

# East Donyland Parish Council

Full Parish Council Meeting – 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019

62/19

St Lawrence School, Rectory Rd, Rowhedge starting 7.00pm.

## MINUTES

**Present:** Cllrs Phil George, Richard Helliwell, Anna Appleyard, Doug Clay, Tracie Guy & Dave Myers; ECC Cllr Kevin Bentley, CBC Ward Cllr Lee Scordis; Clerk Nicki Matthews and 15 members of the public.

The Chairman, Cllr Phil George, opened the meeting at 7pm.

**37/19 To receive and accept apologies and to note absences:** Apologies received from Cllrs Case & Crouchman and CBC Ward Cllrs Mike Lilley & Adam Fox.

**38/19 To minute pecuniary & non-pecuniary interests of members relating to items on the agenda:** DM – pecuniary, item 42/19; DC – non-pecuniary, item 47/19, RH - pecuniary, item 58/09.

**39/19 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2019:** PG proposed the minutes to be correct; RH 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed.

**40/19 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 48/19 - A Randall spoke in support of this proposal and the positive impact it would have on the village.
- Item 53/19 – R Keeble requested that when this item is discussed the council clarifies what is being proposed for the pump house. L Bannatyne thanked the council for liaising with the RHT on this; the RHT committee are meeting soon to form their view on the latest proposal from Hills.
- Item 55/19 – are the RCRC contributing to the cost of this work? PG advised that this item is for the council to consider quotes to improve access for disabled users across the quayside.
- Tyre wall on Fingringhoe Rd – unsightly and a fire risk, and appears to be on the public highway? The tyres were put there to prevent fly tipping which had become an issue, but is there a better alternative? CBC and ECC have already been contacted on this issue – ECC Cllr Bentley to take action to get the matter resolved. *Action - KB*
- Heath Rd garden – concern was raised about the current and future management of the garden now that J Rowland is not on the council; does the council have a plan for this?
- CBC refuse service – R Keeble raised concerns that the policy not to supply black bags to households without wheelie bins is unfair; CBC Cllr Scordis advised that all households including those with wheelie bins are required to provide their own bags.
- Rowhedge Heritage Trust – L Bannatyne thanked the council for approving their application for the seafood picnic.
- Burial ground compost store – still not been emptied. NM advised a quote has now been obtained and is on the agenda for the Maintenance Committee to agree on June 19<sup>th</sup>. *Action – Mt Cttee*
- Footpath Thanet Walk to Birch Brook – when will this be improved? PG advised that this will be done with S106 funds now held by ECC.
- Alistair Taylor bench – this needs to be re-sited in a location to be agreed; PG to discuss with L Bannatyne following the meeting. *Action - PG*

**41/19 To receive and note reports from:**

- i) Essex County Councillor, Kevin Bentley:
  - 20mph application is moving forward – the speed surveys will be carried out soon, then the public consultation, then the legal process, then implementation (provided all goes well).
  - ECC now has a top 5 pavement improvement scheme, please send priority issues to KB by the end of June. NM to ask for issues via catch up newsletter. *Action – the Clerk*
  - Rowhedge Road hedge cutting – this was done in response to complaints received about the footpath being overgrown; there were no nesting birds disturbed.
- ii) CBC Ward Councillor Lee Scordis:
  - Housing – Cllr Adam Fox now has responsibility for housing issues
  - Recycling – the new voucher scheme is currently not working and LS is raising concerns with CBC about inequality of access for residents without online access/smart phones printers etc.

# East Donyland Parish Council

Full Parish Council Meeting – 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019

St Lawrence School, Rectory Rd, Rowhedge starting 7.00pm.

## MINUTES

- King Edward Quay – CBC are working to tackle the issue of the caravans etc; help has been offered to those living there (nb they are not classed as travellers), and CBC are now working with ECC to have the vehicles moved so that yellow lines can be installed, with the aim of the quay being permit parking for boat owners only.
- University light pollution – seems to have been resolved.
- Green strategy and walking strategy – public consultations now taking place, please do respond. To be included on the catch up newsletter, *Action – the Clerk*

iii) The Clerk: report noted.

**42/19 To agree the payments list already checked by Cllrs Appleyard & Clay:**

PG proposed that the payments list be approved, RH 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed (DM left the room for this item). *Action – the Clerk*

**43/19 To note the draft minutes of the Finance & Personnel Committee held 9<sup>th</sup> May 2019:** Noted.

**44/19 To receive an update from John Rowland on the formation of a new community group aimed at making Rowhedge a greener village for the future and consider the following:**

- i) **Proposal from Cllr Helliwell that the council agree to support in principle the aim of introducing electric charging points for boats on the quaysides, with the greener Rowhedge group to research and present a fully costed proposal for this project:**

PG congratulated JR on the formation of this group, as a very positive step for the village. JR explained that the group has been set up in response to long term global issues, such as climate change, single use plastics etc; as a community we can't wait for central government to act and need to take control and act at a local level. The group and sub-groups have been formed, and their first event will be the regatta, to raise awareness. They want to liaise with EDPC and other groups to make a difference. Cllrs spoke in support of the council working with the group, to help achieve their objectives. JR explained that the group has been publicised via social media and will develop over time, hopefully involving more people in green energy and zero waste initiatives. The group's first project is trying to help switch the ferry over to electric. RH noted that the proposal on the agenda has come from this initiative; a fully researched and costed proposal for the project will need to be presented for the project to be approved, but in order for the group to raise awareness at the regatta they are seeking support in principle. RH proposed the council supports this scheme in principle; AA 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed.

**45/19 To agree the proposed revisions to the Standing Orders (attached) as recently recommended by the National Association of Local Councils:** PG proposed these be agreed; RH 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed.

**46/19 To note the revised Code of Conduct (attached) as recommended by the Essex Association of Local Councils:** Noted.

**47/19 To approve a land exchange with the Diocese of Chelmsford to enable the legal construction of the EDCA annexe for the use of Rowhedge Under 5s, and to enable St Lawrence Primary school to build the required modular classroom required to accommodate the 2019 intake. The proposed transfer is for EDPC to obtain the strip of land currently owned by the Diocese but used by the preschool within their garden area in exchange for the area currently owned by EDPC but used by the school as a wildlife garden and bike shed. (refer attached):** It was noted that the school have requested a slightly larger area to be transferred to the diocese, to encompass the path around the edge of the car park adjacent to the wildlife garden and bike sheds (marked plans distributed). DC noted that the path was built approx. 10 years ago to provide access to the school and is no longer in use so this would not impact on car park users. RH noted support for this proposal to help improve facilities for both the school and preschool, and proposed that the council approves the exchange of land; AA 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed. *Action – the Clerk.*

**48/19 To consider replacing all older style public litter bins (x 14) within the village with new covered bins as on Lion Quay, at a maximum total cost of £8,500 + VAT:** Cllrs discussed the benefits of replacing the bins, and noted that the cost would be covered by the budget surplus

**East Donyland Parish Council**  
Full Parish Council Meeting – 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019  
St Lawrence School, Rectory Rd, Rowhedge starting 7.00pm.

**MINUTES**

from 2018-19. TG proposed the council agrees to replace all bins as above; DC 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed.  
*Action – the Clerk.*

- 49/19 To consider a request from a resident to achieve improved access to the footpath between Rowhedge and the Hythe, which would either require the towpath to be widened to allow a cattle grid with adjacent gated access, or construction of an additional access route to the side of the existing path using steps. In order to achieve this EDPC would need to obtain permission from the landowner & Environment Agency, and identify how these improvements could be funded (NB, ECC have advised these improvements are beyond their remit; they are seeking to replace the existing kissing gate with a wider kissing gate using the allocated S106 funds):** PG explained the background, regarding S106 money allocated to this route several years ago, which has prevented EDPC from carrying out any improvements; these funds have now been released and improvement works are being planned by ECC. If EDPC spends any money in this area it could potentially lead to S106 funds being withdrawn. This request arises from an incident several months ago when an electric wheelchair user fell down a bank due to difficulty negotiating the existing kissing gate; however cllrs noted that previous interactions with the tenant farmer have not been very supportive of footpath users and there could be potential issues with trial bikes if a cattle grid was installed. According to ECC, the widening of the kissing gate should address access concerns. AA proposed that the council monitor access issues once the ECC S106 improvements to install the wider gate have been completed, and revisit if needed; DM 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed.
- 50/19 To consider the suggestions received from the Rowhedge Allotments Association (refer attached) regarding the future of the allotment site, alongside a proposal from Cadman (attached) to renew the existing allotment site lease (which expires 31.12.20) for a further 5 years:** The existing lease expires in 18mths; EDPC have made repeated requests to Cadman regarding potential purchase of the site or a renewal of the existing 10year lease but not received a firm answer. Cllrs noted that this 5year lease offer is not as long term as hoped but is an improvement and appears to be the best offer at present, although it does not resolve the issue of allocated S106 funds for the purchase of allotment land. The RAA are meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> June and their chairman indicated that they are very likely to accept a 5year lease. RH proposed that the council accept as offered this 5year lease renewal to start at the end of the existing term, and that the council continue to pursue the option to purchase the site in the future; AA 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed. *Action – the Clerk*
- 51/19 To receive a request from Rowhedge Football Club as follows:**
- i) Permission to install a sign 1m x 1m to go underneath the Village Hall sign on the entrance road, advertising Rowhedge Juniors Football Club:** Cllrs agreed this is a good idea in principle, but that signage at this site should be consolidated, incorporating directional signage for the recreation ground, village hall and football club with design approved by EDPC. NM to take this forward and liaise with the RJFC/EDCA. *Action – the Clerk*
  - ii) To hire the EDPC garage, as they need storage space to refurb the modular building into changing rooms; RFC are prepared to buy EDPC a new filing cabinet for paperwork if agreed:** Cllrs agreed short term shared use should be ok, but will be dependent on the amount of space needed, access and length of time needed. RH proposed this be delegated to the Clerk to discuss further with RJFC and agree terms; PG 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed. *Action – the Clerk*
- 52/19 To consider an event application from Rowhedge Football Club for an Under 12s Mini Tournament on 1st September (refer attached):** Cllrs noted issues re parking on the roads and charging for car parking at the club's most recent event; NM advised that these issues have been raised with the club, who reported that stewards were present, the charge included a programme, and that the bus route being blocked was unconnected to the event. PG noted these are very positive community events, and proposed that the application be approved with the following conditions: no parking charges for the event; stewards must be provided; the club to check with the village hall diary to ensure no potential parking conflicts, and the club to inform the community about the event in advance. RH 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed. *Action – the Clerk*

# East Donyland Parish Council

Full Parish Council Meeting – 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019

St Lawrence School, Rectory Rd, Rowhedge starting 7.00pm.

## MINUTES

- 53/19 To receive an update from the Clerk on communications from the Rowhedge Heritage Trust regarding the Pump House and consider whether the council is in a position to make a commitment to progress this project further and any actions required at this time:** The RHT have had ongoing discussions with the developer Hills regarding options to save the pump house from being demolished, with the aim of retaining it as a community heritage facility. Hills are seeking to impose conditions on any sale including the purchaser taking responsibility for any land contamination, and are seeking a firm commitment to the purchase as soon as possible. The current offer from Hills is to both the RHT and EDPC and is for a three month option to purchase the pump house at a price of £120,000 on the basis that both parties withdraw their objections to the Hills planning application. Cllrs discussed this proposal, raising the following issues:
- When the council previously considered this site, total estimated costs for the project were approx. £300,000 including the £120,000 purchase price, due to the amount of restoration work required. The council does not have this level of funds available.
  - The council would therefore need to seek a loan for any financial commitment on this scale and the process for loan approval from the Public Works Loan Board includes a requirement for public consultation which shows support for the project. This would require a detailed project plan and is not achievable within three months.
  - The council's previous valuation of the site indicated that the price of £120,000 was above market value by approx. £30,000 but the owners would not negotiate on their price at that time.
  - The council cannot withdraw its objection to the planning application as it was formally agreed and the grounds stated are still valid.
  - Approx 3m of topsoil appears to have been added to the site – potential evidence of land contamination? EDPC would need to see the contamination reports for the site.
  - The council has not yet been provided with full details of the site available for purchase, including boundaries, access etc.
- L Bannatyne (RHT Chair) advised that the RHT also view the timescales as unrealistic, but hope to go back to Hills to outline what could be achieved within 3 months, e.g. contamination reports, liability assessment etc. The RHT may also be able to apply for HLF funding due to the age of the building, and could use some of the business plan for the previous heritage centre proposals as the basis for their funding application. At their forthcoming meeting, the RHT will discuss whether they are willing to withdraw their objection to the planning application in light of this proposal. PG proposed that the council respond to Hills in conjunction with the RHT once their committee has met, with EDPC raising the following issues: the council will require a copy of the contamination report for the site; the council cannot withdraw its objection to the planning application; the council cannot commit any funds until a loan request is approved which is a long process and could not be achieved within the three month option period; the council requires full details of what is being offered for sale, including site plans showing boundaries and access. RH 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed. *Action – the Clerk*
- 54/19 To consider the three quotes received for installing a noticeboard (refer attached) and agree a proposed location for the board in order to submit a request to Bloor for their consent:** AA noted that there had been no suggestions received for the noticeboard location following her post on Facebook. Cllrs agreed that the board should be located near the observation tower on the waterfront, subject to agreement with Bloor Homes. AA proposed that the council obtain permission from Bloor to site the board as discussed, and if successful to purchase and install the board from Realise Futures at a cost of £508.98 + VAT incl delivery; DM 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed. *Action – the Clerk*
- 55/19 To consider the three quotes received for improvements to the patio and walkway to the RCRC hut on Lion Quay (refer attached):** PG proposed this be deferred to the July meeting as the council need to know which of the quotes received is from the company who carried out the original work – all agreed. *Action – the Clerk*
- 56/19 To consider a proposal from Cllr Helliwell to commission works to rebuild the commemorative burial ground gate, retaining the existing engraved panel within a new oak**

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Full Parish Council Meeting – 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019

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## MINUTES

**frame, at a maximum cost of £600:** RH explained that this gate is of local historical interest but has now deteriorated beyond repair; F Bush has advised that he could remove the engraved panel and rebuild it within a new oak frame at a max cost of £600. This would be a specialist piece of work, separate to remedial works to the rest of the burial ground fence and other burial ground issues which are being considered by the Maintenance Committee. RH proposed F Bush be commissioned to carry out this work at a max cost of £600; PG 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed. *Action - RH*

**57/19 To deal with matters arising from the previous Council minutes not dealt with elsewhere in this agenda:** The action list was noted. The cleaning of the picnic benches has been ordered; NM to follow up with the owners of 28 Rectory Rd re the village hall entrance road; J Rowland has agreed to complete the Heath Rd compost bin action prior to regatta. *Action – the Clerk*

**58/19 To discuss planning applications and note decision papers as listed:** *Action – the Clerk*

i) **Planning application 191314: 158 Rowhedge Road; proposed side and rear extension 2 storey with single storey lean to on rear. Application is identical to previously approved application ref 160754:** PG proposed that the council comments with no objections to this application; DM 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed.

ii) **Planning decision 190897: 10a High St; application to vary condition 2 following grant of planning permission 161095 in accordance with 180154 – application conditionally approved:** noted.

**Part 1 of the meeting closed at 8.29pm.**

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

**59/19 To consider and agree the renewal of the mooring licence for the vessel Our Boys (refer attached draft):** DM proposed that the licence be agreed with the following amendments: replace Pearsons Quay with Lion Quay; add wording stating that the vessel should enhance the appearance of the quayside; add a term that the vessel may not be used for any commercial purposes. TG 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed.

**Part 2 of the meeting closed at 8.37pm.**

Agreed as a true record.

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

Chairman