local schools.

Despite the preparation of a number of possible solutions prepared by the traffic engineers, Colin Buchanan & Partners, the approved new junction of Johnston Walk and Worplesdon Road has met with the disappointment and disapproval of interested residents, who do not believe this will work. Following comments from residents in Johnston Walk, STAG have asked the traffic Engineers to look at a number of possible alternatives but the county highway engineers have rejected any alterations to this junction.

STAG are disappointed that the traffic improvements promised have not yet been put in place – the main complaints being made about the development concern the problems created by the construction delivery vehicles travelling the wrong way to the site on already overcrowded and totally unsuitable roads. The developers are making every effort to correct this dangerous situation.

STAG believe that the planning gain, road improvements, the financial commitment of £1.65m to a Park and Ride facility for Stoughton, etc.. in the main benefit Surrey County Council and not the residents of Stoughton who will only benefit from the £200k funds for the Stoughton Infant

School, the £300k for environmental improvements and hopefully, but not yet certain, an improved 20 minute bus service into Guildford.

STAG feel the residents of Stoughton are not being adequately compensated for the disruption to their lives during the 4-5 years of the construction programme and this is one of the main reasons that STAG is fully committed to ensuring that Stoughton, which is sadly lacking in social facilities, will have a community centre to serve them all, about which they will all be proud. STAG is determined that the proposed building will offer services for every sector of the community and it is their hope that this will put the 'heart', which Stoughton sadly has never had, into the ward and make it a better place for residents