

**BUCKHURST HILL PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE ACCOMMODATION COMMITTEE  
HELD AT 8.05pm ON THURSDAY 4 JUNE 2020  
VIA ZOOM**

**01/20**      **PRESENT**

Councillors: Mr B Nagpal (Chairman)  
Mr K Williamson (Vice Chair)  
Mr J Barkham  
Mr S Clark  
Mrs J Forker-Clark  
Mrs S Patel  
Miss G Reynolds  
Mr K Williamson

In attendance: Mrs L Petyt-Start (Clerk)  
Mrs K Lumb (RFO/Deputy Clerk)

Press: David Jackman

**02/20**      **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

It was proposed by Cllr Patel, seconded by Cllr Forker-Clark, and AGREED that Cllr Williamson be elected as Vice Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

**03/20      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence received.

**04/20      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest from Members in any item on the agenda.

05/20 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2020 were approved and the Chairman authorised to sign them.

**06/20**      **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no public participation.

**07/20 CHAIRMAN AND CLERK'S COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no communications received for this meeting.

***The committee moved into private session for the remainder of the items to be discussed (Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960).***

**08/20**      **COMMUNITY HALLS**

- a) The Clerk advised the committee the structural monitoring of the Roding Valley Hall was continuing and the surveyor had advised the removal of trees adjacent to the Monkams Public House. The Clerk shall continue to manage the issue and keep the committee updated. The building remains safe and the insurance company has appointed the structural surveyor managing the building movement problem which has arisen due to ground movement.
- b) The latest update of information from Government that leisure facilities may re-open from 1<sup>st</sup> July was acknowledged. The halls are undergoing deep cleaning in preparation for re-opening and the Clerk is beginning to work with hirers on their sessions recommencing subject to receipt of a satisfactory risk assessments.

**HALLS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

*(Cllr Wright joined the meeting shortly after the commencement of this item)*

- a) The committee discussed the next stages of the project timetable in detail, previously agreed by Council.

It was agreed that should a development take place the council should do everything it can to ensure hirers are retained and temporarily re-located if necessary.

Concerns were raised regarding the location of the proposed development and the need for an accommodation strategy. It was noted it should be established if the TFL car park is available for development.

Opinion was given that land not owned by the Parish was a distraction at this stage but the committee may look at other development options as they arise. It was indicated the suggestion (of TFL land) was not to stop the current proposal but something which could be done in parallel.

It was noted the committee had been working on the halls' development project for considerable time and the feasibility study had brought this work together, now is the time to move forward.

Another member agreed the committee may look at options but the project needs to move forward.

A view was proposed that the library must be kept as a community hub and the library should be maintained. Plus, a need for a strategic direction and that a business plan was required.

It was requested the library proposal should be circulated. It was stated that if the library was to close there would be no community facility in the west of the parish.

A member said the council must separately consider the 'library as a service' and the 'building' currently used to house the library. Public interest appears to be in maintaining the 'library service', and not necessarily the 'building'

An expression of interest has been made by a third party who wishes to continue the library service within the building, whilst adding additional services such as soft play and a coffee shop. To that effect, the Parish should look into getting behind this third party (for the continuation of the library service) since they may be better placed to continue the use of the building as it is. The issue of the library is a separate point and should not interfere with the decision-making process for the RVH

Opinion was given the hall (at Roding Valley) is not in the condition required therefore it makes sense to replace it and the location of the library should be considered. A member noted the feasibility report had highlighted the number of halls in the area and felt it is important to seek to spend the public's money well.

Another councillor stated it was time to move forward, focus on what the committee was here to discuss, if no decision is made then the reality is the council moves backwards due to the current conditions of the halls. The view offered was that the council can change and evolve as the

development of the project and land options arise.

A suggestion was made that the Roding Valley Hall may be sold. In response opinion was given that the RVH had a covenant which would return financial benefit to the EFDC. A request was made to see previous reports and a view expressed that whether the feasibility report justified doing anything.

It was noted the plan was to build a new community hub to replace the hall which would provide a flexible space and provide an increase diversity of use for future use.

Chair advised the committee the feasibility report had included a strategic review and business plan options, that the committee responsibilities of the meeting was to implement the recommendations of the report in detail. He asked the members to get behind the decision to move forward and implement the project next stages to concept design stage and further detail on business planning and funding.

It was noted the RVH was designed to be a temporary structure but has remained far beyond its natural life. The inspection reports (the structural movement being the most recent) support this view. The reality is that this hall will have to be replaced in the near future and it makes commercial sense to do this now as part of a wider redevelopment plan.

A further discussion ensued noting the prior work of the committee in considering the architects tenders and examples of work.

It was AGREED to progress with

- Design development – the preparation and development of outline designs and costings to RIBA stage 2 (architect) to enable the detailed business case and business plan to be prepared (feasibility consultant)
- Detailed business case and plan for the facility – development of the detailed business plan and preparation of the programme and operation. (consultant)
- Preparation of funding applications and submission of funding bids to support the design development. (consultant)

- b) It was agreed to receive an updated timetable from RPT Consulting to deliver the next stages of the project as discussed (a)

**10/20     ACCOMMODATION ITEMS OR CONCERN**

- a) No items of concern were noted  
b) No items were provided for the next agenda

Cllr Wright gave thanks for Cllr Williamson, his hard work on the project to date and noted he was grateful he was still on the committee

There being no further business the Chairman thanked those present for attending and closed the meeting at 21:14.

Chairman .....

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