

BEXHILL HERITAGE MEMBERS' MEETING HELD AT FRIEND'S MEETING HOUSE, ALBERT ROAD, BEXHILL-ON-SEA, TN40 1DG ON 4th FEBRUARY 2019 AT 19:00

1. WELCOME

Raymond Konyn (RK) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. FIRE SAFETY

Mike French explained the evacuation procedures in the event of a fire.

3. COMMITTEE APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Steve Johnson.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEMBERS' MEETING ON 10th NOVEMBER 2018

There were no Matters Arising from the previous meeting and RK signed off the minutes as a true record of proceedings.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

RK asked the Members present to consider if they would have the capacity to help with any of the following areas where Bexhill Heritage was currently stretched: Refreshments Team; Bexhill Heritage Events 2019 or Committee Membership especially anyone with knowledge and skills in planning to assist the planning team.

6. PROJECTS

i) De La Warr Bus Shelter – Simon Allen (SA) said that he had made contact with the Solicitors who look after property divested by the Crown. They confirmed that they currently had possession of this shelter and adjoining land and were keen to get this item off their books. Options included purchase of the shelter by RDC or Bexhill Heritage, but the Capital and Maintenance costs involved were currently unknown. The meeting suggested that the Bus Companies who use the stop could be approached as part of their Community work or St Richards and the College could adopt it as so many of their pupils use it. SA undertook to investigate these options.

ii) Max Faulkner Placard Reinstatement – SA reported that the existing Plaque was made of fibreglass and in good condition and can be reinstated once a suitable site is identified.

iii) East Parade Shelters – RK reported that Bexhill Heritage had undertaken a condition survey which had been shared with RDC, so they could make an informed assessment of the repairs required. Two Heritage Lottery Funding applications had been unsuccessful and Bexhill Heritage stand ready to assist RDC in any forthcoming bids. The Heritage Lottery had, however, confirmed that they were not seeking any bids in 2019 and therefore the next round of funding opportunities would not be until 2020 at the earliest. RDC will therefore undertake remedial work to try to prevent further deterioration of the shelters and to this end had included £30,000 in the current year's Capital Budget and a further £385,000 in the following year; however the latter amount was currently largely unfunded.

The meeting queried why the previous bids had failed and whilst the reasons were unknown it was wondered if greater community involvement in any future applications would help to strengthen the bid. Members also wondered if commercial sponsorship, such as currently used on roundabouts, might be a source of funding, but that was a matter for RDC to pursue if they felt it appropriate.

7. PLANNING

i) Cemetery Lodge – David Beales (DB) reported that no actual planning application had been submitted to RDC for the development of the area, but an application had been put forward by the applicant for a new access in St Mary's Lane. BH hadn't objected but are currently unhappy with the proposed access.

ii) Spindlewood - DB said that full details of the application were available on the RDC website. RDC is currently analysing the work undertaken by the applicant to see if the development would cause harm to the Pevensy Levels and the question of who would monitor this in the long term also needed to be resolved.

8. PRESENTATION – THE DRILL HALL

RK introduced our guest speaker Peter Cole of the Hanoverian Study Group who outlined the early history of the building and its usage. This was supported by Alex Markwick's set of photographs which illustrated the various iterations of the Hall over the years. Finally, David Beales explained the current day position and sought members views on the best way forward. He explained that Bexhill Heritage in general supported RDC's plans, as long as it included the retention of the front two storey part of the Drill Hall. A show of hands from members present showed unanimous support for the retention of the Drill Hall, whilst some members supported retaining the front two storey part. There seemed no obvious support for the complete demolition of the building.

In discussion it was suggested that the Public Realm consultation could have a bearing on this building, but it was pointed out that the Public Realm document was primarily concerned with the spaces between buildings and that this was primarily a planning issue, therefore the use of Public Realm interest here would be inappropriate. The unused modern Skills Centre just outside the redevelopment site has been taken over by a Charitable Trust and will be used as a skills centre aimed primarily at socially excluded children.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Members felt that the use of a Town Plan, such as Alex Markwick's OpenStreetMap, would be helpful to illustrate where sites being discussed actually were during members meetings. This was particularly relevant in the Projects and Planning sections of the meeting. This would help those not that conversant with the various sites under discussion. RK felt that was a good idea and undertook to investigate this further.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RK confirmed that the date of next meeting, which would be the AGM, will take place on Wednesday 10th April 2019 at Friends Meeting House, Albert Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, TN40 1DG.