

# Minutes of the Opening Meeting of the Great Park Neighbourhood Association.

Venue : Great Park Community Centre

Date : 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018

Time : 20:00

## 1) Welcome and introductions:

Cathy Priestley : Chair of East Moor Village Residents Association (EMVRA)

Steven Meldrum : Secretary of Brunton Grange and Village Residents Association (BGVRA)

Cathy and Steven welcomed all in attendance to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.

Apologies:

Margaret and Lyn George

Sarah Maluila-Tyler

Ian Herring

Chris Marsden

Morgan O'Sullivan

Mark Graham

Ruth Hewitt

Sanchit Dutta

## 2) Background briefing from BGVRA and EMVRA

Meeting held for the following reason, residents and RA's felt the time was now right to join forces and create 1 large RA for Great Park in it's entirety.

BGVRA – formed in early 2015 for Cell F including the Town centre. Great Park has grown substantially since BGVRA was formed – need to reform identified.

EMVRA formed in Sept 2013 – small area of benefit now as only 82 houses – need to reform identified.

Melbury and Warkworth Woods (M&WW) - ? when formed but also have identified the need to reform.

Greenside are happy to remain as they are for the present.

So, all agreed at a meeting in November 2017 that there is a need for a larger formal RA – now to be known as a Neighbourhood Association. This will include all

areas of GP excluding Greenside, unless they wish to join in future.

### 3) Constitution and area of benefit.

All formal neighbourhood associations are required to have a formal constitution to set out their aims and objectives and their operating standards.

All agreed that we will amend the current EMVRA constitution which is very similar to that of BGVRA and apply it to the new Great Park Action Group (GPNA.)

The document was circulated and the aims and objectives outlined by the chair.

It was agreed that residents supported these and the decision to amend and adopt the constitution was ratified.

### 4) The role of the GPNA – what do residents want it to do?

Members agreed that there is a need for a formal group, and that there were many advantages to having one large group. In the past multiple groups have been confusing for new residents and there has been scope for playing one group off against another, reducing effectiveness. Consideration was given as to how to work with the Great Park Action Group (represented by John Atkinson, who is leading it). This pressure group has successfully raised awareness of town centre and infrastructure delivery delays and commenced a dialogue with the developers. A reporting system for infrastructure issues has been developed, and it was proposed to continue to use this because of the built in monitoring of progress. It was agreed that GPNA would advise residents to use this system, and could monitor the issues residents were raising and any progress on them and it is a single point of contact. It was felt it would be helpful if the consortium reporting web form could accommodate attachments, send a copy email to the person reporting and possibly also to the GPNA for monitoring purposes. Cllr Lower said that more personal issues are often reported to her, and these could not be shared to protect privacy.

It was agreed that GPNA would support and promote reporting infrastructure (estate) issues via the consortium web site and copied in to John Atkinson. Details to be posted on web and facebook groups. John Atkinson from GPAG advised that as soon as the completed list of issues is uploaded to the Consortium website residents will need to look through it to ensure that their issues are on the list. John also advised that the list will have a time frame and who is responsible on it. It was felt at the meeting that GPNA and GPAG need to work together for the benefit of the residents.

Agreed also that if issues are not being resolved via GPAG that this is when the GPNA should be involved to push for action. Also that the GPNA should be the place to signpost residents to the most appropriate place to raise their concerns, issues etc.

Those present at the meeting agreed to the above process.

It was agreed that a summer social event would be a great way to celebrate.

#### 5) Communication and how we want it to work.

It was felt that a priority was to promote the new group. Various ways of communication identified.

- Facebook – need to be aware that not everyone has access or chooses to use
- Web site which links with facebook
- Meeting minutes and all correspondence (unless there is a need to protect an individual's privacy) to be made public.
- Newsletter – electronic – use an email platform like Mailchimp – quarterly felt to be sufficient.
- Update all sites which point to a GP residents group, Newcastle City Council, Community Center etc.
- Website will need info re who is responsible for what (builders or consortium)
- Contact details to be displayed in site sales offices, Community Centre, Notice boards, On Q3 buses, via Brunton First School were some suggestions.
- Details to be put into new home owner packs
- Second time buyers could be welcomed by a neighbour and given a leaflet

A resident with skills in the area has volunteered to help with promotion work, but unable to attend the meeting. Cathy to meet with her to progress.

Communities Officer post is part funded by the consortium and they are available to assist us (Amy Stillwell & Gail Forbes currently). This is a 2 pw day post for Great Park and they have time to give to GPNA to assist organising meetings, advising where to go for printing etc. We need to use them.

#### 6) Volunteers for elected roles on the committee.

Cathy Priestley

Steven Meldrum

Ian Herring

Christine Young

Claudia Birtwhistle

Helen Redhead

Residents were asked to comment on the yellow cards if they want to be involved on the committee.

Residents were advised that being on the committee does not involve a huge amount of time - approx 1-2 hours every 2 months.

#### 7) Any other business

Thanks were given to Claudia from EMVRA for completing the latest ward grant application which was successful. EMVRA currently have £1668:02 in their account which is now available for GPNA.

Anita Lower (Castle Ward Councillor) advised that this money can be used for printing costs, social events, flyer delivery costs etc. We will need to explore the best ways to use this e.g. printed letters to go into the site sales offices, printed letters to go into new home owner packs.

After the May Royal Wedding there is to be a picnic event on M&WW outside The Ark In The Park – all are invited.

All reminded that David Abercrombie has left his post of Project Director for Great Park. The consortium have restructured their management of the GP and Susan Cargill, a part time (2 dpw) Project Officer will be the main point of contact for residents. It is understood that the directors of the building companies will be more involved, and residents issues will be signposted internally as they are reported.

#### 8) Next meeting

Date and time of next meeting not set as yet.

Steven will contact those who have expressed an interest in helping on the committee via email to arrange a meeting. This will be to decide roles and how to take forward the work of the group.