

Committee :

Raymond Konyn
Steve Johnson
Alex Markwick
Simon Allen
John Swap
Anthony Lightly
Jeanette Eason

1. Apologies

David Beales (sent Committee report)

2. Approval of Minutes and Matters Arising – from February Committee Meeting and to record any amendments to the minutes. Minutes approved.

- i) Confidential item discussed – agreed actions.
- ii) Use of Workshop and Tools – SA confirmed there had been two sessions at the workshop, mainly to clear the ivy and assess the state of the stairs and landing. Both in poor condition and a safety issue. After discussions with owner, it was agreed to postpone further work or activity until after the emergency. The other donation of tools has been delayed, firstly due to the weather and gaining access to the donors shed, but the virus restrictions have now also prevented physical contact to transfer items.
Action: RK to contact T Williams to check situation.
- iii) Electricity Bill – discussions re the bill presented for short term use of Devonshire Road shop. SJ contested the amount with the owner of the building and BH minimal use of electricity. The owner was not prepared to reduce the amount and claimed that two other organisations were also using the building (Community Bus and Tourist Information). It was agreed that the bill be paid, rather than pursue a formal challenge and potentially bad publicity. In future BH will need to be more cautious and aware when entering into such contracts for shared use of buildings/offices.

3. Planning and Development

- i) Cemetery Lodge – Nothing further to report at this time
- ii) Baptist Church, Buckhurst Road - Nothing further to report at this time
- iii) Down Cottage request for listing - Nothing further to report at this time
- iv) Spindlewood - Nothing further to report at this time
- v) Others - Nothing further to report at this time
- vi) Community Asset Register – response from RDC. SJ noted that none of issues were addressed in the response from RDC. Suggest a follow up email to a nominated councillor.

DB also submitted a separate emailed report re RDC Planning Committee main extract copied below:

- ESCC highway works in special areas, and a current report to a review Committee suggests a limited, but more flexible approach to allow use of non-standard lighting columns, and materials other than standard blacktop. These suggestions are the result of an earlier study. The report indicates that ESCC expect DCs and/or others to cover the extra costs. The report makes several references to this and indicates DCs should engage with interest groups locally, via Conservation Officers.
- No reference was made to the RDC Public Realm Strategic Framework of early last year. DB suggested BH write to RDC, to Tim Hickling, asking for full liaison about, and engagement with any such items which come to them from ESCC.
- Re Sackville Road application, after discussion with TL, an objection/observations letter was sent to RDC.
- Potential Relaxation of Planning Controls/extension of Permitted Development rights, upwards extensions to be allowed (by up to two stories) for residential buildings. This was referred to obliquely in the Government's budget, briefly the following day by the Minister for Housing etc., who will introduce a draft order or consultation paper when time permits. This could be very damaging. DB suggest BH ask Tim Hickling to let us know when RDC is consulted.
- Responses on Planning Applications – to be left to a later date

It was agreed to accept DB report and recommendations.

4. Bexhill Heritage's Work/ Corona Virus

- i) Under Corona guidelines there is nothing in BH stated purposes which only concerns the built environment, unlike BOTPS which includes looking after people. There was discussion re using BH database for emailing people about subjects other than heritage. However it was recognised that the use of email and postal addresses would be breaching Data Protection Laws. SJ asked what could be offered to the membership. AM suggested there could be a newsletter next month. Also a suggestion that memberships could be suspended temporarily and/or adding on a couple of months to take account of Corona restrictions. RK commented that most BH practical projects and work are likely to be low priority at present due to the virus restrictions. There was a suggestion that perhaps the newsletter could include a quiz, or an Architectural Spotlight section e.g. Air Raid Shelter in Sea Road and some 'Good News' stories.
- ii) SJ stated that due to Corona virus there would be no general Bexhill events until further notice. SA stated that he would be stopping work on the Shelter. SA has had a formal letter/text from the NHS as he is in one of the key risk groups, telling him to remain at home. Others who had been helping with the work on the Shelter will need to assess their own risk if they continue to attend. SJ stated he would carry on by himself if necessary, so long as he has his radio for company. Not too many could work at any one time due to space limitations within the Shelter.
- iii) There was speculation that even the King Offa 2022 celebrations could be delayed or deemed redundant.

5. Projects & Priorities

- i) East Parade Shelter No. 3 – some of the benches have been dismantled and the slats removed, plus connector rods. Rita & John will work on them from home. There was discussion re shot blasting the Bench Supports back to bare metal and repainted in the correct colour. Obviously if Corona Virus restrictions continues, all such work will be put on hold. SJ stated that BH will need to get quotes to get an idea of potential costs.
Action: SJ to email to potential contractors.
- ii) De La Warr Road bus shelter – unlikely to hear from college at present. Also any application for a grant towards restoration would be difficult at present, and therefore also on hold.
- iii) West Parade clock tower – (reported under earlier item) SA and AM visited to check if the clock had dried out and found that the clock had stopped. SA found a loose wire and put it back to where it should have been and fixed the clock, but was reluctant to interfere too much further. According to the record log held in museum, Deborah Kenneally (RDC) and Richard Evans have visited the site. Neither Deborah nor museum know who R Evans is.
- iv) Sainsburys Mural – Nothing further heard.
- v) Workshop & Tools – See under item 2 – matters arising.
- vi) Town Flag Update – on hold at present. Recognised Keith Rhodes had done a good job with his report and work to date. SJ expressed concern for the estimated costs of £1000. Clarity needed as to what this pays for: just the flag, registration or towards a parade? Given situation it was felt this was not a project that necessarily needed to be completed this year, and therefore could be put on hold initially for two months. It was emphasised that suspending BH involvement with the project does not imply any agreement to pay the £1000. KR indicated a fund raising/crowd funding campaign could be considered.
- vii) Restoration of Royal Sussex Badge – NFA required. Item can be removed from the agenda.

6. Finance & Governance

- i) Committee Roles – suggestion that Secretary role could possibly breakdown into three roles, to enable one or two more people to assist with other parts of the role. SJ explained under Trustees and Governance, Membership has become John's role. SJ mentioned that a new member has experience in a governance role and would be interested in volunteering (Mary Law). She was due to come to meeting and ready to start.
Action: SJ to review Secretary and all BH roles still needing volunteer cover.
- ii) Charity Commission application – ideally the only way forward would be via the AGM. However it was discussed whether the question could be circulated separately to members, and to ask them to reply specifically to meet CC guidelines for approval. It was agreed that the question would need to go out to individual members and not just via the website. A set of accounts would also need to be prepared for circulation to each member.
Action: SJ agreed to get something out early May, which would mean two extra documents being emailed or delivered manually with the Newsletter.

- iii) Impartiality Statement – redrafted by SJ, approved and to be amended on website
Action : AM to update the present statement on website.
- iv) Membership Update – JS noted that BH has limited ‘family’ membership opportunities, although feedback has shown a fair few negatives to date. One comment seemed to be angry at a perceived NIMBY response to a planning application. Another from a new member who wanted to be actively involved, has been waiting ever since for someone from BH to contact them. Some also commented that they felt a little pressurised into joining at a stall or the Hub. Some people who didn’t wish to join felt that they already belonged to too many groups to commit to BH. JS mentioned it is often difficult to get responses back from text or answerphone messages left for ex-members. AM confirmed that there are two more new members now, making 372 members at present. The committee agreed it will be interesting to see how the membership fluctuates in the next few months.
- v) Finance Update – SJ mentioned he was disappointed that the £1000 from RDC is not likely to arrive any time soon due to the current emergency. Also the money from the Co-oP Project, currently £521.96, will not be paid to BH in full until the autumn when their charity year closes. Some projects are coming to an end in April. RDC is now on emergency planning and budget to cope with any additional burial places required, plus other emergency storage, food distribution operations or other activities. SJ stated that BH will need to be very careful about priorities and expenditure at present.
- vi) Fund Raising – SJ has a log of potential funders or organisations that offer grants to charities. He is reluctant to chase up Stapletons for their promised donation, due to the fact that estate agents are having a difficult trading period at present. It is hoped companies like Trade Paints might sponsor Civic Pride in future. Consideration needs to be given as to how much to ask for, or what their project levels offer. It was suggested that there might be an opportunity to get a promotional piece in the Bexhill Observer. SJ feels he should arrange a meeting with Trade Paints, now that BH is more knowledgeable about the benefits to any potential sponsor. Yorkshire Building Society referred BH to their corporate website. It appears to be a similar arrangement to that offered by Co-oP. SJ suggested it might be better to hold off on making an immediate application, and to wait until after the current emergency.

7. Any Other Business

- i) SJ presented the idea, put forward by a member, for making a promotional video to feature some of the things people don’t immediately see in and around Bexhill. Agreed a good idea for the future.
- ii) SA wondered if BH should do an April Fool’s Day piece for the website. There was some positive discussion and ideas.
- iii) Items on hold – Suggestion Box, Electronic Legacy Board, Presentation to the Catholic Women’s Group (Jeanette to do).
- iv) Museum group Meeting – Stakeholder meeting AM said there was a very good turn-out, with lots of attendees, and BH representation, at the all-day event. It

proved to be very helpful to the museum, and probably useful for identifying community engagement, which should help them when applying for funding grants.

- v) Faversham Visit – Now on hold during the emergency.
- vi) Cllr Cathy Harmer - RK met the Councillor at a Rail Network Meeting. Cllr Harmer is due to stand down as Mayor soon and RK asked her if she would represent BH within the council, especially at Planning meetings if possible. Said she would be delighted to consider when she is no longer mayor.
- vii) Dr Paul Wright – has produced a second book Eye Spot Bexhill on Sea, focussing on the East Parade. Some interesting feedback e.g. perhaps better as one book not two as planned. AM suggested that there are a number of changes needed to the first book e.g. West Parade and Sovereign Lighthouse, which is why there have been two books. JS asked if it was known what the target audience was for the book, age groups etc. Also it mentions what was at a location previously, but doesn't show any pictures or items to reference the dialogue, such as then and now? RK asked what, if anything Dr Wright is wanting BH to do. **Action** : AM to liaise with Paul and provide feedback as outlined by JS.

8. Dates of Next scheduled meetings:

- Members Meeting – AGM Wednesday 6th May 2020 (to be postponed)
- Committee Meeting – Monday 6th April 202 – online meeting