

## **TILGATE FORUM MEETING Minutes**

**Thursday 25 January 2018 7:30 - 9:15 Shackleton Road Community Centre**

Chair: Richard Handy

The meeting was attended by 41 people in all; this number included MP Henry Smith (part of the meeting), WSCC Councillor Duncan Crow, CBC Councillor Carlos Castro, CBC Development Officer John Dale and Nick Hagon, Manager of Tilgate Park.

### **1. Welcome and apologies**

RH welcomed all. Apologies were received on behalf of CBC Councillor Francis Guidera. As before the meeting was recorded to help with accuracy of the notes.

### **2. Questions for MP Henry Smith**

The Chair departed from the agenda temporarily as HS had to leave early, so queries and questions for him were invited at this point.

#### **2.1 Why are there so many rough sleepers in the area?**

HS pointed out that Crawley is an attractive place and that the population of rough sleepers includes a good proportion of ex-service personnel and also those with mental health problems. HS reported that he is aware that the local agencies do work together to focus on the latter group specifically, but despite that some rough sleepers seem unwilling to accept any input or support.

#### **2.2 What about a further runway for Gatwick now that the consultation for an extra runway has been re-opened?**

HS: This has been re-opened due to environmental concerns apparently, although HS suspects that the outcome may be similar to the initial result. Heathrow has better connectivity. Another runway for Gatwick would affect housing and other resources in the area and currently the local infrastructure – especially the transport – is not adequate to cope with such a development, which would have to be sited to the south of the airport.

#### **2.3 What about railway links to and from Crawley?**

Specific reference was made to the Gatwick Express. Discussion took place concerning non-airport passengers on this service who were prepared to pay the extra to travel on it, resulting in overcrowding for people with suitcases. HS himself often stands all the way into London. HS would prefer Gatwick Express to be a dedicated air service.

#### **2.4 The issue of local residents who are too fearful to go out given groups of young people on the streets/at the local shops was raised.**

It was suggested that the fear of crime may be greater than the actual risk of such, although it was also suggested by members that a greater Police presence might reassure those who are fearful. (HS has regular meetings with the Police Commissioner.)

### **3. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising**

No matters arising from Forum members.

One matter arising from the committee - it was decided at the last committee meeting to ask Forum members what they thought of the idea of Christmas lights on Tilgate Parade. This would be a costly project and currently the Forum does not have the funds/and may not have the personnel to achieve it. RH asked for a show of hands from those present and the

majority (of those who voted) was in favour of Christmas lights. Enquiries will be made to other Forums that have undertaken similar projects.

The minutes from the Forum meeting held on 16 November 2017 were accepted, and will be posted on the Tilgate Community Forum website.

#### **4. The Men's Shed – guest speakers Ian Sage and Robert Simpkin**

The Men's Shed movement began in Australia in 1980 and reached Crawley in 2015. Nationally there are currently 428 Sheds in existence, reaching a total of 10,000 members. The Crawley Men's Shed has 56 members on the books and the Co-Ordinator's post (IS) is funded by CBC. Currently the members meet in the disused AgeUK day-care centre in Shackleton Road (next to the Community Centre) in Tilgate, although this is temporary. Ages range from 28 – 87years, with some members having dementia and other disabilities such as Autism.

There are many benefits: reducing isolation, developing skills, confidence and creativity – generally improving health and wellbeing. Currently the Shed is open each Friday between 10am and 4pm and access is open and free with a small occasional donation for refreshments. IS and RS are also hoping to open later in the day on a Monday for men who are nearing retirement. A plan is underway to offer cooking lessons for widowers who need to pick up new skills in this area; there are two volunteer teachers lined up but now a cooker is needed.

The emphasis is on practical skills such as carpentry, but there are no fixed routines or activities and members can simply come to socialise if they wish. Board games, darts and archery are also available. Most tools and materials have been donated and the current focus includes making bird boxes. Members have also helped a local resident to mend broken fences. If any Forum members have a project in mind, or a cooker to donate, or would like to join in, please get in touch. Call 01293 438163 or email [shed@crawley.gov.uk](mailto:shed@crawley.gov.uk)

#### **5. Healthwatch – Katrina Broadhill, Service Manager**

KB explained that Healthwatch came into being in 2012 with the purpose of listening to local communities' experience of their health services and providing a voice for service users in the organisation and development of services. This is achieved by instigating local debate about all local health services including G.P.s, dentists, and hospitals and covers the complete age range for all services. Importantly, Healthwatch is an independent organisation that receives allocated funding from the local authority. Healthwatch workers have the power to go into any NHS funded organisation, talk to service users and observe the delivery of the service.

Reports from service users are made anonymous in order to prevent any anxiety about speaking up. The organisation looks more widely also at trends and the way systems work as well as wastage and inefficiency issues. KB suggested that Forum members share their experiences of using local NHS services. Several members did this and KB took details. For those that did not wish to share at the meeting, KB asked that they take away a Story Form to fill in and return – the remaining blank forms are with the Secretary. KB will note the issues that have been shared this evening and feed back to the Secretary and it is her plan to build an on-going dialogue with the Forum on such matters.

West Sussex Healthwatch contact details:

tel. 07436 102435

facebook: @healthwatchwestsussex

twitter: @healthwatchws

national email address – [enquiries@healthwatch.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatch.co.uk)

## **6. Suggestions from Forum members for future topics**

The following items were brought up by Forum members:

- Poor drainage on some roads due to the position of the drains (i.e. too high to prevent flooding);
- Update from the Community Engagement Team from the NHS (currently Pat McGrath);
- Another visit from Neighbourhood Watch;
- Presentation from the Area Patch Team for Tilgate about their work (NH also informed Forum members that any member(s) wanting to improve a neglected area near them can apply to CBC for the cost of tools etc. but that this does need residents to commit to carrying out any work.);
- Presentation from Crawley Museum Society.
- The possibility of a social night with a fish and chip supper was raised and this was supported by a show of hands.

## **7. Updates from local councillors**

7.1 DC reassured Forum members that all waste plastic generated by WSCC residents is not affected by the recent withdrawal of China from processing this material, as the WSCC recycling plant at Ford is able to deal with it. It is sent on to other Viridor sites to be sorted for colour and made into pellets before being re-used in the UK.

The path between Winchester Road and K2 Leisure Centre – a Forum member pointed out that the bushes are overgrown, the fence is in need of repair and fly tipping has taken place. DC undertook to have a look at the path and report the problems. As before, the land to one side of the path remains earmarked for housing development, and DC will also see if he can find out how far this plan has progressed.

7.2 CC – parking issues have been raised with him again;

It was to CC that the residents above at 2.4 explained their fear of going out in Tilgate;

The recent temporary ice rink in town – CC thought that this was a good thing for the town centre and hopes that any future rink will be more open to enable spectators to see what is going on;

CC shared the case of a single mother to alert members to possible risks: the mother had been befriended by a male who had taken advantage of her by moving into her home and opening it to his own friends. CC would like to be informed if others are aware of, or come across, any similar situations.

A query was raised asking if CBC might start up a food waste collection for the town. Food waste near to homes and the risk that it would attract animals were mentioned as hygiene issues with such a service. Related to this, other Forum members added that “plates of food” have been thrown out for foxes on the bank opposite part of Salisbury Road, resulting in a near miss for one fox cub who almost got run over and distracting dogs being walked, making it more difficult to manage them.

## **8. Update on Tilgate Park – Nick Hagon, Manager**

A new area for the Nature Centre to be called “The Americas” is under development and is due to open on 07 April 2018;

Further repairs to the paths are planned for March 2018;  
Work to repair the banks of the main lake should take place later this year;  
Friends of Tilgate Park – the next meeting is scheduled for 27 February 2018, 6.30 for 7pm in the Barn.

Other events in the pipeline for later in the year are the Dog Show, National Gardens Scheme participation, a Food Festival, the Race for Life and an Outdoor Cinema (June).  
NH also gave details of working parties to attend - see below at 10.

**The swans on the main lake** – the adult parent swans have been trying to drive off their youngsters (normal behaviour for swan parents) and the youngsters keep coming back after circling round a bit. Notices have gone up round the park for park users to call staff (07730 703519) if the adults become aggressive as the youngsters may have to be physically moved to another site.

NH also brought along several perfumed and scented flowering shrubs which were flowering, as well as a few daffodils. He described these, and gave them to residents to pass round - taking care to avoid the sap of the euphorbia, which can be an irritant.

### **9. A.O.B.**

No items were raised.

### **10. Announcements**

- Peace Garden volunteers Saturday 27th January 10.30am – meet in Walled Garden;
- Parking Committee Monday 29th January 5.30pm, Holy Trinity church;
- Safer Internet Day free drop-in Tuesday 6 February 10 – 12 and 2 – 4, Crawley Library;
- Heather Garden volunteers Wednesday 14th February 10.15am – meet in Walled Garden;
- Bikes Revived Open Day Thurs 15th Feb 12-3pm Tilgate Recreation Centre Hut 3 – for bike safety sessions, fixing your own bike, repairs and secondhand bikes: please phone first - 07871 103357 [www.bikesrevived.org.uk](http://www.bikesrevived.org.uk) [info@bikesrevived.org.uk](mailto:info@bikesrevived.org.uk)
- Crawley County Local Committee Wednesday 28th February 7pm, Longley Room, Crawley Library. County Local Committees involve local residents in decision making, bringing us closer to our County Council. Anyone can attend.

### **11. Next Forum and committee meetings**

After the raffle RH thanked all for attending and reminded everyone of the next meeting dates:

**Forum meeting Thursday 15 March 2018**, at the Community Centre in Shackleton Road, 7.30 - 9.15pm

**Committee Meeting Thursday 15 February 2018**, at the Community Centre in Shackleton Road, 6 – 7.30pm - for those members who would like to attend the committee meeting, and also for those who might be interested in joining the committee.

Contact details:

**Tilgate Community Forum** email [tilgateforum@gmail.com](mailto:tilgateforum@gmail.com) [www.tilgateforum.co.uk](http://www.tilgateforum.co.uk)

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/tilgateforum/>

For County Council services: <http://love.westsussex.gov.uk>

West Sussex Healthwatch facebook: [@healthwatchwestsussex](https://www.facebook.com/healthwatchwestsussex)

twitter: [@healthwatchws](https://twitter.com/healthwatchws) email [enquiries@healthwatch.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatch.co.uk)

Men's Shed 01293 438163 or email [shed@crawley.gov.uk](mailto:shed@crawley.gov.uk)