

Bera AGM 22Nd March 2016

St Augustines Church SS1
Meeting opens at 8:00pm

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies from Debbie Fuller, Catherine Marks, George and Sheila, Joy Coulson, Fred and Margaret Watson, Bettine Pledge, Jerry Nathan

2. Minutes of last meeting

Passed

3. Matters arising

No matters arising

4. Update from Veolia - Nick Drake & Steve Crowther

Now 5-6 months into the new contract and the company has procured new equipment/vehicles, and there is a new wet team that deals with noxious fluids and blood as well as graffiti. **There will be a zoned approach to cleaning, focussing a deep clean on a particular area.** They have beach cleaning equipment which will filter the top layer of the sand. Customers will find there are more recycling bags available.

Waste is a resource and so the separation of paper is important. There will be promotions around the town for the new service. There will be posters, leaflets and roadshows plus they are looking to employ more customer service advisers. Updates will be available on both the Veolia and Southend Council websites. In May there will be a change to a 4 day working week (no collections on Monday) which will mean there will be no more confusing catch ups after bank holidays. **This won't mean a reduction in services though and the Monday will be used for staff training, MOT's and servicing for trucks and cars.**

Veolia recognises there is a lot of concern about the blue box. There will be engagement directly with people who have concerns, to encourage greater participation. Flats will be assessed to see what receptacles are the best fit. Veolia will also engage housing associations, letting agents and landlords.

The current recycling centre sites will be reviewed and will undergo renovation, including installing CCTV so customers can view the queue lengths/waiting time. This will improve safety, and ultimately the level of recycling. **There are plans to introduce ANPR to ensure that people using the facilities are from Southend.** The transfer station (Eastern Avenue) is also undergoing a renovation (completion due June 2016) with humane relocation of the badger population.

There will also be a new re-use scheme to ensure items delivered to the site will be upcycled if possible.

Q Richard Bently - Will the services be collected on time?

A: Yes.

Friday collection will remain the same. No Good Friday collection. Will be a Saturday this Easter.

Q Ted Hunick - Where does all the recycled waste go to and how does it get separated? There are stories of recycling being dumped in landfill in China.

A: This is an old story from 10 years ago. Recycled waste goes through several processes including through an MRF and it becomes a commodity and is resold. There is an audit trail and there is a clear delineation where this goes. The paper will now go to a paper mill where it will be used as a clean paper source.

Q Peter Hyde. How big are the blue boxes going to be?

A: They are the biggest in the UK and these are proven to be a popular resource.

Q: Lucette Smith. Why can't we have a bag rather than a box?

A: In terms of the rationale behind the box it encourages more recycling. If there is a storage or a lifting issue they will automatically be collected from an agreed place. There will be a bag service for flats and tower blocks.

Q: Why doesn't the recycling plant at Stock Road have a compactor any more?

A: They are gone because of the JCB facility and because there is a lot more interest in recovering material and the JCB is better than a compactor.

Q: Can large chunks of cardboard just be flattened and left under the box?

A: Yes.

Q: We don't consider it a forward step to have boxes rather than bags.

A: Boxes reduce litter.

Q: Jackie Smith: The blue food bins are not put back on our property properly so how can we believe that the new boxes will be?

A: Please report when blue bins are not put back properly. There will be discipline taken through award deductions.

Q: Christine Cousins: Will Stock Road continue to be closed on a Thursday?

A: Yes.

Q: Kenny Pitcher: Do the new blue bins have lids?

A: Yes, and drainage plugs.

Q: Glynn Jarvis: Moved from Rochford to Southend. There was a wheelie bin for everything in Rochford. Is there a plan to move from bags to bins?

A: No not at the moment.

Q: How long will the updates for Stock Road take?

Most infrastructure changes have been made. But there is more to come, along with more innovative ideas.

When Ted said "we want bags not bins" a lot of people disagreed.

Maureen Judd said we are lucky we can put our rubbish out and have it collected.

Pink sack engagement in Southend surpassed Veolia's expectations and they want to encourage that.

RON: if your bins are not put back properly then complain. It will get registered and there will be a strong feedback loop to the operatives who will be penalised. Ron also advised that 4% of the council tax is spent on litter picking.

5. Update from the tram stop project - Bob Craven

At the moment the tram stop project is in a great place. All the efforts to convince the Council that the building was falling down were suddenly taken notice of last year. Volunteers/builders/plumbers etc are needed to help rebuild the tram stop. They rely on donations/sponsorship as Thorpe Bay is not an area of need so there is not much funding from lottery and other places. There has been around £30K of funding raised. This has paid for the architect and civil engineering fees and there is still money left over.

Weston homes donated 100 tons of sand for the wheelchair access ramp. The total rebuild cost is likely to be £400-500,000. Currently the cost of building will be £250,000 but it is expected that around £100,000 will come in materials donated. Tram stop have also started an initiative called "Caring on Sea". There was a consultation with various groups to ensure that the facilities built are created so that the people who need them use them. Currently none of the ramps and platforms on the seafront are fit for purpose as they leave the wheelchair user separated from their families as they are unable to get onto the beach. It is possible to get matting and an all-terrain wheelchair. On 1st April at 11.00am there will be levelling taking place on the beach to show how this is possible.

Everyone is welcome to attend their AGM on Tuesday 17th May at Roslin at 7:30pm and they are looking for ideas. Their motto is By the Community, For the Community.

Mike has been tireless in his work on the tram stop and along with Bob and the rest of the Committee should be congratulated for how far they have come.

6. Ron - Police report summary

Might only have 11 police officers per shift. PCSOs will go from 30 down to 7.

BERA can get panic alarms and personal alarms if anyone needs them.

We need to take responsibility for our own personal safety and be more vigilant. **If people are really worried they should invest in a burglar alarm.**

The council is looking at whether there will be a council tax discount for people who volunteer to be a Special Constable.

7. Talk re Neighbourhood Watch – Mike Stafford

The thought is to set up Neighbourhood Watch to pool resources and to ensure that we are acting together. If anyone is interested then Mike will coordinate this.

8. Membership secretary report

624 members plus another 10 people joined tonight but 233 less than last year. A further renewal reminder letter will go out in May to hopefully bring people back to membership.

9. Chairs report

Following BERA's donation there are now new trees around the church and a further £1,000 has recently been donated by BERA for additional trees. A single tree is a £110. Philippa suggested more trees on The Broadway. People were invited to suggest locations for new trees.

Money was also spent on Christmas Decorations in the Broadway for Christmas 2015, but high winds kept breaking the lightbulbs which was a problem. For Christmas 2016 we will be looking at an alternative.

Changes to drop down kerb policy are due to be passed in April and after this it will cost less to have the work completed - down to about £1500.

There will be new LED street lights where needed and new columns will be up and completed by autumn next year.

Sea Defence Update – Peter Lovett

Peter Lovett has been attending the sea defence meeting tonight and has come straight from the meeting to update BERA.

Council and the Officers have given an assurance that the Shoebury seawall will not go ahead under their administration. Nothing was decided about the scheme as there was a need to check the integrity of the seawall before making a decision.

A much more open and honest atmosphere exists with the new consultant.

10. Treasurers Report – Mike Stafford

Looking at renting Christmas lights rather than buying and storing. BERA plan to get an idea of prices sorted out during the summer.

Expect that BERA Will be up to £17,000 with the incoming membership. Thoughts on how to spend money include: Noticeboard, more money on Christmas lights, more trees, shrub borders.

Mike Taylor/Bob Craven proposed and seconded Accounts.

11. Re-election of Committee members

Mike Stafford, Catherine Marks, Philippa Peters and Avis France were up for re-election. Les Hay proposed and was seconded by Mike Carter.

12. AOB

Ron: Just a word of warning that there is one person who is stirring up trouble about the leaseholder situation. BERA has been threatened and if anyone else feels that they are being targeted please ignore the person concerned or come to BERA for any assistance.

Are there any BERA members prepared to deliver newsletters?

Pavements - Brian Lacey

£4M put in budget for pavement repairs. There are concerns regarding the pavements as the whole borough would cost £24M to get all pavements to a good standard and they would all need doing again in 10 years time. Caused by people in cars and heavy vehicles who drive up pavements. Colbert Avenue is a prime example.

Audience member: Safety Thorpe Bay Broadway.

Twice people have turned the wrong way up the Broadway which is a one way street as there is a missing no left turn sign when you come from FERMOY.

Request by Lucette: - Can a new sign be installed at the top of St Augustine's steps. The current one is too small.

Can the shrub borders around the St Augustines roundabout be litter picked.

Ron has said that the number of enforcement notices being issued is now over 2000.

Audience member notes: There are now going to be 3 vacant shops in the Broadway. Two are going to be estate agents and then another will be a coffee shop.

Ron Replies: There is a free for all regarding the mix of retail types on the high street. This is because of the original licence granted to the Café.

13. Refreshments

Meeting closes at 21:35 with refreshments served.