

**Highbarns Residents Group Meeting
Wednesday 13th June 2012**

MINUTES

Attendees:

Jennifer Taylor – Highbarns Resident
Richard Taylor – Highbarns Residents
Heidi Cutts – East Green Resident
Michelle Berkeley – Pond Road Resident
Shane Flynn - DBC
Mike Evans - DBC
Sheila Potts – DBC
Ben Hosier - DBC
Mark Skittrall – Hyder Consulting
Dave Bowman – Hertfordshire Highways
Geoffrey Doole – DBC Councillor
Jan Maddern – County Councillor

Apologies received:

Andy Price
Jenny Young
Sarah Dodds

1. Welcome and Introductions.

All attendees were welcomed to the meeting

2. Actions carried forward from minutes of 2nd May 2012

SF to speak to Ben Hosier about getting the procurement process in place – **Done. PQQ issued. BH attending June meeting to provide update**

Issue project plan for all to see – **Done for June meeting**

HCA to be notified of the revised timings to the project so far – **communication with HCA by Steve Baker has taken place. Further updates to be provided by SF**

Communications Plan should take account of those not directly affected – **Draft communications plan to be discussed at June 2012 meeting.**

We would include a statement around remedial works and the position on this in the newsletter. Residents should take photos before and after work happens. We need an appeals process so that people know who to talk to if they want to complain. – **to be completed**

A formal Communications Plan was needed. Need to consider the customers in terms of what information is needed. – **draft plan to be discussed at June meeting**

Each member of the group could take on responsibility for a group of houses. Use parish notice boards – make it big and visible – include contact numbers. – **JM to provide SF with contact details for Parish Council**

Letter to say this is where we are and what is going to happen next. AP said that it needs to involve knocking on doors where there are specifics to address, letters alone not always appropriate – **done in May**.

MS agreed to brief David Lawrence at Hyder on doing some of the customer-facing work straightaway. SF to speak with MS about the communications strategy we will need, with a draft plan by the end of next week. - **Done**

If Hyder could let people know as soon as they have the results from the boreholes, which MS said he could do. – **to be completed when available**

What are our options regarding the properties we can use for the decant? Possibility for one property (maybe private rented) that people can be moved into and out of?. SF to discuss with Fiona Williamson – Done: **options being explored over summer**

Lisa Bayley raised a number of questions by email which were addressed:

1. To date I have not met the site manager who is over seeing the project and we have no contact number for him/her should we have any issues or concerns. Please can you email us those details? – **included in newsletter**

2. Would it be possible for the Highbarns resident group to receive weekly or bi weekly emails to let us know how the site work is going and what work is to come in the following week? This will mean we can not only look out for unusual comings and goings but that we know what to expect and can tell the residents should we be asked. – **generic email address being set up so that regular updates can be sent**

3. Is there now 24 hour security on site? If so please can we have a number to call should we need to? The site office is based in Pond Road, with no clear view of Highbarns so I would like to know if security are walking around all areas where there is equipment and has fencing? I am presuming in the coming weeks that more equipment will be arriving so we will need this to be addressed. – **discussions with PCSO had taken place. The Phase 2 contract will have 24 hour security included**

4. We discussed in the general meeting at the school that the houses on the periphery of the chalk mines, should be assessed along with those directly affected. I know that this process has started at a number of houses already, so please can you confirm that this has been taken into account? **not to date but will be taken into account in Phase 2**

Notes on further discussions

JM – would chase Mike Penning on the letter he promised to write for insurance companies.

SF – would seek clarification from Fiona Williamson on what our powers are around temporary re-homing of private residents, ie, can we rent a house and lease it out, with people hopefully being able to claim the costs from their insurers?

MB – said it was important that the new contractors meet with residents prior to work starting.

Security on site was discussed – no police presence seen. JY has spoken to PCSO (Ian Martin) and they were aware of the situation and had said they were keeping an eye on the area.

RT – requested additional communications be sent out to residents about the appropriate behaviour of children/teenagers on the site – **done in newsletter 8**

JY suggested setting up a highbarns@dacorum.gov.uk email address to add resilience for residents in case JY was unavailable. Need to make sure that messages are getting to the right people.

3 Update (MS)

Work finished 1st June as expected. Still doing re-instatement but should finish end of this week and site office closed down. Previous indications were that would be offsite by the bank holiday. This does not represent slippage, and in fact have made time up. Need to be clearer about what will be done by when from the residents' point of view.

Good results – no significant changes to size and limits of the mine. Very happy with data set that we've obtained. By end of August should be in a position to make public statements. Tender documents will go out then.

GD – Can we identify those which will have to move, those that might have to move and those that don't have to move. MS to look at producing a statement along these lines.

Two week shut down at Xmas and 10 day shut down over Easter. Complete on site by 10 June. Need to advise HCA of one month to cover the reporting – end July. Total 20 weeks on site.

Location of heavy plant – will use the current site but will need a bigger area – so will need to advise residents – maybe need to use some of the school playing field? Will have to meet with Mark to look at options here. Sheila to look at whether the local garages are in use as these might be an area that could be used.

4 Procurement process

Not OJEU. Restricted procedure. 2 stage process. PQQ went out 31 May. 11 bidders so far, closes 29 June. Shortlist to 5 or 6. Invite these to tender. 30 days + 10 days evaluation + 14 days standstill period.

5 Communications

Still need a degree of onsite communications. Can use Richard as channel for local communications as there are opportunities to clarify misunderstandings at first hand – can pass notes through Richard.

Need to engage with people. Could involve councillors in these discussions. Build into the comms plan. SF to review options for engaging Housing Officers or County staff for detailed discussions with affected residents.

A detailed note is needed: When is house going to be empty? How long for? What security will be put in place during the vacancy? Provide people with a plan of what the process is. Need to specify what the resident will need to do, what the contractor will do etc.

GD – suggest develop all information so that the only thing we are waiting on is the date.

6 Public Meeting

Not to take place until end September/early October once affected residents have been informed. SF to circulate an agenda and seek views. MS to demonstrate 3D model along. Technical information to be kept to a minimum and no Jargon.

7 Any other business –

During phase 2 – an on-site drop-in centre was suggested to increase visibility and enable immediate responses to queries – will need a contractual obligation to have a client site that is approachable.

David has provided a statement of works done to each householder who requested one.

Monthly water observations will continue so some boreholes will remain and have been capped. These will be visited over the summer to monitor water levels and the affected residents have been informed.

8 Next meeting

Another residents Group meeting is not needed until more information is available. SF to provided updates via RT if need be. BH suggested a possible meeting to review selection criteria once these have been set – likely to be early August if needed/desired.