



**Minutes of the Open meeting held  
on Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> April 2015 at 7.30pm  
in Bulphan Village Hall**

**Present:** David Gilbane (Chairman), Naomi Cooper (Treasurer), Janet McCheyne (Secretary), Cllr. Sue Little, Cllr. Brian Little, Dave Hale, Gill Miles, Diane Perkins, Denise Wakeling, Jason Wakeling, Angela Shearing, Bob Shearing, Colin Pankhurst, Iris Aedy, Alan Cox, Linda Cox, David Tutt, Dawn Tutt, Helen Winter, Tom Neil, Dawn McMahon, John Everett, Yvonne Conway, Kelly Fiford

**Visitors:** Samson Odubanjo (Healthwatch), Ed Jessamine and John McIntyre (Novus Solar)

1.	David welcomed everyone to the meeting.								
2.	The <b>minutes of the last Open Meeting and AGM</b> on 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2015 were distributed, agreed and signed.								
3.	<p><b>Matters arising:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The Bluegrass Festival 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> July 2015 had received the go-ahead from the council</li> <li>b) A special thank you was expressed to Rod Addison for his continuing help: he is tending the donated silver birch trees. He has potted them on using his own pots and compost and will do his best to grow them on. They will be planted in the park once big enough (probably 2 years' time)</li> <li>c) Broadband update: Richard Robertson had provided an update on this which David read. David also said we would be aware when our systems had been upgraded because there would be a sticker placed on the green boxes. Actual timing of Orsett's upgrade has not been pinned down, but once the stickers are in place, we will try to inform people.</li> <li>d) Fairwinds Solar Farm Open Day: originally planned for 25<sup>th</sup> April 2015, the arrangements for this have changed. SunEdison would like to offer sponsorship to the school's Fun Day on July 5<sup>th</sup>, provide an information stall and possibly take small groups of interested people to the site. The PTA AGM is on 20<sup>th</sup> April, so this will be decided then.</li> </ul>								
4.	<p><b>Healthwatch Thurrock Development Officer</b>, Samson Odubanjo, then gave a short explanation of what his organisation does: they are the local consumer champion for Health and Social Care in Thurrock. They are an independent organisation, based at the Beehive in Grays. They can help you find information, improve services based on your suggestions and help you make a complaint or raise a concern. You don't have to share your own details if you don't wish to. Samson left leaflets, questionnaires, volunteer forms, keyrings, pens, wristbands and "bugs". You can reach them on 01375 389883, <a href="mailto:admin@healthwatchthurrock.org">admin@healthwatchthurrock.org</a> or write to them at Healthwatch Thurrock, The Beehive Resource Centre, West Street, Grays, Essex RM17 6XP.</p>								
5.	<p><b>Treasurer's Report:</b> the Forum funds at 9<sup>th</sup> April 2015 are:</p> <table style="margin-left: 40px;"> <tr> <td>Forum petty cash=</td> <td>£14.86</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Forum bank</td> <td>= £28,276.88</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Drainage funds</td> <td>= 195.94</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td><b>£28,487.68</b></td> </tr> </table> <p>SunEdison Solar Farm (on Lower Dunton Road) had awarded £25,000 to be spent on park entranceway redesign and enhancement.</p> <p>Our Santander account has changed from a Business Account to a Treasurer's Account – this doesn't affect anything the Forum does.</p> <p><b>Easter Antics</b>, which is a social event intending to break even, made a small loss of £13.78.</p> <p>Details of Easter Antics finances, Forum income and expenditure, and full details of the entranceway work and costs were distributed.</p>	Forum petty cash=	£14.86	Forum bank	= £28,276.88	Drainage funds	= 195.94		<b>£28,487.68</b>
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6.	<p><b>FixMyStreet:</b> Naomi reported that she had found it easier and more effective to report potholes, fly-tipping, graffiti, broken street lights, broken paving stones and other problems via FixMyStreet, rather than by using Thurrock Council's website. In fact, you don't have to know which council area you are in: the site automatically contacts the correct council to deal with the problem. Go to <a href="http://www.fixmystreet.com">www.fixmystreet.com</a></p>								
7.	<p><b>Lime Kilns Solar Farm</b> idea: Ed Jessamine and John McIntyre of Novus Solar UK gave a presentation on a possible solar farm at Lime Kilns Farm. Lime Kilns is opposite the airfield and Burrows Farm, on the A128. We were shown photos and maps evaluating the visual impact from various viewpoints; options of how</p>								

	<p>much of the available acreage should be used, which areas should maybe be avoided and many other aspects were discussed fully. This development is likely to produce electricity to power 9,000 homes. A resident asked if the proliferation of solar farms would continue. Ed said that there is finite capacity at the sub-station, so if Lime Kilns went ahead, there could be no more solar farms in the Bulphan area. The majority of Lime Kilns is Grade 3b or lower quality, and the development would include the introduction of wildlife corridors and wildflower boundaries, and the interconnection of existing woodland and hedgerows. The airfield and the Langdon Hill Golf Course had been consulted, and some very near neighbours were in attendance at the Forum meeting. As well as environmental and ecological benefits, Ed told us there would be direct financial benefit: a guaranteed annual payment directly to Bulphan Village Community Forum of £500 per mW installed (so probably £10,000 - £15,000 per year, for up to 35 years). And at least 10% of the scheme would be set aside for community investment/ownership. This would mean that individuals living locally could buy shares in the array after it is built if they wanted to.</p> <p>As Novus Solar wish to make sure that their proposals take into account the concerns and suggestions of as many local people as possible, they would like to have a public exhibition day at Bulphan Village Hall, probably towards the end of May.</p> <p>Regarding planning permission, Cllr. Brian Little pointed out that providing solar energy does usually count as “very special circumstances”, which may allow development in a green belt area. Ed and John left information sheets, available from Janet (<a href="mailto:secretary@bulphancf.org.uk">secretary@bulphancf.org.uk</a>).</p>
8.	<p><b>VE/VJ rosebed:</b> Helen Winter had asked the Forum if there were any plans to commemorate the 70 year anniversary of the end of the second World War. Janet had suggested Helen organise something, and Helen explained her idea of converting one of the flower beds in front of the hall (between the Bull and the bench) into a rosebed. Bulphan villagers could sponsor a rose to commemorate someone they had lost, and a plaque would name those remembered. The meeting was in favour of this idea. Kelly hoped that the new bed would be in harmony with the other beds, thereby maintaining a balance. This will be borne in mind as this idea is take forward.</p>
9.	<p><b>Update on village shop:</b> Bulphan Village Community Shop Ltd. Is now registered as a company. Next steps are to apply for planning permission to site a portacabin in the village hall car park. Mick Norcross has donated a portacabin, and a local crane company may be able to help with transport. This would be a temporary shop (up to 3 years maximum) run by a part-time manager and volunteer staff, installed and fitted by local labour and acting as a community hub as well as a retail outlet. By buying a £10 membership share, people could become members of the community benefit company (and therefore have a vote on shop matters, allocation of profits and awarding of interest to shareholders). Further shares would be available to buy and interest would be paid on these (subject to a majority of members agreeing). The Plunkett Foundation continues to advise and support us. Share offer letters will be issued soon.</p>
10.	<p><b>Community Speed Camera training:</b> Cllr. Sue Little confirmed that this is still being taken forward. Some potential volunteers were worried about “manning” the speed gun in their own village, so it was suggested they may prefer to operate in one of the other villages. Residents of Bulphan living on the A128 accepted there were concerns with traffic speeding through all 3 villages, but felt that the excessive speeding (and fatalities) on the A128 were being ignored. The councillors agreed to look into this.</p>
11.	<p><b>Thurrock 100:</b> Denise explained about the Thurrock 100 initiative: a scheme encouraging walking and improved health. 10 x 10-mile walks around Thurrock have been devised; communities will make 16’ flags to lead the walks; schools and other organisations will be involved, as well as Community Forums. Our walk takes in Orsett and Horndon-on-the-Hill as well as Bulphan, and will take place on 10<sup>th</sup> July. On 18<sup>th</sup> July, walkers from all 10 areas will converge at Grays Beach, for a funday Festival. More details soon.</p>
12.	<p><b>Bulphan in Bloom update:</b> in October, 30 pyracantha were added to the planting at the entrance of the village (Church Road/A128 junction); the lavender beds to the east of the A128 are being refurbished and replanted; the major project is a dry bed at Victoria Road ditch. The bark used when the previous planting work was done by Bulphan in Bloom at this site had not aided drainage, and the area had been damaged by the drainage works carried by Anglian Water, so the dry bed would be a big improvement. Anglian were providing some funds, as was another sponsor. Funding is still needed for half the cost of the aggregate necessary to enable this project. Kelly needs to confirm with the De Smedts that their plans for their land adjacent, and Bulphan in Bloom’s plans, will be complementary.</p> <p>Kelly read out dates of planting days, clean-up days and the plant sale. Finally, she said that having maintained the village hall beds for 8 years, Bulphan in Bloom had now handed that over to the village hall management committee.</p>
13.	<p><b>Planning matters:</b> Thurrock Council had approved 19 houses at Pieris Place, but this has to be ratified by a</p>

	<p>higher authority (it is likely to go ahead). Residents asked how they can get to know about planning applications. It was explained that they can visit the council's planning portal on the website; if they give their email address to the councillors, they can receive weekly lists of every planning application in Thurrock. It seems that neighbours are not always receiving letters relating to adjacent planning applications; also sometimes the yellow notices are posted in inaccessible places, or removed almost immediately after posting. John Everett kindly offered to print off all Bulphan applications and pin them up in the Forum noticeboard at the village hall.</p> <p>A recent application is for a 50-bed care home on a field adjacent to Martins Farm in Church Lane. The councillors urged residents to respond to this application.</p> <p>Thurrock Council had put in a strong response to the Dunton Garden Suburb consultation.</p>
14.	<p><b>Feedback from councillors:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Sue Little said that there is £150,000 available for improvements to cycle paths, bridleways and footpaths</li> <li>b) All horses, ponies and donkeys must have a passport to help make sure horses treated with certain medications don't end up as food for people and to prevent the sale of stolen horses, ponies and donkeys. The numbers of horses grazing with no clear ownership has prompted the council's Trading Standards to carry out a borough-wide check. There is a fine of up to £5000 if you can't show a valid horse passport for an animal in your care. Contact Thurrock's Trading Standards office if you suspect someone is keeping an animal without a passport: 01375 652780</li> <li>c) The councillors are holding monthly surgeries in Bulphan Village Hall from 11 – 11.45am usually on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month. Please come along with any queries or concerns, and let your neighbours know about this as well.</li> <li>d) Cllr. Sue Little asked that if anyone is aware of problems with the quality of care packages (social care) they should contact Sue as she may be able to help.</li> </ul>
15.	<p>No further questions were raised from the floor.</p>
16.	<p><b>Next Open meetings:</b></p> <p>Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015 at 7.30pm in the village hall (AGM)</p> <p>Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2015 at 7.30pm in the village hall</p>