



BEMBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

The Clerk to the Council,
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Minutes of the **Community Asset Committee** meeting held at **17:00 on 14th March 2017** in the **Village Hall, High Street, Bembridge**

PRESENT: Mr D Chubb, Cllr T Freeman, Cllr D Grannum, Cllr S Pigot, Cllr M Tarrant, Cllr S Weedall, Cllr A Woodford, Cllr R Weaver, Mrs E Goldring (Clerk), Ms W Jefferies (Project Officer)

PUBLIC: 16 members of the public attended the meeting

Cllr Tarrant advised that, following the meeting held on 15th February 2017, Mr Alan Morris had resigned as Chairman. Cllr Tarrant read Mr Morris's letter and wanted it put on record that he and fellow councillors wanted to give their thanks for the outstanding work undertaken by Mr Morris.

PUBLIC FORUM - Cllr Tarrant then outlined that questions could be raised in public forum as outlined on the agenda.

Question - What is the difference is between the Community Asset Committee rather than the Community Hub Committee?
In reply the original Terms of Reference section 'Roles and Functions' points 1 – 9 were read.

Question – Who is the committee?
It was confirmed that the committee consists of all Parish Councillors and people who are representative of the user groups: - Dennis Chubb Village Hall Management Committee and Jonathan Bacon Library.

Question – Is the CAC just the Parish Council?
Responded no it is as stated above.

Question – Why read the Terms of Reference of a Hub which no longer exists?
The question had related to the original committee.

Question – Does that mean that the Hub is finished?
It was confirmed that the hub as a central location no longer exists however the community assets still exist.

Question – Appears the Terms of Reference haven't changed, only the name.
It was confirmed that this issue was discussed at the previous meeting. The Community Hub has gone but there is still a need to look at all of the assets and therefore the Community Asset Committee continues.

Question – As an asset shouldn't everyone be invited on the committee to discuss for example 5 – 7 High Street?
It was stated this would not be appropriate as individuals could have a pecuniary interest. Whilst the Parish Council does not want to avoid engagement, individuals could have an interest and the focus needs to be on the asset stock.

Question – Do the Terms of Reference need re-drafting? Also people with an interest not councillors should not be sitting on the committee and planning permission has only just been submitted but the agenda includes items for discussion which are too premature and should be removed from the agenda.

It was stated that there is engagement with the tenants but they would not be invited to sit on the committee as they would have their own interests at heart instead of the community.

Question – If building surveys were carried out in February 2017 how the costing's were obtained and how much did the survey cost?

It was confirmed that the original surveys were undertaken last year and it would be remiss as a responsible body not to look after our assets.

Question – How was a decision made in May 2016 to sell the building but there was no report until February 2017?

It was confirmed that the decision was made on the strength of known issues original condition surveys conducted in 2012 and the state of properties has not got any better. It was clear from the previous condition survey undertaken that a lot of work was required on the building which would not improve and the sale would enable funds to undertake other works required. It was reiterated that the decision to sell is rescinded and, as the building needs work undertaken, the condition survey required updating.

Question – At the last meeting the report was not done – why?

It was confirmed that the condition survey had been done but the actual report was not ready at the time of the last meeting.

Question – Mr A Steane stated he had requested in May 2016 how much had been spent on the Community Hub as nobody knew about the private meetings or budget set.

It was stated that no figures were to hand and that this would be provided.

1. To agree a new Chair of the Community Asset Committee
Cllr Tarrant and Cllr Weedall stated they would be willing to stand as Chair. Cllr Weaver also confirmed he would like to be considered and Cllr Tarrant rescinded his intention.
A vote was undertaken with 1 abstention; Cllr Weedall received 3 votes and Cllr Weaver 2 votes.
RESOLVED: Cllr Weedall appointed as Chair
2. To receive apologies
Apologies received from Cllr J Bacon, Cllr B Bristow Cllr M Champken Cllr G Kendall, Cllr M Humphray and Cllr P Watts
3. To approve minutes of meeting held on 15th February 2017
RESOLVED: Approved minutes of meeting held on 15th February 2017
- 3a. Declarations of Interest
This was added as a separate agenda item following a request from the public as it was omitted in error.

Mr Chubb stated he is the Chair of the Village Hall Management Committee
Cllr Grannum and Cllr Pigot are Trustees of the Bembridge Youth and Community Centre at Steyne Park

In respect of the approval of the minutes, Mr A Steane raised that the report from Christopher Scott relating to 5-7 High Street has still not been provided. The Clerk outlined what had already been received and issued; these are outline layouts which have been provided.

4. To receive the updated Terms of Reference
RESOLVED: The Terms of Reference were received with the change of name and removal of reference to a Community Hub.
5. To receive an update on 5/7 High Street including the;
 - the Schedule of Condition report
 - planning permission application status
 - to agree a rolling maintenance programme
 - analysis of the cost benefits of undertaking immediate building repair works versus a 10 year planned schedule of repairs

Discussion took place and an update was given that the Schedule of Condition report has been received and published on the website.

It was confirmed that planning permission was submitted and advertised with a final date for comments of Friday 10th March.

Discussion took place regarding the cost benefits and it was deemed a sensible approach to establish what works need to be done and undertake at the same time.

RESOLVED: It was agreed that a rolling maintenance programme should be considered and to further review undertaking repair works immediately.

A question was raised from the public asking where the money will be coming from. It was confirmed that the Parish Council will have to find it.

6. To consider the conversion of the public toilets at 5/7 High Street into office accommodation
Cllr Weaver outlined the rationale behind this consideration; that relocating the public toilet to the Village Hall will enable new commercial space which brings in income and a good return on investment which is needed from the building to fund maintenance works. There were questions from the public raising the need to lose the toilets and spend money on changing the Village Hall.
It was clarified that a commercial approach needs to be taken and an underused asset such as 5-7 High Street could yield £6,000 pa and the new public toilet would have lower running costs. Accordingly the Parish Council would improve an existing asset and provide an income. The estimated costs of this are £10,000 to install a new public toilet and £30-40,000 to change the existing public toilets to office space. However, it was confirmed that a rental value of £6,000 for 2 small offices at £250 per month could be achieved.

Questions were then raised from the public relating to the Parish Office, why this building is not sold and why the office space behind 5 Foreland Road is not let out?

It was clarified that the Parish Office historically has a Public Works Board Loan which is cheap when taken out but has punitive charges of around £30,000 if repaid early and therefore it is not financial sense to sell the office. It was also confirmed that improvements have been made to the rear office of 5 Foreland Road and it will be let as a matter of urgency.

Further questions were raised with concerns that the Parish Council has not prepared financially and is hemorrhaging funds. The Chair stated that the discussions on the public toilets are in the broader spectrum and Full Council is where such questions should be raised.

The committee reiterated the need to move forward from the current position in order to progress and communicate together.

7. To consider the development of 5/7 High Street rear yard to maximise income
A question was raised why the Parish Lengthsmen need to be moved. It was confirmed that there are various options to increase income for the rear yard and the present situation is not the best use of land. Discussion took place regarding preserving the Nissan Hut and brick shed as buildings of historical importance.
RESOLVED: It was confirmed that a viability study needs to be undertaken for the best use of the area and the new Parish Council will be making the decisions regarding this.

8. To receive an update on the Village Hall including the;
 - Schedule of Condition report
 - update from the Village Hall Management Committee following user consultation
 - instruction of architects to provide plans, specification and pricing for the public toilet and kitchen
 - to agree a rolling maintenance programme
 - analysis of the cost benefits of undertaking immediate building repair works versus a 10 year planned schedule of repairs

It was stated that the condition report has been received and is on the website. The Chair read the response received from the Village Hall Management Committee and discussion took place regarding a rolling maintenance programme and cost benefits of obtaining a Public Works Board Loan now versus the cost of on-going building works will be lesser; therefore to undertake works may be the better option.

RESOLVED: It was agreed that a rolling maintenance programme should be considered and to further review undertaking repair works immediately.

Further questions were raised on the benefits to spending money in changing the kitchen and toilets. It was reiterated again that changing the kitchen goes hand in hand with moving the public toilets in order to obtain additional revenue stream. Mr Chubb outlined the work involved as per the plans available for all to view.

A question was raised who would be managing this process as the Project Officer contract would be ending soon and it was assumed the Clerk and Assistant Clerk had plenty of spare time to do this. The Chair stated this would be confirmed at Full Council.

9. To receive an update from IWC on the relocation of the Parish Lengthsmen workshop to the Old School Playing Field entrance and to further consider Steyne Park as an option for relocation

It was discussed that relocation to the Old School Playing Field is the preferred option which would offer secure, better accommodation. IWC has confirmed agreement in principle and cost estimates are £10,000 to include planning permission, electric but no water. It was further confirmed that moving the Parish Lengthsmen will release space for commercial purposes.

RESOLVED: The preferred relocation of the Parish Lengthsmen is to the Old School Playing Field.

10. To issue a new notice letter to SH Tree Services on 1st April 2017 giving a three month notice period with a one month rolling contract until a decision is made on development of the rear yard

Mr Hughes stated he had received a letter changing his contract from 3 months' notice to 1 month. It was clarified that SH Tree Services has a licence not a contract and stated that development of the rear yard is to enable storage and parking in order to generate income. Public opinion is that the Parish Council wants to shut the businesses down and that Captain Stan's would lose the storage areas used in the rear yard which are vital to the business. It was clarified that the storage is not in the lease and is an informal arrangement with the business upstairs.

It was confirmed that no decision had been made to remove tenants and that existing tenants could be the first option for storage and parking.

Mr Hughes stated that the existing 3 businesses would give the Parish Council the required income without making any changes. Cllr Weaver refuted this and stated the rental value is not at a commercial rate.

RESOLVED: A vote was taken in respect of the notice letter to SH Tree Services and a unanimous vote of 8 committee members voted for to issue it.

11. To consider timescales going forward

Discussion took place and it was concurred that no further timescales could be set at this stage.

RESOLVED: Need to await the outcome of the planning permission application which is expected in around 8 weeks.

12. To confirm time and date of next meeting

Following discussions, it was agreed that no date will be set at this stage.

RESOLVED: Further meeting date to be set once the new Parish Council is in place after the elections on 4th May.

Cllr Grannum formally proposed that any new storage arrangements in the rear yard of 5-7 High Street be offered in the first instance to the existing tenants. This was seconded by Cllr Weaver. The Clerk confirmed that, as this is not an agenda item, this proposal will need to go to on the next agenda but will also be included in the Full Council papers being issued tomorrow.

Mr Hughes requested a letter of continuity for the shed and where would he go during any planned development. Cllr Weaver offered storage assistance in his yard at the current rental rate during any transitional period.

The Parish Council were told that future actions need to be thought through and consequences considered before acting. Also that better communication is needed. The Chair stated that a lot of consideration was given to implementing a community hub. It was confirmed that a new website and Facebook page will be going live next week and that councillors have attended a number of events but no-one speaks to them about issues.

It was stated that the public felt this meeting had been more transparent but that previous attempts to engage with the Parish Council had failed which caused frustration and, it is believed questions have not been answered. The Parish Council was praised for the 3 page clarification statement which people believed had really benefited.

Councillors stated that they are volunteers and only want to do the best for the village and there needs to be a time limit on meeting to discuss these issues.

The meeting was brought to a close by the Chair at 18:25.

Signed:.....

Dated:.....