

MEETING	BISHOPTHORPE WARD COMMITTEE
VENUE	ACASTER MALBIS MEMORIAL HALL, ACASTER MALBIS, YORK
DATE/TIME	MONDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2019 AT 18:30
PRESENT	COUNCILLOR JOHN GALVIN GEOFF FREESTON (AREA LEADER BRUNSWICK ORGANIC NURSERY) MARC BICHTEMANN (MANAGING DIRECTOR FIRST YORK) STUART FILLINGHAM (NETWORK MANAGER FIRST YORK) BEN POTTER (TRANSPORT PROJECT ENGINEER CYC) KRISTINA DAVEY (ENVIRONMENT OFFICER CYC) CINDY BENTON (COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT OFFICER CYC)
APOLOGIES	NONE

1. INFORMAL DROP IN SESSION (18:30)

Local residents were given the opportunity to speak informally with Councillor Galvin and other speakers/representatives prior to the main meeting.

2. MAIN MEETING, WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (19:00)

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Galvin who welcomed everyone and set out the housekeeping rules and agenda. He then introduced Geoff Freeston from Brunswick Organic Nursery.

3. BRUNSWICK ORGANIC NURSERY UPDATE (Geoff Freeston Area Leader Brunswick Organic Nursery)

Geoff Freeston gave an overview of Brunswick Organic Nursery (a registered charity) which was set up in 1992 to provide horticultural and allied training for people with learning difficulties. The nursery (which has been a great success) currently has seventeen members of staff. Geoff Freeston joined in 2004 to further develop the garden and general landscaping. The nursery provides and maintains various hanging baskets and planters in the community and is also involved in other projects (including tree planting, litter picking and dealing with incidents of fly tipping) which have been of significant benefit to the community as well as those involved in the nursery.

Approximately three years ago, fifty fruit trees (including quince, damson, crab apple and medlar) were planted in the area. The fruit is used for foraging and any unpicked fruit provides food for birds. In spring time, the trees create a lovely display of blossom. Geoff Freeston confirmed that there were plans to plant even more trees and asked residents for their input with regard to this. He further added that the raised bed planters outside Bishopthorpe Library which had contained vegetables, fruit and herbs for local residents to access had proved very popular. In addition, many daffodil and snowdrop bulbs had been planted along the road side between Brunswick Organic Nursery and Acaster Malbis. In 2020 there are plans to provide additional tower planters in Bishopthorpe and Acaster

Malbis, but we need volunteers who are prepared to water them in Acaster Malbis on a regular basis (as it is more costly to maintain them than to plant them). There are also plans to replace the existing seat near Acaster Malbis Memorial Hall.

At this point, a resident from Mount Pleasant raised concerns about overgrown hedges and asked whether they could be cut back. She also asked whether residents could plant some daffodil bulbs themselves. Geoff Freeston also explained that rather than using individual bulb planters, they tended to dig a trench and put a lot of bulbs in together.

Councillor Galvin was very appreciative of the work carried out by Brunswick Organic Nursery and confirmed that funding for additional services to the community came out of the ward budget.

As no further queries were raised, Councillor Galvin thanked Geoff Freeston for his contribution to the meeting.

4. FIRST YORK GROUP (Marc Bichtemann Managing Director First York)

Marc Bichtemann provided an update with regard to local bus services. He confirmed that a new timetable would come into force from 01/12/2019 and could be accessed online. He went on to explain that the service had improved following previous timetabling issues exacerbated by city centre congestion (particularly in the vicinity of York Hospital) and road works. On a positive note, he said that twenty-one new electric Park and Ride double decker buses had been ordered and that from 01/02/2020 all buses would be upgraded to comply with the Clean Air Zone.

Marc Bichtemann also informed residents of an improvement with regard to the Sunday service (the No 500 bus having now been renamed as the 11S to avoid confusion).

A resident asked whether there were significant changes in the new timetable, whether it would be published (as opposed to accessed only online) and whether the Coppergate diversion remained ongoing. Marc Bichtemann confirmed that the new timetable could be accessed on the First York website <https://www.firstgroup.com/york/plan-journey/timetables>. He also pointed out that printed copies were available at York Station Visitor and Bus Information Point and the Visit York Information Centre. With regard to the Coppergate diversion he stated that normal traffic flow had been restored.

Another resident commented that although the bus signs at York Station generally worked well they only seemed to show the scheduled (as opposed to actual) time of the next bus. Marc Bichtemann acknowledged that this had previously been flagged up when the new buses were put onto the system. However, he said that the glitch had been resolved (but asked residents to notify First York if any further problems arose).

One resident raised the issue of cars parking near the Acaster Malbis bus stop and asked if it would be possible to have a designated bus stop. Councillor Galvin said that this would have to be dealt with by City of York Council (Highways Department). One option would be to consider requesting double yellow lines (particularly on the bend) to deter inappropriate car parking (although due to a current backlog the matter probably wouldn't be considered until the middle of 2020).

5. VEHICLE ACTIVATED SIGNS IN BISHOPTHORPE (Ben Potter Transport Project Engineer CYC)

Councillor Galvin raised the issue of speeding traffic in the area and confirmed that two radar activated speed signs had been proposed for Bishopthorpe and should be up and running in early 2020. He went on to say that every driver should take responsibility for their driving and speed.

He then introduced Ben Potter who gave an update with regard to the speed signs (which cost about £4,500 depending the location and power supply) and referred to the current signs in Strensall and Stockton Lane which flash up the speed of the vehicle (followed by the words 'Thank You'). He confirmed that, in an effort to avoid being inundated by requests, City of York Council had adopted a policy for considering the suitability of signs in certain areas. He went on to explain the criteria used for measuring speed which involved recording speed data for a minimum of seven days at the 85th percentile speed. Ben Potter informed residents that there were approximately fifty such signs in the York area which tended to last approximately ten years before developing faults.

One resident enquired as to whether the signs would register and track a speeding vehicle to which Ben Potter replied that the aim of the speed signs was to act as a general deterrent (as opposed to law enforcement).

Another resident then asked whether the police responded if speeding drivers were reported. Councillor Galvin confirmed that they did and that a police speed van had been in the area twice within the last three months. He also flagged up Appleton Road as a particular danger spot. Concerns were also raised with regard to the safety of pedestrians walking between the junction along the bottom of Moor Lane and Bridge Road as there is no footpath.

One resident enquired about the possibility of monitoring speeding drivers using a hand held radar device. Councillor Galvin said that he would be happy to look into it but also pointed out that regular volunteers would be required to commit to the scheme and that each team would require three people (one to operate the radar device, one to read the number plate and one to write it down).

Several residents discussed whether it was better to pay a fine (and incur penalty points) or enrol on the driver improvement course. One resident considered that a driver improvement course was a good idea as it corrected poor driving and avoided incurring penalty points. Ben Potter explained that City of York Council worked closely with North Yorkshire Police with regard to speed management and referred to the 95 Alive website.

6. WARD BUDGETS

Ward Budget (2019 – 2020) - £15,798 (including funding carried forward)

Local Highways Budget (2019 – 2023) - £55,697

Housing Environment Improvement Funding (2019 – 2023) - £6,800

7. HAVE YOUR SAY (Councillor John Galvin)

Councillor Galvin commented on irresponsible dog owners who put dog mess in plastic bags but then proceeded to hang the bags on trees or throw them in other people's gardens. In an effort to combat this, he confirmed that two new dog bins would be provided

in Acaster Malbis and Bishopthorpe (in addition to existing ones). He also stated that it cost more to empty the dog bins than to provide them.

With regard to funding, Councillor Galvin asked residents to let him know if they required funding for any project or scheme which would benefit the local community.

Residents were then invited to raise any other queries or concerns.

One resident asked for clarity regarding the nature of the meeting. Councillor Galvin confirmed that it was the Bishopthorpe Ward Committee Meeting (and that Bishopthorpe was a one member ward).

Another resident asked if any minutes would be available. Councillor Galvin confirmed that the minutes would be available on the City of York Council website (as well as the Facebook page).

One resident thanked Councillor Galvin for providing flyers about the ward meeting and Councillor Galvin acknowledged the difficulty of publicising the meetings in advance.

Another resident said that a lot of people were not aware of available funding (or how to apply for it). Councillor Galvin agreed that a lot of residents were unaware of funding (which should benefit the community) but was able to confirm grants that had already been awarded this year to the Catalyst Community Resource Group, Bishopthorpe Bowling Club, Bishopthorpe Library and Brunswick Organic Nursery. Last year grants were given to Bishopthorpe Pre-School Playgroup and Friends of Bishopthorpe Junior School. One resident offered to put further information on the Bishopthorpe residents' website (Bishopthorpe.net).

A resident then raised the issue of maintaining local waterways. Councillor Galvin flagged up concerns regarding an open ditch near the lakeside which needed to be covered and confirmed that responsibility for drains lay with the IDB (Internal Drainage Board)

Finally, as no further questions were forthcoming, Councillor Galvin thanked everyone for attending the meeting which ended at 20:15.