



# BEMBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

**The Clerk to the Council,**  
5 Foreland Road, Bembridge, Isle of Wight, PO35 5XN  
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## Minutes of the **Community Hub Committee** meeting held at **11.00 on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2017 in Parish Office, 5 Foreland Rd, Bembridge**

**PRESENT:** Mr A Morris (Chairman), Mr D Chubb, Cllr M Champken, Cllr T Freeman, Cllr D Grannum, Cllr P Watts, Cllr G Kendall, Cllr S Pigot, Cllr R Weaver, Cllr S Weedall, Cllr A Woodford, Mrs E Goldring (Clerk), Mrs J McDade (Assistant Clerk), Ms W Jefferies (Project Officer)

**PUBLIC:** Mr S Hughes, Mr M Curtis, Mr A Steane, Mr D Groom and Mrs J Hickman

1. To receive apologies  
Apologies received from, Cllr J Bacon, Cllr B Bristow, Cllr M Tarrant  
Non-attendance Cllr M Humphray,
2. To approve minutes of meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2016  
**RESOLVED:** Approved minutes of meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2016.
3. To discuss the decision of the Library Committee regarding the lease  
The current position was outlined in that a decision had been made by Library and Heritage to take on the lease. No questions were raised.  
**RESOLVED:** noted the decision of the Library Committee.
4. To receive an update on 5/7 High Street including planning permission status.  
The background to the Community Hub Committee and reasons for decision making to date was outlined as the concept of a hub is a central Government idea. It was confirmed that the terms of reference are publicly available via the website and that plans for 5-7 High Street have been drafted by Christopher Scott and a planning permission application was submitted in late December 2016. The Parish Council has the general power of competence and is able to be a commercial landlord however should not trade to be in competition with others.

Questions were raised if all stakeholders were involved in the consultation process and whether the terms of reference focussed merely on bricks and mortar over the good of the community. It was confirmed a full community hub survey was issued to all residents and the motivation for selling the property is the on-going maintenance and building work required. There was a request for evidence to support the estimated building costs and for clarification if funds had been put aside to cover them.

It was outlined that the precept spend is allocated and options to raise the required monies for the Community Hub are; sale of 5-7 High Street, obtain a loan or raise the precept. It was confirmed that the rental income to the Parish Council is net £5,000 per annum.

Attempts have been made to consult and inform the community but perceived apathy in people not responding makes this difficult. Public attendees disagreed there is apathy and a petition against the sale has been submitted with over 1300 signatures. It was confirmed that the petition will not be ignored and that the committee needs to be more specific and show choices to the community and also the consequences of those actions in order to move forward. Engagement with the community has proved difficult during the consultation process with only 140 out of 4000 attending a meeting.

Public attendees raised the perception of no community engagement and that the sale is a fait accompli by the Parish Council. It was requested that, as a goodwill gesture, the lease

termination and planning permission application should be withdrawn and that the building should be registered as a community asset. The planning permission application has been paid and submitted so will continue though it does not have to be acted upon; the lease for Captain Stan's is in place until 2019 and SH Tree Services has been given notice in accordance with the agreed licence with the option to remain until the property has been sold.

**RESOLVED:**

- A breakdown of estimated building work, timescales and costs is to be obtained.
- Detailed options relating to 5-7 High Street will be drafted and circulated to the community including the consequences of each action.

5. To discuss any response from SH Tree Services

It was accepted this item had been covered in discussion of agenda item 4.

6. To agree the planning quotation and timetable for the Village Hall public toilets

The current position was outlined and that if 5-7 High Street is sold the public toilets would need to be relocated; the obvious place being the village hall. The Committee is liaising with the Village Hall Management Committee and basic agreement has been made to use some of the kitchen area to install a public toilet which will include disabled outside access.

It was confirmed that the relocation of the public toilet may have gone ahead anyway as it would cost £20-25,000 to refurbish the existing toilets. The committee was questioned as to how much has been spent on the Community Hub project to date. It was confirmed that £6,300 had been spent on architect/planning services and that other costs which included the employment of a project officer (not fully utilised on the hub project) would need to be checked and listed.

It was confirmed that the plans and specification for the public toilets will go out for pricing once finalised and agreed.

**RESOLVED:** Await a response from the VHMC for a final specification to be drafted prior to pricing and consultation with Village Hall users.

7. To agree the planning quotation, outline plan and timetable relating to relocation of the Parish Lengthsmen workshop.

It was advised that if 5-7 High Street is sold the Parish Council would need to relocate the Lengthsmen and plans for this are currently being reviewed.

**RESOLVED:** Draft a timetable and budget for Lengthsmen relocation.

8. To receive an update on the Consultation Response briefing

The consultation response highlighted all response including that the main choices related to the Post Office, Bank, Village Hall and car parking. It was confirmed that full details are on the parish website.

**RESOLVED:** Update received.

9. To discuss the Community Grant fund bid

It was outlined that the Community Hub needs funds in addition to those which could be raised by the sale of 5-7 High Street. Accordingly, an application has been submitted to the Communities Fund for a £70,000 grant which could be used for the public toilet relocation and for an extension to the Village Hall. The closing date for grant application is midday on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

It was asked whether, if the bid application were successful, the proposed sale of 5-7 High Street would have a different outcome. It was confirmed that this is possible but the grant is only available to be used for new items and not repairs to existing properties.

**RESOLVED:** Await a decision on the Communities Grant application end February.

10. To agree the next stage of the consultation process

As discussed at item 6 the committee awaits a response from the Village Hall Management Committee regarding the public toilet relocation and this aspect of the consultation should continue.

**RESOLVED:** Continue with public toilet relocation consultations.

11. To agree the timescales going forward

It was raised that recent discussions on the Community Facebook page indicate that the Parish Council needs a Facebook presence to spell out the Community Hub issues. The Committee is keen to issue clarification to avoid people having pre-conceived ideas and the use of Facebook is already being discussed.

A suggestion was made to issue a letter to every household requesting a written response of their preferred outcome. Comments were made that it is likely replies will not be received or meetings attended and that the use of social media is a better option. It was concurred that the Parish Council needs to find a method of communication which will fit in with different people; the consultation was issued to all residents but did not receive a high level of responses, meetings were arranged but poorly attended and an article was included in the Beacon which is issued to every household. Public attendees suggested that Parish Councillors are not known to all which was disputed.

**RESOLVED:** Identify an appropriate method to communicate with the public for further consultation.

12. To confirm time and date of next meeting

Next meeting 10.00am Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2017 in the Small Hall, Village Hall

Meeting closed at 12:00

Signed:.....

Dated:.....