

# Codford Parish Council

## ***Meeting Minutes***

February 13th, 2017

### **Call to order**

The Chairman called to order the regular meeting of the Parish Council at 7.30 pm on February 13th, 2017 in the small village hall, Codford.

### **Present**

Cllr. C Beagley, Cllr. D Bartlett, Cllr C Brayne, Cllr E. Longlands, Cllr Sue Mitchell and Cllr. A. Rennie

**In attendance:** K Grant, Clerk

### **1 Apologies**

Cllr. T Thornton, Cllr. H Merchant and Cllr B. Smith

### **2 Open Forum**

Ms. Sarah Dicker – Wiltshire Council Refugee Coordinator, attended the meeting to talk about the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme. (The Refugee Programme) This is a national resettlement scheme and Wiltshire is one of the first local authorities to welcome refugee families. It is a voluntary programme with the Home Office. Funding is mainly from the International Aid budget.

**What happens when a new area becomes involved in a refugee programme?** Once a suitable property is identified for the family, in the community, it is checked to make sure it is suitable for a referral to be made. Home Office is then approached for referral suggestions. The council then carries out an internal vetting process with Wiltshire Police, DWP, Health Services, various departments in the council together to consider the referral and ensure the family meet the criteria to be successfully resettled.

#### **What happens when a family is allocated into an area?**

Once the family arrives in Wiltshire they will be taken to their new home. One allocated case worker officer, per family will go through a four-week check list to make sure they are accessing all the services they need. A general orientation into life in Britain is offered to the families.

#### **What is the input of Community and volunteers?**

Volunteers are signed on to the programme to help the family settle. Due to confidentiality and safeguarding of the families, volunteers must be DBS checked.

#### **Where do the referral families come from?**

Syria. Very strong vetting procedures are carried out before a family is allowed on this programme. A lot of the vetting is done by UNHCR, IOM (International Office for Migration), various checks including medical checks, etc ... There are certain criteria which families must meet to be part of the scheme; Women and girls at risk, survivors of torture or violence or both, refugees with legal or physical protection needs or both, refugees with medical needs or disabilities, children and adolescents at risk and refugees with family links in resettlement countries. In addition, the Wiltshire Council team does checks.

**Media involvement.** The programme is highly confidential and very sensitive, as it deals with vulnerable adults and children. Therefore, any media involvement has to go through Wiltshire Council.

### **Qs and As:**

**How did Codford get involved?** Members of the community contacted the scheme.

**Is the property for resettlement within a family?** No. They must have their own property with a minimum of a 1 year tenancy agreement, ideally 2 years. And the landlord must accept local housing allowance so the property is affordable.

**What about the local people in need of housing?** The programme will only use hard to let

accommodation as far as social housing is concerned. Housing Associations with housing stock in Codford did not have any vacant properties to let under the Scheme. Private Housing is up to the landlords if they want to be part of the scheme. Landlords in the community were approached.

**What about the landlords who were not aware?** If there are additional landlords interested in the scheme or more properties, they can be considered. There is no limit to how many can move into an area.

**What problems have you encountered, if any, with the families that have already been resettled in Wiltshire?** The biggest thing is the language barrier, but most of the families are doing very well. The team has 2 Arabic speakers who support the families. Currently the families can access 5.5 hours a week English classes provided by Wiltshire College. 90% are regularly attending English classes. Some are in full time employment.

**Is there any requirement for the community to provide anything for the family?** The scheme has funding for all their initial basic needs; for their homes. No luxury items are supplied. There is, however, an online portal run by the Home Office where members of the community can donate.

**What sort of numbers is Wiltshire taking in terms of families?** Just under 70 individuals, about 27 families, since programme inception in December 2015, have been resettled in Wiltshire.

**Will the children go to the local school?** Providing there is a place at the local school. Two teaching assistants (Arabic speakers) are employed by the scheme and they spread their time across Wiltshire to support the children at school.

**How long is it from their arrival into the country to being housed?** Same day. Accommodation must be found before they travel into the country. As well as the 4 week, initial check list, the family has a 12 month support plan. The goal being to get them as independent as possible.

**What is their status as far as visas are concerned?** They have a Humanitarian Protection Status for 5 years. At the end of the 5 years, the situation is reviewed.

**What about food and clothing, bedding, ... when they first arrive?** The properties will be furnished with basic goods, which includes food parcels, clothing, bedding, etc. They will be given emergency cash.

**Once they have settled, what support do you recommend the community gives the family?**

Empowering them with local knowledge, letting them know there is a friendly face they can approach.

**How will we know they have been resettled in the community?** Unless you are signed up as a volunteer you won't know when they have been resettled. Volunteer packs are available with all the information and policies for anyone who would like to sign up.

**Have you had any issues of racism?** Fortunately, not. Wiltshire police are on board to consider any 'rumblings' the programme may face.

Mr Mike Davidson - Chairman WNHWA, attended to brief the PC about the Neighbourhood Tasking Group meeting that has been scheduled. NTG works with Wiltshire Police to set the local policing priorities and shape the way local policing is delivered. The NTG should be representative of the community across the area it serves. Mr Davidson reported that they were seeking to expand the membership to include all walks of members, representing different organisations.

### **3 Approval of minutes from last meeting**

The minutes were approved as correct and signed by The Chairman. The Cllrs were reminded to check and update their Declarations of Interest.

### **4 Matters Arising**

#### **1) Codford Milestone**

Waiting for the stone repairs to be completed.

#### **2) Parish Steward Scheme**

Parish Steward is scheduled to be in Codford on the 20th and 21st January. On his last visit, the Parish

Steward cleared gullies around the village.

List of tasks for February will include clearing leaves on Green Lane, along Ivy Cottages and the pavement outside the Old Rectory. Clearing the drains. Cleaning any road signs that need a clean. Clerk to contact Mr. Whyte to get the galley emptier through the village.

### **3) AED**

Cllr Bartlett has made the list of instructions to go in the AED box, which he will install shortly.

### **4) Slow Signs**

Priorities are white lines on high speed principal roads and the roads that carry the most risk for highway users. Mr. Whyte will be looking at other areas shortly and will include New Road/High street junction in the next list of sites.

## **4 Planning Applications**

No new planning applications

## **5 Financial Report and Budget Forecast 2017/18**

Budget forecast and details of the agreed precept for 2017/18 were presented to PC.

It was noted that Mr. West had given up the litter pick and therefore the money in the budget for his volunteer work would be allocated to something else e.g. the Great British Spring Clean in march.

Accounts of all expenditures to date were presented to PC

## **6 Items of correspondence**

### **Grant appeal**

From Bobby Van and Victims Support. PC agreed to donate £100 apiece.

### **Treatment Plant – The Grove**

To be discussed in the next regular meeting.

## **7 Area Board/Village Hall Reports**

### Area Board:

1. Health and Wellbeing Fair on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 1.30 – 3.30pm in Warminster Civic Centre
2. Mental Health Awareness on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 3.30 – 4.30pm in Warminster Civic Centre
3. The Great British Spring Clean from 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> march

Posters, for your information, on the village notice boards, for all the above.

### Village Hall:

- Cllr Bartlett reported that the decision to permanently install the WW1 map was going to be made in the next VHC meeting.
- dog fowling has become a problem on the football field.
- it was agreed at the last meeting that the funds raised so far are used on roof repairs. The next project will be the patio and patio doors.

## **8 Matters to report.**

### **COMMUNITY LITTER PICK**

For several years, a member of the community has volunteered to pick up litter around the village. He has recently stopped because a member of the community verbally abused him, when he asked them to pick up litter they'd dropped!

PC recognised his contribution and supported him wholly, over the years. It was noted in the meeting that his invaluable contribution to the community will be hugely missed.

### **TRUSTEES TRAINING**

Cllr Bartlett reported that Wilsons in Salisbury run free training sessions for Trustees of charities for which they act. He is happy to share the dates for the next training if any of the Cllrs are interested.

## **YOUNG PEOPLE AND CHILDRENS ADVOCACY**

Cllr Brayne shared his findings. Based in Wiltshire, they provide a grown up to accompany a child who needs help accessing a service e.g. health services, or has problems with truancy etc...., they help young people to be heard, to understand decisions made about them, they speak on one's behalf about how they are being treated by social services and accompany youth to meetings etc.

## **ALLOTMENTS**

Some residents have been inquiring about the proposed allotments. Mr Latham to be contacted for an update.

## **DEMENTIA FRIENDS IN CODFORD**

Scheduled for Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March at 2pm in the village hall.

## **BLOCKED DITCH**

Highways England have been contacted, a team will be coming to assess and clear the ditch where necessary.

## **CODFORD FOOTPATH No.15 MODIFICATION ORDER**

The matter will be decided at a local public enquiry where evidence presented will be tested under cross examination. Codford Village Hall to be used as the inquiry venue and it is likely to take place in August.

## **APPEAL FOR RESIDENT IN CODFORD**

Cllr Merchant not available to update PC.

## **WEBSITE**

On going.

## **Adjournment**

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9.25pm

**The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held at 7.30 pm MONDAY 20<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at the Village Hall**

## **MATTERS OUTSTANDING**

### **WWI Memorial Programme**