

**East Donyland Parish Council**  
Full Parish Council Meeting – 14<sup>th</sup> January 2016  
St Lawrence’s School, Rectory Road, Rowhedge starting 7.00pm.  
**MINUTES**

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7pm.

**Present:** Cllrs Tony Pullon (Chair), Phil George (Vice-Chair), Doug Clay, Nina Crouchman, Nelly Randall, Richard Helliwell, Gordon Malcolm, Peter Case; Ward Councillor Mike Lilley; Clerk – Nicki Matthews and 8 members of the public.

**176/15 To receive and accept apologies and to note absences:**

Apologies were received from Cllr Rowland, County Cllr Kevin Bentley, and RRA Chair Trisha Curran.

**177/15 To minute disclosable, pecuniary & non-pecuniary interests of members:**

NR – non-pecuniary 186/15; DC – non-pecuniary 186/15; NC – non-pecuniary 186/15

**178/15 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2015:**

Proposed PG, 2<sup>nd</sup> NC – all agreed; minutes approved.

**179/15 Have your say! The Chairman will close the meeting for a max.15 minutes to ask members of the public to speak on any matters relevant to parish business:**

The following points and questions were raised:

- Traffic on Rowhedge Road – this road is well used by walkers, joggers and cyclists. The speed limit varies between 30mph and 40mph along the road, and the path is narrow and overgrown in places. The volume and speed of traffic has increased, including site vehicles (presumably to the wharf development) and heavy goods lorries. Essex County Council has advised that districts can nominate ‘country lane zones’ with 30mph speed limits and funding may be available for this. Could the speed limit be changed to 30mph along its length? Could the pavement be widened? Could cycle route signs be installed? (A separate cycle path is not required) Could contractors be asked to use Fingringhoe Road to access the wharf development site? TP advised that the council will direct these queries to the appropriate people. *Action – the Clerk*
- Recreation Ground – there is a fallen tree blocking access to a dog bin by the entrance to the wood. People have tried to clear it but without success, and it has been there for more than a month. There are also a number of broken branches on the path under the trees, possibly due to football. Could parents of the football club players be invited to join a volunteer team to clear up the rec? NM to arrange removal of the tree. *Action – the Clerk*
- Blocked drains – there is still a blocked drain by the Village Hall recreation ground entrance, and another near the outdoor gym. NM advised that a contractor has been appointed to action this.
- Telegraph pole – the pole half way along Donyland Way has a broken panel, leaving exposed wires. NM to report to BT. *Action – the Clerk*
- Litter picker – there shouldn’t be a need for a litter picker in the village, but there is and she does an excellent job.
- Footpath to Donyland Way – this has been cleared and has been done very well.
- Happy New Year to all!

**180/15 To receive and note reports from:**

i) County Councillor, Kevin Bentley: apologies received, no report

ii) CBC Councillor, Mike Lilley:

- Flooding in the High St due to wharf development works – the contractor promised to carry out remedial works to the drains, but water is still flowing from the site (possibly a broken water main or disturbed underground spring). ML will report again to Planning Team at CBC. The contractors are also using the High St to gain access to the site, possibly due to works being carried out to construct the access road.

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- ML has spoken to Sue Jackson, CBC Planning Officer, regarding the temporary planning permission for the heritage hut. He asked whether the hut could remain on site if there was agreement from all parties involved. S Jackson is open to ideas and will go along with the majority view. She is aware that the Village Plan results are due to be available soon and is happy to hand this over to EDPC to determine what is needed. ML believes that there should be an open meeting to consider all the issues and make a final decision once the Village Plan results are known. He noted concern that the RCRC will need to meet the terms of the covenant with regard to it being a heritage facility, and if this is not met planning permission will not be obtained.
- Roadworks in the village – ML is aware that some residents are not happy about these, but the works are necessary. He is assisting Cllr Bentley in his absence with any highways issues that occur.
- iii) The Clerk:
  - IT Policy – NM to approach EALC/NALC/CALC to see if any templates are available.
  - Footpath funding – the LHP has agreed to fund improvements to the seawall path towards the Hythe, and the S106 agreement for the wharf development includes £50,000 for improvements to the trail towards Fingringhoe.
- iv) Village Bus Representative – Elizabeth Trellis:
  - No issues to raise, but ET is attending a meeting in February with ECC Transport Team. Questions can be submitted in advance. ET plans to raise the issue of no pick up at the Co-op bank in the High St as she still has not received a response on this issue, and will put forward any other questions that people would like her to raise.
- v) Update from December CALC meeting – the Clerk:
  - There was a speaker from the PCC office, speaking on the Restorative Justice initiative, which aims to bring together victims of crime and the offender to bring resolution for the victim and reduce future crime rates. It can also be used in neighbourhood disputes where there is anti-social behaviour. NM to circulate details of the website for more information. *Action – the Clerk*
  - The Local Highways Panel has not met since June, which is causing issues for a number of parish councils, whose scheme applications have not been progressed, including EDPC (recreation ground footpath widening). It appears this is due to internal issues at county level.
  - Feedback was given regarding the CIF fund. EDPC's application for funding for pontoon maintenance was unsuccessful, and there were a number of reasons: applications for funding totalled over £1m, with £120,000 funding available; children's play facilities were given priority, as was completion of ongoing projects; there were a high number of marine related applications, and Wivenhoe Council were successful in their bid for funding for a new pontoon.
- vi) Latest EDCA meeting – Cllr Clay: hasn't been held yet.
- vii) Rowhedge Residents' Association – Trisha Curran: apologies received

**181/15 To agree payments list already checked by Cllrs George & Clay:** RH proposed, PC 2<sup>nd</sup>, all agreed. *Action – the Clerk.*

**182/15 To note the draft minutes (previously circulated) from the Maintenance Committee 16th December and any proposals/recommendations as a result:** draft minutes noted.

**i) To consider the quotes received for the pontoon maintenance recommended by the inspection carried out in 2015 and agree the way forward (refer attached):**

Since receiving these quotes, S Chick, Brightlingsea Harbourmaster, (who provided one of the quotes) has sadly passed away. The council to write to the Brightlingsea Harbour Office, offering condolences to his family on behalf of the parish council. *Action – the Clerk*

It was noted that the Brightlingsea quote was the most competitive, although it is for inspection only. TP proposed that the council approach the Brightlingsea Harbour Office to see if they are able to take the

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inspection forward, at a maximum cost of £2,000. The council to then consider any remedial works required. RH 2<sup>nd</sup>, all agreed. *Action – Asst Clerk*

**183/15 To consider the option to opt-out of the sector led audit process from 2017-18 and appoint an external auditor independently (refer attached):**

NM outlined the background to this, that the Audit Commission has been dismantled and a new sector led body is being set up to appoint auditors for smaller authorities. All councils have the option to opt out and appoint their own auditor, but NM recommends that the council does not do so at this time as there appears to be no tangible benefit to EDPC. TP proposed that the council does not opt out, in accordance with the Clerk's recommendation. PG 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed. *Action – the Clerk.*

**184/15 To agree the budget and parish precept request for 2016-17 (refer attached):**

PG proposed that these were accepted, RH 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed. *Action – the Clerk.*

**185/15 To agree and adopt the draft Communications Policy (refer attached):**

The councillors noted thanks to the Clerks for a very useful document for future use; it would be sensible to add the council's contact details to it. TP proposed that the policy should be adopted, with the addition of contact details. NR 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed. *Action – the Clerk.*

**186/15 To note the draft minutes from the meeting between EDPC members and RHT representatives on 6<sup>th</sup> January regarding the heritage hut (attached), and to consider the following proposals:**

- i) **To support the RCRC in applying for planning permission (up to 3 years), to retain the heritage hut on site and manage it in its current format for a period of 2 years.**
- ii) **The long term future of the site to be determined by the Parish Council once the outcomes of the Village Plan consultation are available for consideration, taking into account the covenant restrictions on the land.**
- iii) **To consider temporary or permanent transfer of ownership of the heritage hut structure to EDPC, subject to agreement from RHT.**

RH summarised the meeting of the 6<sup>th</sup> January, which was attended by NC, NR, TP & RH; the RHT are not going to go forward with their proposals for a heritage centre, and consequently the issue of what happens to the existing hut has arisen. Planning permission expires in March and the RHT have proposed that they can either remove the hut, or it could be taken on by a third party. The view of the meeting was that it is a valuable asset, and if possible should not be removed until the results of the Village Plan are available and a final decision on the site's future can be made. The Rowhedge Coastal Rowing Club (RCRC) have offered to take over management and operation of the hut on a temporary basis, if planning permission can be obtained, with any proceeds generated during that time being retained by RCRC. The RHT are prepared to continue to provide heritage exhibitions for display in the hut in order that it meets the restrictions on the land usage. The structure itself is owned by the RHT, and they may wish to re-use it offsite in the future for storage purposes. The councillors present at the meeting proposed that ownership of the hut be temporarily transferred to EDPC while it is onsite, with an option for the RHT to buy it back when no longer in use. The RHT members noted this would need to be considered by their committee and there may be issues regarding disposal of an asset belonging to a charity. The meeting also noted that there may potentially be S106 funds of up to £50,000 available in the future to be put towards a smaller building on the site if that was what the Village Plan identified was wanted. The funding is currently earmarked for improvements to the village hall, but it may be possible to raise funds for that project from other sources in the interim. The RHT hold approximately £36,000 of funds which may also potentially be available for use if the building met with their charitable aims. All the councillors who attended the meeting were happy to accept the draft minutes, with the minor amendments proposed by the RHT. TP proposed these be noted, RH 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed.

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PG raised Cllr Lilley's concern that the outcomes of the Village Plan should inform any decision on what happens on the site. RH noted that even if the outcome of the Village Plan was available now, it would not enable a long term decision and plan to be formulated before the existing planning permission expires. This proposal for the RCRC to take over operation of the hut is a holding position, pending the outcome of the Village Plan and the council cannot predetermine what that outcome will be.

The RHT Committee met on Monday 11 January, and TP read a statement from them, confirming that they have voted to enter into formal discussions with RCRC regarding them taking over the running of the hut, with RHT providing heritage exhibitions and displaying appropriate artefacts. They have also discussed the issue of ownership and unanimously agreed a proposal that as a responsible charity they need to look further into the legal aspects of arrangements regarding ownership of the Hut before deciding on this.

PG asked why a period of 2 years was being proposed, as this seems a longer term than potentially necessary. NC noted that the RCRC are happy to take on the operation to keep the hut in place and the time scale was just a proposal to do that. RH suggested that proposal i) be amended to read 'for up to a period of 2 years' and that a break clause would need to be inserted to allow the council to terminate the agreement once the Village Plan results were available and a long term decision had been made.

GM noted that the wording on the application for planning permission will need to be carefully considered to ensure the proposed use meets the heritage requirement. TP advised that the RHT have offered to assist the RCRC with the application to ensure it meets the relevant criteria. Cllr Lilley could also be a resource to liaise with the Planning Team at CBC on this.

GM asked whether the parish council is confident that the RCRC can meet the criteria for lease applications that the council agreed during its heads of terms discussions. TP noted that they will need to demonstrate that they can meet these, and that the proposal under discussion is simply to support the RCRC in their application to take this project on.

TP proposed that all three elements of the proposal be accepted, with the amendment to item i) to read 'for up to a period of two years'. NR 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed.

### **187/15 To deal with matters arising from the previous Council minutes not dealt with elsewhere in this agenda (refer attached Action List):**

RH advised that the day of action will be scheduled as soon as the weather improves. They may be able to include any work required to trees on the recreation ground if these have not already been addressed.

### **188/15 To discuss planning applications and note decision papers as listed:**

#### **i) Planning Screening Opinion Application 152897: Rowhedge Wharf; screening opinion on the matter for the need for an EIA (refer attached):**

NM explained that this is an application asking that the requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment on the site be removed, because the development doesn't meet the relevant criteria for requiring the EIA. The company making the application represent Mersea Homes. RH proposed that council submit the following comment: East Donyland Parish Council take the issue of environmental impact very seriously and would urge that the said assessment goes ahead as planned. PC 2<sup>nd</sup> – all agreed. *Action – the Clerk*

The meeting closed at 7.52pm.

Agreed as a true record.

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

Chairman