

**East Donyland Parish Council**  
Full Parish Council Meeting – 14<sup>th</sup> November 2019  
St Lawrence School, Rectory Rd, Rowhedge starting 7.00pm.

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Cllrs Phil George, Richard Helliwell, Anna Appleyard, Doug Clay, Nina Crouchman & Dave Myers; ECC Cllr Kevin Bentley; Clerk Nicki Matthews, Asst Clerk Elizabeth Nelson-Hayes and 9 members of the public.

The Chairman, Cllr Phil George, opened the meeting at 7pm and advised all present that the Clerk will be leaving the council at the end of the month. PG wished NM well for the future and thanked her for all her work at the council, most recently including helping the council to achieve the Foundation Level Award in the Local Council Award Scheme for Quality Councils. This will be presented to EDPC at the Town Hall on 5<sup>th</sup> December as part of a CBC full council meeting.

**118/19 To receive and accept apologies and to note absences:** Apologies received from Cllrs Peter Case & Tracie Guy

**119/19 To minute pecuniary & non-pecuniary interests of members relating to items on the agenda:** D Clay – non-pecuniary, item 132/19; R Helliwell – non-pecuniary, item 132/19; D Myers – pecuniary, item 123/19; A Appleyard – pecuniary, item 123/19.

**120/19 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2019:** PG proposed the minutes to be correct; RH 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed.

**121/19 Have your say! The Chairman will allocate a max.15 minutes to ask members of the public to speak (max. 3 minutes each) on any matters relevant to parish business:**

- Item 130/19 – F Ward noted EDCA's support for this application, and that they have white paint available to paint the kerbs on the entrance road driveway, which FW is happy to do.
- Item 131/19 – R Keeble noted his opinion that the current garden is an eyesore and is concerned about this proposal to develop it further, and how the resultant garden will look in the future to residents and visitors to the village.
- Item 132/19 - F Ward advised the meeting that he is now the Chair of the Walking Football Club, and that the club have experienced similar issues with RJFC re clash of usage / concerns about damage to the turf and would like community usage of the ground clarified. The Walking Football Club no longer use the Recreation Ground as a result of these issues. PG noted that it is a community recreation ground, owned by EDPC and this has been clarified with RJFC.
- S106 funds for Recreation Ground – has there been progress on how these are to be allocated and is another meeting of the working party planned? PG advised that Jess Tipper at CBC has now been identified as the contact point regarding the archaeological investigation required for a potential new MUGA. NM is liaising with JT to obtain advice and progress.
- Security in the village – concern raised about reports on social media regarding stolen property etc. Aside from reporting incidents to the police, what else can the parish council do? PG advised that the CBC scheme for community PCSOs which EDPC had been looking into has been withdrawn, but a new toolkit for 'Safer Rural Communities' has now been released which will hopefully help identify ways the council can take action.

**122/19 To receive and note reports from:**

**i) County Councillor, Kevin Bentley:**

- 20mph project – ECC have now produced a map (circulated at the meeting) identifying two zones which encompass most of the 'old' village. It excludes Rectory Rd/Head St/Marsh Crescent/Rowhedge Rd as this is a bus route. Cllrs confirmed they were happy with the proposed map. The speed limit will require roundels painted on the roads to inform drivers, and possibly a speed cushion on Hillview Close (KB working with officers to see if this can be avoided). KB advised that the next step required is to carry out informal consultation to identify and address any potential objections; this can be carried out by CBC in April, or now by EDPC and involves online consultation and a door drop. CBC can provide the content for the letter – all cllrs agreed that EDPC should carry out the consultation to speed up the process. Then ECC will complete the formal design, carry out due legal process (which is lengthy) and formal consultation, with any objections at that stage referred to the Leader of ECC for sign off. The aim is to install the zones by the end of 2020. There is also the intention to provide signage outside the school to reduce speed, which could be either '20mph when the lights are flashing' – timed lights around school

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start/finish times, or 20s plenty roundels. K Malcolm has advised that the flashing lights would be the school's preferred option – NM to liaise with KB to progress.

- Tyre wall on Fingringhoe Rd – KB advised that this is on private land so no action can be taken.
- Bus Turning Circle – S Church (ECC Highways Officer) is looking into the options for a one-way restriction. Planting the circle will require a licence from ECC, and forms to apply for this will be sent to the Clerk (noted there is a water main under the circle which may prevent tree planting). KB will look at the options for double yellow lines with the NEPP but suggests that this is the last resort as it only moves the parked cars elsewhere. KB will also speak to the bus companies re buses parking at the circle as this should not be happening.
- Winter service – this has already started with gritters going out on main routes when forecasts indicate freezing temperatures overnight.

ii) **CBC Ward Councillors, Mike Lilley, Adam Fox & Lee Scordis:** absent, no report.

iii) **The Clerk:** report noted, following points raised:

- Following the meeting with Cllr Bentley and S Church re Highways issues on 13.11.19, SC is also going to look at possible options to improve safety around the bend on Marsh Crescent as it will not be included in the 20mph zone.

**123/19 To agree the payments list already checked by Cllrs George & Clay:**

Cllr Myers & Appleyard left the meeting for this item. PG proposed the list be approved, RH 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed. DM & AA then re-joined the meeting. *Action – the Clerk*

**124/19 To note the draft minutes from the Maintenance Committee on 16th October:** noted. The committee agreed the renewal of the Crow's Nest lease as proposed.

**125/19 To receive two grant applications:**

i) **From the Rowhedge Going Greener group for £186.24 to purchase five further bins for specialised recycling as part of a new 'renewable centre' in the Crow's Nest Courtyard:**

Cllrs noted how great it is that the scheme is so successful that it is ready to expand and congratulated those involved. It was confirmed that J Sharp is aware and supportive of this application which will be the maximum capacity the courtyard can accommodate. The new bins are to increase the range of items that can be collected which would not normally be otherwise recyclable in the roadside collections. AA noted that the scheme is being referenced at meetings in Colchester as a good example for other communities. RH proposed the council awards the proposed grant of £186.24; DC 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed. *Action – the Clerk*

ii) **From the Rowhedge Heritage Trust for £450.00 towards the VE Day 75 exhibition, to cover transport of display items and set construction:** PG noted that this is really great project; plans for the exhibition are progressing well with lots of exciting items being secured including vehicles, and it is the transport costs for these larger items which the grant will go towards. Cllr Clay will be the liaison for the council for the VE Day 75 events. DC proposed the council awards the proposed grant of £450.00; PG 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed. *Action – the Clerk*

**126/19 To consider a proposal that the council declares a Climate & Ecology Crisis and in response adopts a policy statement to adjust its working practices accordingly:** PG thanked J Rowland for bringing this matter to the attention of the council, making EDPC one of the first local councils in the area to consider such a motion. Cllrs noted support for this proposal, as it will help ensure the council considers these important issues when making decisions, send out a good message to the community, and signals the council's intent to act responsibly towards the current situation. AA proposed the council declares a Climate & Ecology Crisis and adopts the associated policy statement to adjust its working practices accordingly; NC 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed.

**127/19 To receive an update from Cllr George on the Rowhedge Heritage Trust's efforts to prevent the Pump House being demolished and to restore it for use as a community heritage facility:** PG noted that at a Local Plan meeting on 21.10.19 CBC noted their support for the Pump House to be retained by the community as a heritage facility, and it was voted onto the local list. This means that although in theory it could still be demolished it would be much harder for a developer to achieve and would require a lot of justification which is unlikely to gain approval. PG noted that hopefully this will make the Pump House a less attractive proposition for developers

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and potentially the purchase price will decrease accordingly. PG then invited K Phillips to give the following update: recently the RHT has been working to put barriers in place to prevent the demolition of the Pump House as noted by PG. Now, the focus is on working with CBC officers to identify who owns the building (unclear given Hills' option to purchase – has this been taken up?) and to develop a lease purchase proposal to submit to the owners. If accepted, such an agreement might assist the RHT in obtaining grant funding for its restoration. Once options are identified, the RHT will then seek to re-engage with the public to secure practical help with restoration etc. Agreed that NM will provide KP with details of the previous owners who may still be the current owners. *Action – the Clerk*

**128/19 To receive an update from Cllr Helliwell on the recent meeting with the structural engineer to discuss the issue of subsidence and stability of the quaysides:** RH met with the engineers on site on 05.11.19 and they looked at Pearson's Quay and Lion Quay as far as the pontoon. The report of the inspection was received today and an initial review suggests that it is generally positive with no significant structural issues identified. They have suggested a further inspection into possible voids using probes, which could be carried out in the spring. It was agreed that the full report be presented to council in December with the aim of identifying and scheduling any further works as required. *Action – the Clerk*

**129/19 To receive an update from Cllr Helliwell regarding the tree lights on the Holm Oak and approve a way forward:** The lights previously installed have been breaking during high winds, and advice is to re-site the lights along the underside of the branches (above the electrical box) rather than around the crown. New lights have been purchased and a quote of £250 has been obtained for installation. The electrician providing the quote has done previous work at the hut including the connection for the tree lights to their power supply. RH proposed that the quote of £250 be accepted and the electrician commissioned to install the lights prior to the St Nicholas event on 01.12.19; AA 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed. *Action – the Asst Clerk*

**130/19 To consider submitting an application to the CBC Safer Rural Communities Fund for a grant of £1,000 towards the costs of providing the additional lighting and CCTV in the community car park proposed by EDCA and agreed by council in September (ref 92/19):** It was noted that £1,600 expenditure towards this was agreed in September, and this would be reduced if the grant application is successful. PG proposed the application be submitted; RH 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed. *Action – the Clerk*

**131/19 To receive and consider three proposals from the Rowhedge Going Greener group:**

i) **To submit a grant application to the National Lottery fund for £10,000 to develop the Heath Road community garden, to include a garden shed, raised beds, greenhouse, compost toilet, water storage and solar electricity:** PG thanked J Rowland for preparing these very positive proposals. JR noted that the details can be determined at a later date, and that the main aim of the group is to seek agreement to apply for £10,000 to develop the garden. JR noted that there may need to be a readjustment of expectations regarding aesthetics vs ecology, and that the aim is not only to provide a garden but also a community facility. A discussion followed, with the following key points being raised:

- How detailed the application would need to be and how the NLF would monitor expenditure
- Would the allotment site be a better location for this? JR advised that the Allotment Association already use the whole of that site and its future is not entirely secure.
- Concerns about including a container on the site, e.g. size and location and what planning permission would be required
- Ability of the site to provide a facility for school usage (concern raised over safety by road)
- Compost toilet – concerns raised about including this; would need to be carefully managed and secured
- Is there a team in place at RGG to manage such a large project?
- Issues over land ownership – EDPC licence the land from CBC and JR advised that CBC are open to this project

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It was agreed that more detail is needed including a proposed site plan, and costed project plan identifying key milestones. If EDPC's bank account is to be used to receive grant funding, the council will need this information to be able to respond to any NLF queries. PG suggested that it may be helpful to allocate an EDPC rep to work alongside the RGG to develop their proposals further before they are brought back to council. Cllr Appleyard indicated that she may be able to assist once the project is developed further. *Action - RGG*

- ii) **To plant an avenue of birch trees along a widened path in the Recreation Ground as memorial trees available for adoption by members of the public, with additional planting and LED lighting between the trees:** JR noted that the proposed variety of tree is now birch rather than cherry as their roots are less invasive and leaf litter is reduced. The wider path is one of the projects proposed as part of the S106 funded works to develop the Recreation Ground and including LED lighting will make the path feel safer for users. There are two options for planting – either for the council to fund the planting of the whole avenue in one go (with people then applying to adopt individual trees) or planting them one by one as they are purchased for adoption. Trees could be planted in groups rather than a straight line if preferred. The approximate cost is £50 per tree. Cllrs asked J Rowland to provide a plan of proposed locations for planting and number of trees, plus total costs for the project. *Action - RGG*
- iii) **To remove the turf on the bus turning circle on Rectory Rd, cover with bark and plant with birch trees, dogwood, bluebells and daffodils at an estimated cost of £2,000:** This is a potential solution to the parking issue, with the plants proposed requiring very little maintenance (noted potential issue with trees raised earlier due to water main). Cllrs agreed to seek resident views on this proposal, with RGG volunteers to carry out a letter drop. Pending the response, the council can then consider submitting an application to license the site from ECC. *Action – the Clerk/RGG*

**132/19 To discuss the Rowhedge Community Fireworks event organised by the PTA on the Recreation ground on Sunday 3rd November, and the issues arising with the Rowhedge Juniors Football Club regarding conflict of use and damage to the turf, and to agree any actions required as a result e.g. restoration works, correspondence with the PTA / RJFC and future use of the Recreation Ground for events:** PG outlined the situation as per the circulated summary, and advised that he has spoken with both the chair of the football club and the chair of the PTA following the event. He has reminded the football club that the recreation ground is a community facility, and having assessed the pitches PG has agreed with the club that no repairs are needed. PG will advise the PTA of this, given that they had offered to pay any costs required. Ideally for future firework events there would be no vehicle movement on the recreation ground in wet weather – the PTA have advised that they hope to submit their event application for 2020 soon and it will include a range of layout options to cover different wind conditions and wet weather forecasts.

There are clearly differing points of view on communications before the event regarding matches, and cllrs agreed that all future event applications should include complete set up and break down times. Once an event on the recreation ground is agreed, the council will then write to the football club notifying them of the times when the recreation ground will be unavailable for matches and advising that any matches for those times need to be rescheduled or moved.

Cllrs agreed that it was a great event, with only one complaint received, and it raises a lot of much needed funds for our local school. If the event application for 2020 is submitted soon it will give the club plenty of notice to make arrangements regarding matches. The council works flexibly with organisations in the village and equally expects them to work flexibly with each other for the benefit of the community. *Action - PG*

**133/19 To deal with matters arising from the previous Council minutes not dealt with elsewhere in this agenda (refer attached Action List):** The action list was reviewed and the following noted:

- Signage for the Village Hall – need to chase up with football club, *Action – the Clerk*
- Path between Bloor/Hills – NM liaising with Atlantis mgt company to try and resolve

**134/19 To discuss planning applications and note decision papers as listed:** *Action – the Clerk*

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- i) **Planning application 192744: outside former police house, Rectory Rd; consultation by BT – proposed removal of public telephone box:** The box has only been used 16 times in the last year. PG proposed the council supports its removal – all agreed.

Part 1 of the meeting closed at 8.41pm.

**Part 2 - Closed to the press and public due to the sensitivity of the item under discussion**

**135/19 To consider future staffing arrangements for the council in light of the Clerk's resignation:**

Cllrs congratulated ENH on completing her CiLCA and thanked the Clerks for preparing the circulated proposal and ENH for her willingness to take on the role of Clerk. PG proposed that ENH be appointed as Clerk from 01.12.19 as per the proposal document; DM 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed.

**The meeting closed at 8.48pm.**

Agreed as a true record.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Chairman