**Notes from a Village Meeting held on July 18th 2019 at 19:30 at the Weston on the Green Memorial Village Hall**

**Attendance:** Mrs. Diane Bohm (DB), Chair, Weston on the Green Parish Council (PC)

Mr. Neil Mullane, Chair of the Traffic Calming Advisory Group (TCAG)

Mrs. Susan Davies, Vice Chair, PC

Mr. Robin Stafford Allen, Councillor, PC

Mrs. Ruth Whitfield, Counciillor, PC

Mrs. Jane Mullane, Parish Clerk, PC.

And,

43 villagers

1. **Update on TCAG:**

NM gave a Power Point presentation as per the attached on the priorities and actions by the TCAG to date.

NM asked for questions:

Q.1 What about the footpath from opposite St. Mary’s Church to the playground? **Response:** This is current under discussion but one of the concerns is disturbance to the horses in the adjoining paddocks.

Q.2 Should the speed be reduced to 10mph? **Response:** Not considered as it will be too difficult to gain approval from Oxford County Council (OCC).

Q.3 What is the average speed on Church lane according to the surveys conducted? **Response:** The average speed was 26mph which meets OCC’s criteria for considering a speed reduction if the average speed is over 23mph.

Q4 What consideration has been given to the traffic flow through the village when there are traffic problems on the A34. Response: This is an on-going problem and the topic of continued discussions with OCC and we need to discuss with Highways England (HE). ***Action: Enter discussions with HE on traffic volumes through the village caused by accidents etc. on the A34.***

Q5 There should be signage restricting the use of village roads by HGV’s. **Response:** This matter is being discussed with Cherwell authorities. ***Action: Ask Cherwell to remove WOTG as the shortest route for HGV’s in future planning applications***.

Q6 Concern was expressed that it is very difficult to enter Church Lane from some of the residence aligning the Lane in particular for those on mobility scooters and some individuals with hearing impairment. OCC should come and see the magnitude of the problem. **Response:** OCC has been made aware of the problem but they take to position that the absence of accident data precludes them from taking any corrective action. ***Action: TCAG to continue these discussions with OCC and to press for improved safety measures in this regard.***

Q7 are there any restrictions on HGV use for businesses at Staplehurst Farm complex? **Response:** not aware of any restriction and the PC will follow up. ***Action: The PC will follow up with Cherwell to determine if there are any vehicular restrictions in place for businesses using Staplehurst Farm***

Q8 Has consideration been given to erecting caution signage for mobility scooters? **Response:** None to date. ***Action: PC will follow up on this enquiry.***

DB thanked the TCAG for their work. DB pointed out that Wendlebury now has 20mph speed limit on the road through their village, and Middleton Stoney is seeking a speed reduction/weight restriction on the B430, which may be supportive of our efforts to reduce speed and weights on the WOTG section of the B430.

1. **Update on Oxford/Cambridge Expressway:**

DB informed the meeting that the PC has joined the Expressway Alliance Group. The Chair attended a meeting at Brill and observed there was considerable opposition to the expressway proposals. The Chair invited Roger Evans (RE) of the Expressway Action Group (EAG) to update the villagers. The points RE raised were:

2.1 The rationale for the expressway is very weak without the one million homes being developed.

2.2 The proposed development is not needed to meet local needs rather it is a reflection of a national priority.

2.3 Highways England will be attending symposium in France in the autumn with one of the purposes being to raise the necessary capital investment for the expressway.

2.4 The public is becoming increasingly aware of the implications and ramifications of the expressway proposal.

2.5 The overall plan does not contain a clearly defined future vision/mission purpose, rather it is developer led. The existing plans for Oxfordshire calls for 100K new units in the 2011-2031 time frame and 200k to 300K units in the 2031-2051 period. This implies a population increase of 1 million people, effectively doubling the population of Oxfordshire.

2.6 The EAG has met with Barry Wood. Ian Hudspeth and the David Hughes, the last being the new Chair of Cherwell District Council. There appears to be misunderstood information amongst those in government. David Hughes had asked for EAG recommendations, which has been done. They have requested Cherwell to develop a smart vision of development for the district. It is key to alert District Councillors and others on the ramifications of the proposals.

2.7 Reliable public transport is need to lead the proposed growth. Government needs to establish a standard of scheduling for public transport.

2.8 Highways England will announced the preferred expressway route in September/ The EAG has booked the Village Hall for Sept 26th to inform the villagers of the decisions.

2.9 The District is meeting its housing needs, but there is manipulation of housing numbers at present through the use of developers controlling land banks and restricting the availability of units coming to market.

**3) Wolf Resorts in Chesterton:** This is a proposed resort hotel containing 500 rooms; an occupancy ratio of 4.5 people per room; car parking for 1,000 cars with a water recreation park. Total number of visitors is expected to about 500K. The number of employees will be 600.

3.1) DB has attended two information meetings in Chesterton hosted by Wolf Resorts. They are determined to see the development. In response to DB’s question about access the resort will route its traffic through Weston on the Green using the B430. Their modeling indicates that the B430 can handle the increased traffic.

3.2 They anticipate 40% of their clientele will use the A34 and B430 routing.

3.3 Good and service vehicles will use the B430 during the evening and night hours. The above indicates that WOTG will have a traffic planning issue to be met.

3.4 Wolf Resorts is holding pre-planning application meetings with Cherwell and OCC The formal application may be submitted at the end of October 2019. The parishes of WOTG, Chesterton, and Middleton Stoney are coalescing into a coalition to oppose the application.

3.5 The parishes are requesting information on the pre-planning application meetings under the Freedom of Information Act.

3.6) There will be a joint meeting between the Parishes and the responsible person at Cherwell (to be determined) to fully discuss Cherwell’s vision for the future.

3.7) Chesterton asked residents to write to Wolf Resorts with copies to Cherwell, which has created a sizeable number of statutory consultees for any planning application lodged by Wolf Resorts. Copying Cherwell obligates them to include the writer as a statutory consultee

1. **Affordable Housing**: DB advised that a new person has been hired by Cherwell to deal with the issues surrounding affordable housing. DB has held discussions and one of the constraints raised is the necessity of having one’s name on the application list for affordable housing within any village. At present there are only 1K people on the list in the entire district. Before applications for affordable housing can be approved there must be evidence of a need rather it be downsizing; children of the village etc. to support the application. DB encouraged those who foresee such a requirement to apply now.
2. **Southfield Farm Application:**  Southfield Farm’s formal application for a Phase II development of 18 houses (5 less than the previous application) was rejected unanimously by Cherwell District Council. David Hughes supported the WOTG position.
3. **General Questions:**
   1. Is the PC’s position on housing development, the Oxford/Cambridge Expressway realistic as the Government policy seeks to establish several garden cities regardless of any opposition. **Response:** Yes the PC and the villagers have a democratic right to express their views to the politicians.
   2. Dealing with Cherwell has been difficult. **Response:** That is true some of the time but we must continue to press our point of view as it is important otothe future of our village.
   3. What is the current status of the Neighbourhood Plan? Response: It is before the examiner and the PC ability to press for an timely outcome is limited due to the independent status of the examiner.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 20:45.

Eric A. Bohm