

East Donyland Parish Council
Full Parish Council Meeting – 11th April 2019
St Lawrence School, Rectory Rd, Rowhedge starting 7.00pm.

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Phil George, Richard Helliwell, Peter Case, Nina Crouchman, Tracie Guy & Dave Myers; CBC Ward Cllrs Adam Fox & Lee Scordis; Clerk Nicki Matthews and 5 members of the public.

The Chairman, Cllr Phil George, opened the meeting at 7pm and advised that Cllr John Rowland has resigned from the council. PG thanked JR for his hard work and the huge contribution he has made to the council, particularly with regard to the Heath Road garden and improvements to the green spaces in our community, which have made a real difference to the village.

- 01/19 To receive and accept apologies and to note absences:** Apologies received from Cllrs Appleyard & Clay, ECC Cllr Kevin Bentley and CBC Ward Cllr Mike Lilley.
- 02/19 To minute pecuniary & non-pecuniary interests of members relating to items on the agenda:** DM – pecuniary, item 06/19; RH – pecuniary, item 12/19 & non-pecuniary, item 14/09.
- 03/19 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 14th March 2019:** PG proposed the minutes to be correct; NC 2nd – all agreed.
- 04/19 Have your say! The Chairman will close the meeting for a max.15 minutes to ask members of the public to speak (max. 3 minutes each) on any matters relevant to parish business:**
- Item 16/19 iii) – L Bannatyne spoke as newly elected chairman of the Rowhedge Heritage Trust. Following a successful AGM which has resulted in an increased committee size, the RHT are enthusiastic to move forward, including the new members of our community. They are very interested in being part of a multi-agency team to potentially take on the Pump House if there was an opportunity to do so. The RHT have written to EDPC to express their concern about the proposed demolition of the building, and are aware of the history regarding the council deciding not to purchase it in recent years; they believe it does have potential to be a real asset to the village and would be a significant loss if replaced with housing. It is well sited and suited for community use and the RHT have capital funds which could be used for this project if it realised the RHT's charitable objects. The RHT have deep concerns about the loss of the building for its intrinsic value and note that the proposed housing increase is not included in the Local Plan. R Keeble also spoke on this application; expressing hope that the council will support the community in objecting to it. There are ongoing issues with drainage on the site; it represents a further increase in housing which is not in the village's interests; and with further areas such as the sandpits now in Hills control, raises concerns that further developments may be proposed in the future. PG advised that in 2017 the parish council considered purchasing and renovating the Pump House but at an estimated cost of £300,000 and with a lack of demonstrable community support (only 60 responses from a public consultation, with mixed views given) the council could not justify taking the project forward. In addition, an independent valuation identified that the asking price was above market value and the vendor was not willing to lower it. See item 16/19.
 - Fly posting – recently there has been an increase in use of lamp posts, fences etc for fly posting, and removal is slow even after incidents are reported. Please could the council take more action to enforce the byelaws? The telegraph pole by the Co-op is a particular issue.
 - Public participation – in previous times, in addition to 'have your say' members of the public could request to speak on other items, after councillors have debated the issue but before a vote is taken. If this is still permissible within regulations could the council consider reinstating this protocol as sometimes members of the public can make a useful contribution but need to hear the councillor debate first. PG advised that if regulations allow this the council will consider. *Action – the Clerk*
 - Footpath – there are currently cows being kept in the field opposite the burial ground, are these allowed to be there? It appears to have been closed off to the public but as there are stiles at both ends it is effectively a PROW; can the council look into this? *Action – the Clerk*
 - Signage – the fingerpost sign at the junction with Fingringhoe Rd has still not been replaced although the PROW signs have been done, and ECC advised they would be done at the same

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time. There is now also no chevron sign on the bus turning circle – please can this be raised with ECC? *Action – the Clerk*

- Speed limit – previously ECC advised that the 30mph limit at the top of Rectory Rd could not start until the first lamp post; as new lamp posts have been installed as part of the wharf road development, could ECC be asked to move the speed limit further up accordingly? *Action – the Clerk*

05/19 To receive and note reports from:

- i) Essex County Councillor, Kevin Bentley: apologies received; 20mph project – no further progress.
- ii) CBC Ward Councillors Adam Fox & Lee Scordis:
 - Pump House / Wharf development – AF advised that they have called in the application so it will go to Planning Committee for discussion in public. They concur with the concerns raised this evening and directly to them by members of the public; the Pump House is a viable building with a place in the history of Rowhedge. Any financial benefit CBC might receive in terms of S106 contribution would not outweigh the impact of these additional homes. Ward cllrs will continue to voice the concerns of the residents at every opportunity. LS noted that there have been over 70 responses to the application already, all objecting. Reasons for objection include drainage, lack of infrastructure, the housing not being in the Local Plan, loss of historic building. The main barrier to preventing the demolition of the Pump House will be that it is already owned by the developer. AF noted that individuals should be encouraged to respond separately rather than as a joint objection as it is the total number of objections that is counted, and that objections should be based on material concerns rather than emotional responses.
 - Policing – there is a new police commander in Essex who is changing policy and direction. The town centre initiative has been rebranded, and rural policing and street weeks have been identified as not a priority. CBC are waiting to see what opportunities there are to work in partnership with the new commander but parishes may need to put any funds previously identified for the planned rural policing initiative into their reserves for the time being.
- iii) The Clerk: report noted; the meeting with EDCA is still on hold pending a response from the diocese.

06/19 To agree the payments list already checked by Cllrs Appleyard & George:

RH proposed that the payments list be approved, PC 2nd – all agreed (DM abstained). *Action – the Clerk*

07/19 To note the draft minutes of the Finance & Personnel Committee held 14th March 2019:

Noted.

08/19 To consider a quote from Nicholas Percival of £650 + VAT to carry out the survey work and prepare two land registry compliant plans required for the transfers of land between EDPC and the diocese in relation to the proposed EDCA extension to the village hall:

This follows a quote received from Holmes & Hills solicitors last month for £3,200 to carry out the transfers needed for the planned extension, which noted that these plans are required for this work. The extension cannot proceed without this work being done, and the facility will be very valuable to the community. At present however, this cannot be actioned until written consent is given by the diocese for the transfer. PG proposed that written consent from the diocese be requested, and a maximum of £4,000 expenditure (+ VAT) be agreed to carry out all required legal works once such consent is obtained. TG 2nd – all agreed. *Action – the Clerk*

09/19 Following adoption of the blue plaque commemorating AB Everitt and discussion of a potential plaque as a memorial to PO Wright (198/18 & 199/18), to consider implementing a scheme for blue plaques in Rowhedge to ensure consistency, fairness & sustainability (refer attached draft):

Cllrs discussed the proposed criteria for 20 years to have passed before an event can be commemorated with a plaque. NM noted that this has been taken from best practice examples of blue plaque policies and aims to ensure that events stand the test of time as being historically notable. PG proposed the policy be adopted; NC 2nd – all agreed. *Action – the Clerk*

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- 10/19 To receive an update from the Clerk on planning advice from CBC regarding the potential installation of a larger MUGA and the production of a scale map of the Recreation Ground including existing facilities:** No progress to date; still awaiting further advice from CBC and confirmation from drone operator re aerial photos.
- 11/19 To confirm by resolution that the council meets the criteria for the Foundation level of the Local Council Award Scheme (refer attached):** It was noted that EALC have advised that the Asst Clerk's CPD points and the Clerk's CPD points prior to her leave period will be sufficient to meet the criteria for continual professional development. Cllrs noted that this application demonstrates the council's continuing progress and achievements. PG proposed that the council meets the criteria for the award as listed; RH 2nd – all agreed. *Action – the Clerk.*
- 12/19 To consider the quotes received for engraving the names of those who died during World War I & II and later conflicts onto the Rowhedge war memorial (refer attached summary):** RH left the meeting for this item. Only two quotes have been received although more were sought. One is significantly lower although both propose the same level of work. DM proposed that the council accept the quote from HL Perfitt and commission the work at a cost of £1,050 + VAT; PC 2nd – all agreed. *Action – the Clerk.*
- 13/19 To note that the proposed funding scheme for community policing is currently on hold following changes at Essex Police; to receive an update from the Clerk regarding the response from Fingringhoe Parish Council and agree any further actions to be taken at this time:** As per CBC's update in item 05/19 ii) the funding for the rural policing initiative is currently on hold pending any further allocation. Fingringhoe PC did express interest in the scheme but identified priorities as parking issues and traffic speeding, and a special constable could not assist with parking issues as this is NEPP responsibility rather than police. Cllrs noted it may be unlikely that Fingringhoe PC would want to continue with this given the withdrawal of funding, and EDPC may need to consider whether they would wish to fund this alone, which could involve increasing the precept – the quoted cost of £6,000 per annum represents 10% of the current precept. RH asked whether commercial sponsorship could be an option – LS/AF to find out, with the item to be brought back to council in May. *Action – CBC Ward Cllrs Scordis & Fox.*
- 14/19 To consider an application from Ye Olde Albion to hold a Music Day event using Pearson's Quay on 5 May 2019 (refer attached):** Cllrs noted that this has been a successful community event for several years. PG proposed the application be approved; DM 2nd – all agreed (RH abstained). *Action – the Clerk*
- 15/19 To deal with matters arising from the previous Council minutes not dealt with elsewhere in this agenda:** The action list was noted. Actions relating to Heath Rd garden and other maintenance projects will need to be reviewed in light of Cllr Rowland's resignation. *Action – Asst Clerk*
- 16/19 To discuss planning applications and note decision papers as listed: *Action – the Clerk***
- i) Planning application 190641: 22 Head St; application for proposed two-storey side extension and associated alterations:** PG proposed that the council makes no comment on this application; NC 2nd – all agreed.
 - ii) Planning application 190746: Three Crowns, High St; application for T1 - Monterey pine - Fell to ground level:** Cllrs noted that this tree has been a safety concern for a number of years. PG proposed that the council support this application; RH 2nd – all agreed.
 - iv) Planning application 190753: Rowhedge Wharf; application for demolition of existing buildings and erection of 20 residential properties with associated access, amenity space, car parking, servicing, landscaping and utilities:** further to the discussion in item 04/19, cllrs reviewed the original planning application which was for 12 flats on the site and noted that the new application represents a decrease in the number of affordable units. Cllrs noted that the number of objections already submitted to the application demonstrates the strength of public feeling on the issue and that as elected representatives it is the parish council's duty to reflect their opinions. As discussed, the financial cost and risk to the parish council to take on the Pump House by themselves was too high, but there may be opportunity

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for a joint working project involving a number of parties including the RHT and EDPC. The Pump House is the last part of the original docks remaining and is in a location that connects the old and new parts of the village; it has potential to be a viable community facility. The village has already accommodated significant new housing on this brownfield site and a further increase is not beneficial to the community; Rowhedge does not have the infrastructure to support this additional housing, and associated increase in cars. There is also the potential that there will be further small applications on the fringes of the site by the wharf road, with a gradual creeping increase in the size of the development which would be detrimental to the village. RH proposed that the council objects to the application on the following grounds:

- Lack of infrastructure to support the proposed increase in housing
- Decrease in the number of affordable housing units
- Loss of historic building
- Strength of local feeling

PG 2nd – all agreed. Cllrs also agreed to explore local interest in forming a joint venture to utilise the Pump House if that became an option in the future.

- v) **Planning decision 183144: 2 Chapel St; approve certificate of lawful use re garage conversion:** noted.

Part 1 of the meeting closed at 7.53pm.

Agreed as a true record.

Signed: Date:

Chairman

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Council Resolution for Foundation Award

The council confirms by resolution at a full council meeting that it publishes online:

RESOLVED that:

(a) the Parish Council had achieved items 1 – 15 of the Foundation Level and that all documentation relating to these items can be found of the Parish Council website:

1. Standing Orders & Financial Regulations
2. Code of Conduct
3. Publication Scheme
4. The last Annual Return
5. Transparent Information about Council Payments
6. A calendar showing all meetings
7. Minutes
8. Current Agendas
9. The Budget & Precept information
10. Complaints Procedure
11. Council Contact details
12. Action Plan
13. Evidence of Consulting the Community
14. Publicity Advertising Council Activities
15. Evidence of Participating in Town and Country Planning

The council also confirms by resolution at a full council meeting that it has:

(b) the following items of the Foundation Level have been achieved: A Risk Management scheme; A Register of Assets; Contracts for all members of staff; Up-to-date insurance policies that mitigate risks to public money; Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure; A Training Policy; A Record of all training; The Clerk has achieved 12 CPD points in the last year.