



Friends of Moneyhole / WHBC

Meeting minutes

12 - 2 pm, 23rd March, 2010

<http://www.welwynhatfield.co.uk/moneyhole>

Present:
FoM TK Choo, Will Davis, Frank Marsh, A Choo, Ian Barnes
WHBC Michael Saminaden, Carol Rigby, Tim Beyer
Police Inspector Ian Grout

1) Introduction

Background the meeting was called by Michael Saminaden, Chief Executive following the meeting with Cllr Dean and Cllr Farney on 15 March.

The agenda was to discuss policing issues, the SOSC report, 24/7 park policy and its implications. FoM expressed disappointment over the unbalanced, biased and unprofessional WHBC report that undermines the FoM volunteer efforts rather than to address the core objectives and issues.

2) Police

• ASB calls

- IG restated the need to call the police on all serious ASB for action or to be logged.
- IG said the number of FoM ASB logged to date is deemed low.
- IB declared he failed to notify either the FoM or the police.
- IB said he no longer calls the police as their responses are often inadequate
- TK confirmed that the other residents had similar views
- Repeat callers are also deterred:
 - By expensive 0845 call of 98p (+VAT) from a mobile
 - Due to lack of or timely response
 - Lack of culprits apprehended or resolution
- It is important that all ASB is logged, not necessarily called to police, but on the current FoM log which would suffice to reflect what is happening
- IB promised to keep a weekly log for FoM log. **Action: IB**
- The life cycle of an incident to the Police is very short. The pattern and history of ASBs are ignored. TK raised this for discussion. No answer received.

• Policing Level

- IG said the PCSO finish at 11pm but the neighbour team can work shifts as demanded.
- Out of hours cover is from Hatfield for the whole of the district
- Response is prioritised
- Resources are limited
- IB said another reason for no calls when many ASBs seem to be trivial by the police

• 24/7 Park

- IG does not think the ASB levels and seriousness should exclude late night cars users
- TK cited the effects of 3 nights of consecutive car racing on ice on residents. Apparently the residents sleep and welfare are less important as the rights of car users.

• FoM meeting

- No police will be coming Friday's FoM meeting.
- No policing feedback was given since 21 Nov 09.
- IG to meet with FoM and PC Edmonson on policing feedback **Action: IG & FoM**

Inspector Ian Grout left at 12.30pm for another meeting.

3) WHBC report

- Barrier

The residents still believe the barrier will be the best solution to the car related ASB and will continue to press for this.

Discussion on centred on the report key objections:

- **Misuse of pressure pad – there are none.** It uses an induction loop.
- **Emergency services access** – all emergency services carries a F1 key which is universal across the UK. No barrier can or should be installed without.
- **Unexpected hazards** – there is a footpath. WHBC is to consult the many users like Domino Pizza, Mundells or University of Hertfordshire of rising kerbs installed in WGC and elsewhere to quantify. These sites would have carried out due diligence, risk assessment and be given planning approvals. **Action: WHBC**
- **Electrical Supply** – WD said he was told by the Herts Highway Lighting team in attendance to look at the car park lighting, that there is a spare spur in the electrical box to supply the barrier. The quote of £3,000-8,000 given was just a worst case estimate. As the barrier can logically be sited just feet from this box behind the overhead barrier it was seen as excessive. WHBC will investigate and verify this with Herts Highway Lighting team.
Action: CR
- **Maintenance costs** could be bundled up with the rest of WHBC work.
- **Vandalism** – this risk cannot be quantified but should not be the reason for rejection.

WHBC will issue the corrections before the discussion at the SOSC meeting. **Action: CR**

- Humps

- The humps would not stop all the car related ASB eg car raves, engines revving, etc
- FoM highlighted the risk of attracting bike jumps, cars racing on the pitches, speed hump noise as the Law of Unintended consequences.
- This is only a part measure to stop car racing ASB
- FoM group does **not** support this as a only and final solution to car related ASB
- WHBC is to obtain from the Police, the number of stolen, abandoned and torched cars in Moneyhole Park for a fuller picture (over the last 5 + years). **Action: WHBC**

- Temporary CCTV for 3 months

- Temporary CCTV can be installed 2 weeks after Easter
- The costs are £1,600 for the transmitters and £1,800 for installation
- Images can be monitored from a PC in the control room, but will not be constantly displayed, and can be downloaded for verification purposes
- The aim is to verify the car related incidents and not to catch offenders
- Note: no mention that the CCTV can record sound from stationary cars or revving cars
Correction: TB stated that the policy on cctv is that audio recording through cctv is an inappropriate and improper intrusion. No microphones will be installed.
Comment: FoM formally request that a decibel meter with data logging is installed to find out the true scale of the late night noise disturbances. This would not infringe the perpetrators' rights. This device is regularly used to establish noise issues.
- Whilst the FoM will accept temporary CCTV would help to verify some car related ASB, the FoM would continue to press for permanent CCTVs be installed as part of the raft of solutions. Moneyhole being shielded by trees benefit greatly from CCTVs to deter ASB.
Comment: FoM strongly recommend the temporary CCTVs to cover the peak ASB season over the summer holidays to gain a true view of the problems.

4) 24/7 Open Park

The rights of nocturnal park users, car related or on foot, seem to be paramount rather than the rights of residents to the quiet enjoyment of their homes or their rights to have uninterrupted sleep.

The word of 'balance' was used by IG. It does seem slanted in the night park car users' favour rather than the victims.

- Drug use
 - IB mentioned children frequenting an Ice Cream van but not buying ice creams.
 - IB and TK have picked up drug use evidence in the past. Offers of these to the police at FoM were not taken up.
 - TB asked residents to ring Street Wardens direct on 01707 357420 to collect any drugs paraphernalia or evidence. Residents are to contact the police about the Ice Cream Van.
- Park Safety
 - TK flagged the potential for a serious accident or death caused by alcohol fuelled japes larking about on the high climbing frame in the dark.
 - TB stated that no damage has happened to the play equipment in the last 2 years, since the initial burning of a table.
 - TB said street wardens and youth agencies were in the park over some summer months and the number of children encountered was low.
 - TK replied that number swells significantly after the Street Wardens and Child UK leaves the park at 9pm coming out of the tree belt. The numbers were significant to make him leave.

5) Closing the Park

TK asked WHBC to consider the option of closing exposed sections of the Park.

Around 250m of metal fencing like the allotment's to replace:

- Russett House entire fencing as large sections collapsed over the years allowing trespass and feral gangs to torment residents – see fixmystreet.com
- Short sections of the Park entrance
- A panel section of Sylvandale / Dalewood
- Leysdowns

With a main gate and 7 side gates, this fencing would be effectively keep out the most of ASB offenders. It would also eliminate the long standing ASB to Russett House & Dalewood residents. WHBC owns Russett House freehold. **Action: TB** [Please note that the action was to find out who is responsible for maintenance of the fence so that they can consider a robust replacement. TB cannot arrange for the work to be done].

6) Short Term Strategy

TK asked WHBC what short term measures will be put in place to prevent ASB?

The discussions were not conclusive and options will be explored. **Action: TB** [i.e. TB to raise Moneyhole Lane at the multi-agency meeting of the Community Safety Partnership]

7) Conclusion

The WHBC recommendations are seen as a step towards a permanent solution of the barrier. The security barrier is not discounted. The temporary CCTV for 3 months is to verify the car related ASB. It will not stop ASB.

FoM welcomes Michael Saminaden's efforts to work with the residents, WHBC and police to stop ASB in and round Moneyhole Park.

The meeting adjourned before 2 pm.