

BEXHILL HERITAGE COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of meeting held 23 October 2019

1. Apologies: Apologies had been received from David Beales (DB).

In attendance: Raymond Konyn (RK), Steve Johnson (SJ), Alex Markwick (AM), Simon Allen (SA), Tony Lightly (TL).

2. Minutes: Minutes of the previous meeting of the committee:-
Civic Pride Award – the minute is incorrect as “*also that Redwell will purchase a plaque to place on the building at an approximate cost of £300*”
Has not been agreed. See matters arising below.
Minutes were approved subject to the amendment.

Matters Arising:

- 8.5 Civic Pride Award – Proposal has been made to approach Redwell Estates to provide a plaque. **ACTION: RK to speak with Redwell Estates.**
- 8.7 Email network – AM confirmed that the ‘bounceback’ facility is operating but does not always function for security reasons.

3. Planning and Development:

DB provided a written report on all the current items which was greatly appreciated and contents noted subject to the following comments:

- iii. Down Cottage:-
SJ proposed that BH should offer assistance to RDC to enable a referral to HE for listing. **ACTION: SJ to email DB**
SJ reported that he had been advised by Bill Rawlings that the property had failed to make its reserve at auction and that he continued to be interested in the property.
ACTION: SJ to speak with Mr Rawlings after above action. (079845587170)

- vi. Meeting with Planning Officers and Members:

RK advised that he had an outstanding email on this matter. Following on from DB’s comments it was agreed that a structured agenda should be submitted to RDC for the meeting. These should be as follows:

Engagement between RDC and BH

Effective communication channels between RDC and BH

Administration items.

Specific matters – Items i, ii and iii of DB report.

ACTION: RK to reply to RDC with agenda.

4. BH HQ / Shop etc.:

Current situation was reported as the following options:

Current shop, alternative vacant shop, Buckhurst Place toilet block, Methodist Church, St Barnabas Church.

Following TL’s Condition Report on the Buckhurst Place toilet block it was agreed to abandon this as option.

(Buckhurst Place Toilet Block)

ACTION: RK to speak with DB before responding to RDC with BH thanks for the opportunity and offering TL report, if of interest.

4. BH HQ / Shop etc: (Continued)

Current Shop:-

SJ reported that the letting of the shop to a commercial tenant had been completed and it will be necessary for BH to vacate by Friday evening. Andrew Crotty (AC) may not be available to assist but RK/SJ would attend and remove contents to storage.

Alternative vacant shop:-

Negotiations were ongoing and this was not presently available. This is still a viable option subject to the terms, which would necessitate 100% business rate relief.

AGREED: To continue negotiations.

Methodist Church:-

RK reported that the Methodist Church had offered self-contained vacant accommodation to BH. This was immediately available and Church was providing an agreement.

It was noted that this was not as prominent as the current shop and could usefully be operated in conjunction with alternative facilities.

ACTION: RK to approach Methodist Church for storage of BH equipment pending agreement.

A discussion on future operations resulted in the following options to be pursued:

Option 1. - Use of Devonshire Road shop as active BH/Community Bus/TIP outlet in conjunction with Methodist Church base.

Option 2. - Use of display windows in Devonshire Road Shop as information and advertising space linked to Methodist Church as active outlet point.

Option 3. - Methodist Church as active outlet point linked to St Barnabas Church (see below.)

ACTION: To pursue Option 3 as an immediate response to loss of current shop.
To pursue Option 1 in preference to Option 2 but subject to terms of any agreement or Business Rate relief.
To pursue Option 2 in preference to Option 3 if Option 1 not viable.

St Barnabas Church:-

It was agreed that this is not a good location but has provided BH with a useful home and a public presence.

The proposed conversion/alteration works are essential if this is to be a long term option. At present the issue of a Faculty to enable the proposed works to proceed is unknown and the paperwork relating to the scheme has not yet been found or made available. There is considerable doubt at present over the time scale to progress the alterations. In addition this scheme will entail BH in a considerable financial capital investment.

AGREED: St Barnabas should be advised of the reasoning behind the decision to use the Methodist Church for the present. BH should continue to retain a presence at the Church for the longer term future. To this end it is suggested that this should be the venue for the forthcoming AGM and meeting.

ACTION: RK/SJ to action all above as agreed

5. Projects and Priorities:

i. East Parade Shelters:-

A proposal has been received from a member that the shelters should be named after the completion of their restoration. It was reported that they have never had names historically. However there is some merit in the idea but it will be necessary to ascertain who has the relevant authority.

AGREED: To pursue this in due course at the appropriate time.

Councillors have indicated that they would like BH to pursue the restoration of Shelter No.1, which gave rise to some discussion on the demands this makes on the active membership and particularly the committee. Following the discussion the following issues were identified:

1. Financing – it will be essential that the project is joint funded between RDC and BH. This would need to be on accepted methods of match funding for grant aided projects.
2. Management – whilst the current ‘emergency’ operation has worked it has made significant demands on the committee which is unsustainable. A proper operational plan and methodology must be established before the request is accepted. If the project were to commence in April 2020 it should be anticipated as running for the summer on a 5 days out of seven basis.

Nothing to proceed on this until completion of Shelter No.3.

NOTED.

ii. De La Warr Road Bus Shelter:-

SJ /SA reported on a meeting with the Principal and senior Staff at Bexhill College, which had been very constructive. The College is unable to financially invest in the project but is very keen to be involved. It is seen as having educational value for student involvement.

ACTION: SA to follow up as project proceeds.

iii. West Parade Clock Tower:-

SA reported that good progress is being made in drying out the tower. Monitoring is to continue.

NOTED.

iv. Sainsbury’s Mural:-

SA reported that Sainsbury’s were not showing any particular interest or support but he would continue to see if anything could happen.

NOTED

v. No further action.

vi. Asset Register:-

SJ advised that this needed to be brought to a close.

Agreed to close the register on 10/11/2019.

ACTION SJ to report to members meeting 28/10/2019 and invite final submissions by 10/11/2019.

6. Events:

i. Quiz night, 23.10.2019:-

Comments were tabled and issues for improvement were noted. However overall it had been well received and generally successful.

NOTED

A further night on a theme of a Festive Quiz has been proposed by 'Charlie' seeking help from BH, who would be a beneficiary of the evening. Subject to the following it was accepted as a good idea.

1. This is a Sackville Bistro event under a BH banner.
2. Marketing of the event to a wider audience than BH by 'Charlie' is essential.
3. Adoption of the identified operational improvements by 'Charlie' is essential.
 - a. Buffet, b. Sound system, c. circulation arrangements.
4. If this proceeds, questions to be prepared by SA supported by TL.

ACTION: SJ to speak with Charlie on above terms and report.

ii Local History Day:-

This was a great success and very well received. Operationally it had gone very well, financially it had shown a very small deficit 50% is to be shared by BOTPS.

After discussion it was proposed that this be repeated in 2020 on Sussex Day at another venue, perhaps St Barnabas Church

NOTED for future action.

iii. Future of Refreshments – members Meetings:-

As previously agreed TL will undertake refreshments for meeting on 28/10/2019 and SJ/TL will seek ANO to assist. Future arrangements will be subject to TL availability or the establishment of an alternative regime to be discussed.

DECISION deferred to future meeting.

iv. Members meetings 28/10/2019 & 04/12/2019:

SJ advised that an Agenda for the meeting was still required. SA confirmed that he would provide an illustrated report to the meeting on the Shelter No.3 project.

ACTION: SJ to prepare Agenda. TL to organise refreshments.

SJ advised that there was no subject set for the meeting on 04/10/2019. It was agreed that this should be on the Civic Pride Award. SJ advised that he had no nominations so far from members. A fruitful discussion led to a "long list" being assembled.

ACTION: SJ to present the "long list" to the meeting with a secret vote attached.

7. Finance and Governance:

i. Members roles:-

The offer of assistance for the role of Secretary had been withdrawn due to unforeseen family commitments. RK/SJ to contact further contacts. RK stated that the current load on the minimal committee was unsustainable and the membership will have to help.

ACTION: RK/SJ

ii. Finance:-

SJ circulated a spreadsheet giving current position and projection to end of financial year. This shows a very satisfactory position and current projected position will entail full registration with Charity Commission.

In the light of the projection SJ put forward a proposition for funding the bus shelter works as a combination of using unallocated funds and further fund raising.

NOTED

iii. Completed

iv. Co-op Grant:-

SJ reported that he had been advised of the submission and deadline at very short notice. This entails a suitable quality photograph of the Shelter No.3 project and volunteers. This needs to be done Thursday morning and has to be with Co-op by pm. Friday. There are other follow on requirements to be presented to the membership at meetings and via newsletter.

ACTION: SJ to organise photo and submit.

v. Sponsorship:-

BH currently has sponsorship offers from the following:

1. Charlie
2. Paul Wright
3. Redwell Estates

It was agreed these should be kept current and were applicable to the following:

1. Roof works on Bus shelter
2. Alternative shop in Devonshire Road
3. Civic Pride Awards

ACTION: to follow when required.

vi. Crowdfunding for ‘project bandstand’:-

See item 5.1 above.

vii. Lapsed memberships:-

RK reported the loss of membership due to lapsed memberships was of serious concern. The current arrangements for reminding members of renewal was discussed and thought to be adequate as far as as possible. The conclusion was that ideally we need a Membership Officer.

In the short term a follow-up project for recently lapsed members might have an effect on current losses. An offer has been received from Lyn Markwick to give this a trial run.

ACTION RK to follow up Lyn Markwick’s offer. Long term to pursue appointment of Membership Officer.

viii. Member communications:-

The issue of distribution of hard copy members’ newsletters was discussed and it was agreed that the current hand delivery arrangements were unsustainable.

AGREED: The next newsletter would be distributed by Royal Mail as a pilot scheme.

ix. Central database:-

Deferred to later meeting.

8. Any Other Business:

i. Civic Pride Awards:
See item above.

ii. BH branding:

The issue of the slogan on the baseball caps was discussed and the concerns of some members over the inappropriate nature of the slogan was accepted.

AGREED to discontinue the slogan on any merchandise.

iii. DLWP Associate section:-

RK reported on a successful meeting with Stuart Drew and an agreement for DLWP and BH to add to the Associate section of the partner page on the BH website. He awaited a letter from SD to confirm before adding anything to current documents.

ACTION: RK to action once agreement received.

iv. Technical:-

AM reported that the card reader was in place and operable. It will need some setting up if it is to be used in the shop.

ACTION: AM to set up card reader once shop is up and running again.

v. Leaflet Boxes:-

SA reported on a perspex leaflet box for outdoor use to be located by the Pages Gap display board. And another for use in other suitable sites eg. Temporarily at Shelter No.3.

ACTION: SA to purchase 2 No. Boxes. RK to agree with Keith for installation of box at Pages Gap.

9. Date of Next Meetings:

i. Members meetings:

Monday 28th October 2019;

Monday 4th December 2019.

Friends Meeting House @ 19.00.

ii. Committee Meeting:

Monday 18 November 2019

Traffers Bar, 19 Egerton Road, Bexhill on Sea @ 19.00