

## **Meeting to Discuss 'Communication and Community Involvement in East Bridgford'.**

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2019 held in the Skittle Alley, Royal Oak, East Bridgford. 7.30 pm.

### **Present:**

#### ***EB Councillors***

Paul Bancroft, Joanne Riddle.

#### ***EB Community Plan Group:***

Richard Mackie, David Atkins, Patsy Andrews, Douglas Sutherland, Sheila Brunt.

#### ***EB Communication Media:***

Sherry Rudman - Editor Village Magazine

Tiffany Taylor - Founder "Together East Bridgford" FaceBook page

#### ***Apologies/Absent***

Jack Rieley - EBCPG,

Gill Stevens – EBPC& ENCPG;

Dawn Fearn Wood - Web editor village website

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### **The Objectives of the meeting,** as in the agenda circulated

- 1) to see how communication on village issues in media and at EBPC monthly meetings can be: wider in reach to all residents; more rapid and more involving
- 2) to submit proposals to the EBPC's meeting at the start of October or earlier.

### **Procedural Issues**

RM convener on behalf of the EBCPG agreed to 'chair' meeting

Although the Parish Council are at the heart of Communication and Community Involvement in East Bridgford, it was thought Councillors should remain as advisors only, and proceedings could then be less formal. Councillors use public money, so their meetings are therefore structured & accountable.

As a result, Parish Councillors PB and JR will take note of the meeting and submit their proposals for discussion and approval at forthcoming EBPC meetings.

### **The Meeting**

(Based with thanks, on the notes taken by Sheila Brunt)

There was an extensive discussion of issues relating to the Parish Council's communication with the village focussing on the Parish Council's monthly meetings: how villagers could make their views known and how the meetings' decisions were reported.

It was considered that the election of a new parish council was a great opportunity to increase village involvement in parish affairs

#### **1) EBPC Monthly Meetings**

There was general agreement that it is important that residents attending PC meetings should feel welcome.

- The new horseshoe layout is a significant improvement;
- Copies of the agenda are now available for villagers attending the meeting; draft minutes of last month's meeting are also required.
- A 10 minute period before the meeting when councillors are not seated would allow residents to make personal contact with councillors
- The three-minute limit on individual public comment was considered a necessary rule because of the crowded agendas, but the Chair should show flexibility to relax the rule as necessary.

- Concerning the meeting room there was a suggestion that supporting displays would be helpful for residents, e.g. map of parish, "RBC townscape" map of the village, names and contact details of councillors.

## **2) Reporting the Meetings**

- The Chairman's Summary Report of the EBPC monthly meetings should continue on the Village Website and Together East Bridgford social media; it keeps the village informed during the one monthly delay before minutes are officially ratified;
- Draft Minutes to be posted on the Village Website as soon as available so that they are accessible for the village, particularly for interest groups like the Community Plan Group. Official Minutes are already posted on the Village Website.

## **3) Communicating with the EBPC**

It is generally agreed that, as now, the PC should be approachable by any resident and given the opportunity to make a public comment. The 3 minute rule limits public discourse so improvements are suggested:

- Residents should get in touch with an individual Councillor or the Parish Clerk as soon as their issue arises rather than waiting for Public Comment at a Monthly Meeting
- The EBPC should get advance notice of major village issues raised by residents. On complex issues a letter or 'paper' should be sent to the Clerk to the PC in advance, so that preliminary discussions can take place before the PC meets officially..

**PS** (Subsequent to the meeting the Minutes of the EBPC's July Meeting were published: a Community Plan Liaison Group – Cllrs Tracey Strutt, Joanne Riddle, Paul Bancroft and Julz Dawson – has been set up. It will meet informally with members of the Community Plan Group and other village groups to consider issues that can later be discussed at formal Parish Council meetings.)

## **4) Speed of Communication**

Parish Councils seeking to increase involvement would benefit from a more rapid means of communicating with residents on current issues and residents would benefit from an option of receiving more up to date information than the monthly EB Village Magazine or the seldom referred to EB Village Website. Smartphone apps can offer both greater accessibility and speed. The East Goscote PC's app (<https://eastgoscotepc.org.uk/download-app/>) shows what is possible.

- The EBPC may not be ready for smart phone technology but should review its potential,

## **5) Village Media working together to improve communication and resident involvement**

It was agreed that the monthly Village Magazine was highly regarded and with the Xmas issue gained 100% coverage. However, coverage on the monthly subscription is lower with a tendency towards older residents, whereas the social media site Together East Bridgford is used more by younger people and is regularly updated. The Village Website has relatively low usage.

- SR (Village Magazine) and TT (Together East Bridgford) will explore ways of cooperating.

## **6) Welcome packs for new residents.**

These are considered an excellent introduction to the village for new residents but are thought to be no longer issued.

- It was agreed that Welcome Pack content and the distribution (probably by the Village Magazine team) be reviewed and funded by the EBPC

## **7) Planning Issues**

- This item was on the agenda, but it was agreed that detailed issues relating to planning applications should be discussed later with EBPC Councillor Julz Dawson. The EBPCG will arrange a meeting.
- One important issue affecting the Community Plan was raised: the need for the Plan to be adopted by the EBPC.

(P.S. Three members of the Community Plan Group had discussed the role of Neighbourhood and Community Plans with our M.P. Robert Jenrick (Housing and Communities Minister) and he had stressed the importance of working through the Parish and Borough processes. Our County Councillor, Borough Councillor and Monica Monni EBPCouncillor were included in these discussions)

**8) OTHER BUSINESS**

Traffic is a major concern of residents. There was brief discussion of traffic issues, again these are deferred to a later date and another committee.

**9) CONCLUSION**

Most of the actions needed to make village communication wider in reach to all residents, more rapid and more involving, lie in the hands of the EBPC.

- The active engagement and contribution of the two Parish Councillors in the meeting was much appreciated
- **It was agreed that, provided progress was made, this 'Communication and Community Involvement in East Bridgford Committee' was no longer needed.**

Richard Mackie

(meeting convenor for the EBCPG)

05/06/19