

## HIGHBARNES PUBLIC MEETING

11 FEBRUARY 2009

DACORUM ROOM, CIVIC CENTRE – 6.00 PM

### PRESENT:

#### **Dacorum Borough Council & Nash Mills Parish Council:**

John Clarke, Head of Public Protection (Dacorum Borough Council)

Louise Manders, Senior Manager, Corporate Communications (Dacorum Borough Council)

Jenny Young, Civil Contingencies Co-Ordinator (Dacorum Borough Council)

Councillor Lucy Foster, (DBC Councillor Nash Mills Ward Councillor and Nash Mills Parish Councillor)

Councillor Terry Douris, (Nash Mills Parish Councillor and DBC Councillor)

Councillor Geoff Doole (Nash Mills Parish Councillor)

Theresa Chalkwright, Member Support Officer (Dacorum Borough Council – Minutes)

#### **Residents:**

Richard and Jennifer Taylor, Carly Savage, Lisa Bayley (Highbarnes Residents) Rodney and Michelle Berkeley (Pond Close Residents)

### APOLOGIES:

Mark Goodyear, Herts Highways

### 1. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Mark Goodyear was not able to attend the meeting but he had sent an email in response to issues raised at the previous meeting. This was given as an update under the Highways Issues. Mark had indicated in his email that he would be happy to answer any questions either verbally or by email. His contact details are provided later in the minutes.

John Clarke said he had been expecting a representative from the police to attend the meeting but unfortunately no-one had turned up. He reassured the residents that he has a good relationship with the police and he was confident that there would be a representative at the next meeting.

The Minutes from the public meeting and the Residents Group would be put onto the website.

All residents should have received the latest newsletter.

JC will ask Councillor Foster if she had managed to find any representatives from Meadow Road to attend the residents group meetings. Please see below for Residents' Group Contact Details:

Richard and Jennifer Taylor  
24 Highbarnes  
Hemel Hempstead  
Herts HP3 8AG  
Tel: 01442 404746  
email: [Richard.C.taylor@myway.com](mailto:Richard.C.taylor@myway.com)

Rodney and Michelle Berkeley  
1 Pond Road  
Hemel Hempstead  
Herts HP3 8BA  
Telephone: 01442 388507  
email: [rodneyberkeley@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:rodneyberkeley@hotmail.co.uk)

Carly Savage  
13 Highbarns  
Hemel Hempstead  
Herts  
email: carly.savage@sky.com

Lisa Bayley  
40 Highbarns  
Hemel Hempstead  
Herts  
Mobile: 07789 482625  
email: lisabayley@btinternet.com

Councillor Geoff Doole  
Nash Mills Parish Council  
Telephone: 01442 267050  
email: geoffdoole@btconnect.com

If any of these details are incorrect or you wish to add any details and if there is anybody else on the Group who would like their details added, please contact Theresa Chalkwright by telephone 01442 228226 or by email [theresa.chalkwright@dacorum.gov.uk](mailto:theresa.chalkwright@dacorum.gov.uk) These contact details will be added to the next newsletter.

## **2. UPDATE/CURRENT SITUATION**

Jenny Young, the Council's Civil Contingencies Co-Ordinator gave a brief update of where we are at present. She had been in contact with David Keaton at English Partnerships (now part of The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)) before Christmas and a bid has been sent. A response is now expected by end of February 2009. JY will chase this up and any information received will be put onto the Highbarns website: link below:

<http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/DBCWeb/Default.aspx?page=5691>

A link to the HCA website is also attached below for information:

<http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/>

Louise Manders said that once funding has been received and a Project Manager was in place another public meeting would be arranged. She also pointed out that the tender process was ongoing and 8 companies had been shortlisted (all of whom are experienced) and interviews would be taking place.

Mr Berkeley asked if the funding was two-fold (i.e. covering investigations and remedial works)

John Clarke replied that this was the case.

## **3. HIGHWAYS ISSUES**

It was noted that now the new road closure was in place, the residents feel more secure.

Councillor Douris had received a response from Stuart Pile, Executive Member, Highways, Transport and Rural Affairs. This is summarised below:

SP confirmed that a great deal of work has been going on behind the scenes since the public meeting in October but this has taken longer than anticipated. A timetable had not been set due to uncertainties regarding the timing of the legal closure orders and the choice of alternative forms of barriers. He also pointed out that written confirmation was not received until November 2008 that remedial works carried out in Highbarns had been successful and this confirmation was required before any further works could be carried out.

He wished to reassure residents that more robust signs are being ordered. These will be used to highlight the diversion route. These will be provided after the new road closures come into effect. Cul-de-sac signs have also been ordered to alleviate the problem of turning traffic. The site was due to be tidied up but due to the heavy snow this work has been delayed.

Planters are being considered to improve the visual appearance of the area over the medium to longer term, these are expected to be ordered shortly after discussion with Dacorum Officers and local residents with regard to their ongoing maintenance.

Whilst awaiting the delivery of the planters some pedestrian guard railing has been ordered to provide an immovable barrier at the new closure point in Highbarns. This will enable some (but not all) of the less attractive temporary barriers to be removed.

He wished it noted that Officers have carried out at least 4 home visits to meet concerned residents. As a result of those meetings some footway surfacing and carriageway surfacing had been carried out in January in Highbarns. Bollards have also been ordered to protect the grass verges and works to seed the grass verges are planned for when the weather improves as it would not be worthwhile to undertake this work in the winter months.

He also noted comments about the use of a small part of Chambersbury Lane as part of the original road closures and asked that the following be noted:

1. No commitment was given by Herts Highways that Chambersbury Lane would not be used as part of any future diversion route for local traffic, and no such promise could have been given.
2. We were obliged to specify a diversion route in the legal notices that accompany the temporary road closure and this part of Chambersbury Lane had to be specified. The Police were consulted and raised no objection.
3. Only local traffic use this part of Chambersbury Lane.
4. The main part of the diversion route is being formed by Belswains Lane, so traffic that would otherwise be using Highbarns will still be directed to use Belswains Lane which will be clearly marked by the diversion route signs. These signs will be fixed to lamp columns where possible.
5. Belswains Lane will remain open and only local traffic should need to use this part of Chambersbury Lane. No signs will be placed to direct traffic up Chambersbury Lane (this represents the 'status quo').
6. The problems that arose in August last year were mainly due to the additional closure of Belswains Lane for a period of several weeks so that National Grid could replace one of their gas mains. There was no other alternative option available. The Official diversion route as via Apsley and the Plough ('Magic') roundabout. Motorists chose to take short cuts and ended up in Chambersbury Lane. As Belwains Lane is now open for the foreseeable future no repeat of those difficult circumstances has been anticipated.

Councillor Douris wished it noted that he was frustrated that nowhere in the correspondence did it give dates and he knows that the residents are looking for some definitive dates/times for when these works will be carried out.

Louise Manders then highlighted extracts from the email received from Mark Goodyear as summarised below:

- Road surfacing works in Lower Road have been postponed.
  - The changes in Highbarns went ahead as planned
  - Cul-de-sac signs have been ordered (have not yet been fitted but MG will chase this up)
  - Site has been tidied up and barriers have been taken away.
  - One area of footway and one area of carriageway surfaced in January
  - Visited the site, concerned about signs which could be improved and this is in the process of being arranged (would like residents advice re these)
  - Permanent guard rail barriers have been ordered and will be erected
  - Bollards have been ordered
  - Planters need to be agreed with Dacorum Borough Council as they will need to be maintained.
  - No diversion route signs are directing traffic up the narrowest part of Chambersbury Lane or Meadow Road. The condition of these two roads is being monitored as we are aware of concerns about defects arising. (Members of the public can report any defects on 01438 737320.
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- MG will try to get answers to questions that arise from the meeting as soon as possible.

John Clarke summed up and asked the residents how they felt about having the planters. He suggested that these would be better than what is in place at present.

The residents agreed that the planters would be a better option.

Councillor Foster said that Nash Mills Parish Council would be happy to pay for the plants required and to maintain the planters.

The residents suggested that evergreen plants could be used which would not require much maintenance.

Questions for Mark Goodyear:

Lisa Bayley asked if the plastic signs that are near her property could be removed and replaced with something more robust.

A question was asked with regard to what the bollards would look like. Could Mark Goodyear let residents know?

Further signs are required that say 'no access', and also to show access.  
Signs are required to say road is closed before drivers get to the diversion.

Street lighting in some places is very poor, can this be looked at?

Potholes on Chambersbury Lane diversion route very bad, can these be looked at?

Mark Goodyear can be contacted on:

email: [mark.goodyear@hertshighways.org.uk](mailto:mark.goodyear@hertshighways.org.uk)

Telephone: 01727 816000

**Outcome:**

Jenny Young will contact Mark Goodyear and let him know what questions had been asked and if he could provide answers and also to explain about protection of verges/amenity space and to let residents know exactly what is happening. John Clarke, Jenny Young and Mark Goodyear to meet on site to discuss this in more detail.

John Clarke will contact HCC about the planters and say that the residents are interested in having these put in place and will enquire about the cost of these and who is paying. He will also ask them to liaise with the Parish Council re maintenance of the planters.

**4. SECURITY ISSUES**

John Clarke apologised that there was no representation from the police at the meeting but he assured the group that he has a very good relationship with the local police and he urged residents to report anything that is suspicious and that the police would then look into these matters.

Michelle Berkeley said there was still concern about vehicles either being broken into or stolen and also about burglaries in the area. She suggested that a police presence might prove to be a deterrent.

John Clarke replied that the PCSO post was vacant. He added that there is a recruitment drive going on at present and he is hopeful that this post will be filled soon but in the meantime he reiterated that any suspicious incidents should be reported.

**Outcome:**

John Clarke will ask for a police representative to attend the next meeting **Action: JC**

**5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Michelle Berkeley asked about the Council Tax test case.

John Clarke replied that David Martin, Head of Resources is dealing with the Council Tax application (Rateable Value test case) and will be in contact with her as soon as he has any information.

Councillor Geoff Doole asked if the road closure will be in place for 2 years.

John Clarke responded that the road closure will have to remain in place for the duration of the stability works, but once funding is approved and comes through remedial works will be started and that further investigations will not take place until this has been rectified. Louise Manders added that once the project management is in place a work programme will be produced to show the extent of the work that is required. The work will be progressed as quickly as possible but a timescale cannot be given at the present time. It is hoped that the Project Management Team will be in place by March/April 2009.

**6. CONCLUSION**

John Clarke thanked everyone for attending the meeting and hoped that by the next meeting a lot of the highways issues would have been resolved and he was hopeful that both Mark Goodyear and a Police Representative would be attending the next meeting.

**7. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT RESIDENTS GROUP MEETING**

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 17 March in the Gade Room at the Civic Centre.

The meeting ended at 7.20m