

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF P-A-IN, HELD AT POTTERS SNOOKER HALL, 29.11.07

The meeting opened at 7 p.m. Those in attendance as per signing-in sheet.

Apologies – C. Cannon, S. Cullen, B. Fairhurst, H. Johnson, P. Kirby, R. Kirkland

Minutes – Confirmed as a true record of the last meeting (25.10.07)

Guest Speaker – The meeting was pleased to welcome Mr. Steve Normington from Mansfield District Council, who spoke about Emergency Planning. He explained that Emergency Planning is part of a national framework, which all of the local authorities are bound by, any national response being governed by the Civil Contingencies Act. A 24 hour presence is maintained to enable immediate response to any major occurrence. His talk was accompanied by an explanatory leaflet.

S. Downen thanked Mr. Normington for his talk. Questions followed

Q - S. Downen – With regard to the proposed ERF, it was understood that the Planning Committee would consult the Health & Safety Executive if the proposal was deemed to be a potential danger to the public. He highlighted indiscretions that have been committed by Veolia in the recent past and quoted several emergency situations that have arisen at numerous incinerators operated by Veolia in recent years. He asked Mr. Normington if the local authority's response would be to set up separate emergency contingencies to cover potential dangers from incinerators.

A - Consultation would include the local authority, H &SE and the Environment Agency if necessary.

Q – How do MDC as statutory consultees treat the application?

A – Public consultation, Environmental Health and H & SE negotiation. The results would then be channelled back to the County Council as the planning authority. There would also be an opportunity for the public to make representation.

Q – A. Tift – There is a possibility that 12 members on the County Council Planning Committee dare not refuse the application for several reasons.

A – External factors cannot be acceptable in the consultation.

Q – S. Downen – Members on the Planning Committee will be aware of the financial penalties if the application is refused.

A – Again, external factors should not prejudice the decision. Codes of practice are applicable and members understand that they should abstain from any vote if a conflict of interest exists.

Q – B. Thompson – Earlier in the year at a BBC Radio Groundswell programme that was recorded in the village, a senior officer of NCC made an explicit statement. He has now left his job and it transpires that this comment was untrue. What is the procedure for handling this situation?

A – There is a set procedure which the Council will instigate. If a complaint letter provoked no response, presumably it did not trigger the complaints procedure. The advice was to write again.

Treasurer's Report – We are still in pursuit of the £1000 which was promised via A. Fell through the MEAA and then withdrawn.

- We need to move a sizeable amount of jumble which was accumulated during the year. Any ideas for fundraising in 2008?
- Current bank balance = £2352.36

Distribution Report – Leafleting in Bilsthorpe has now been completed. Also leaflets placed in specific places in Farnsfield. What do members think of pushing into other areas, or should we concentrate on home ground? It was felt that we should keep the impetus in Rainworth and S. Downen formally proposed to endorse J. Kitts' proposal to do that.

Membership Report – Current membership = 134. Telephone enquiries are being received from further afield as more people hear about the campaign.

Raffle – Proceeds amounted to £29.

Legal & Research – It was reported that as at 11 a.m. on 29th November, the application by Veolia had not yet been received.

- It is understood from the Government Office of the East Midlands that any request for a public consultation will not be considered until NCC sets a date for the Planning Committee to meet and commence consideration of the application, which may be 6 – 9 months time. The Secretary of State will only consider arguments of national significance. In the meantime, we can send our points, questions and objections to NCC.
- We are proposing to prepare a press release and offer more telephone numbers for contact, in addition to the P-A-IN number. This will hopefully offer us and the Press greater opportunity for dispersal of information.
- P. Cullen is poised to make contact with Planning Aid as soon as the application is submitted.
- Our efforts to secure Legal Aid to engage a professional solicitor to help with our planning objections have not produced a favourable result as yet.
- The success of Veolia's application may hinge on their claim that domestic heating will be a by product of the operation. Even so, the estimated figure may only be around 15%. It was noted that an EU directive demands that heat from the burning of waste materials MUST be utilised. A quick vote was taken to ascertain whether we considered that it would be a worthwhile exercise to pursue with the EU the fact that our government is not doing this. The vote produced an overwhelming desire to do so.
- The previous promise that a number of jobs would be created and offered to people in Rainworth may not be as realistic as first appeared. It seems that Newark & Sherwood planners are more in support of job creation schemes to the south of Newark rather than "over the border" in Mansfield.
- The Woodland Trust has indicated that their "woods under threat" team is happy to work with us to identify ancient trees in the vicinity and help with any objection in relation to this aspect.
- Center Parcs have been contacted with details of the proposal, but no response has been received yet.
- The National Lottery has been contacted regarding the Living Legend (Sherwood Forest) application. A. Tift stated that not a lot of response has been made to peoples' comments. Generally, it appears that the organisers are happy to spend the money to get projects up and running with little regard to public comments or sufficient research into wider implications. Members were asked whether we should escalate our campaign to be more visual. Also should we (P-A-IN) take a formal stance on this issue. Generally, it is a good idea, and research information can help to sway a decision. Shlomo asked if any members might be interested in taking up this piece of work, since he and others in the L & R team will have more than enough work to do once the Veolia application is submitted.

Publicity – R. Johnson will be contacting local papers to advise of future meetings.

- A press release will be prepared after Veolia has submitted its application.
- Our "spoof" leaflet will be forwarded to our legal representative for scrutiny.
- It was suggested that any protest against the incinerator should not happen until after the application has been submitted.
- Web site - Additional information is being added constantly.

Any other business - A. Tift raised £650 when he was recently "locked up". The total amount raised with his other "inmates" was £4600, which was donated to the Stroke Association. Congratulations!!

Carol Concert – Tickets are still available for the concert on 12th December, being performed by the Carlton Male Voice Choir at Rainworth Village Hall.

It was proposed that all future meetings should be held on the third Thursday in the month. This was accepted.

Date of next meeting – Thursday 17th January 2008, Potters Snooker Hall, Kirklington Road, Rainworth, 7 p.m.

Happy New Year!