

Hastings Old Town Residents Association

Committee meeting 16 June 2015

Present: Dick Edwards, Elizabeth Stevens, Richard Stevens, David Woolf, Bruce Nichol, Kate Francis, Ann Novotny.

In attendance: Satu Pitkanen.

Apologies: Phil White, Jill Bradley, Shirley, Cllrs Dawn Poole and John Hodges

Minutes of May's meeting were agreed and accepted.

Matters arising: Quality issues re the Conquest hospital have been passed to Hastings Community Network to be discussed at the next Local Strategic Partnership meeting.

FLAG enquiries as to how the budget is being spent are ongoing. Richard Stevens is our representative.

ESCC: apparently there is no budget for drop kerbs. Issue to be raised with whoever becomes our next County Councillor.

West St: Permission has been granted for a cellar bar.

Coastal Users Group

Jill had provided printout of proposed seafront improvements. Generally met approval.

HVA/HCN

KF attended meeting re digital inclusion. With most access to services moving online there is a real risk of those without the skills or the budget to be excluded. There are a number of organisations in the town trying to help. HVA is to provide a list. The REACH project, hosted in Hastings Works in Robertson St and London Rd, and at FSN London Rd, provides free one to one tuition and guidance.

Chairman's report

AGM

Thanks to Jill and Tony for the wine and nibbles which added to the occasion. It was agreed that the presentation left unanswered question re the celebration of the anniversary of 1066. **DE to write to Polly Gifford to ask why Hastings week is not to be incorporated.**

Work Plan

West St: Shameful state of a street central to our tourist area. There are environment issues: commercial rubbish and fly tipping, and there have been incidents of serious, intimidating, loutish behaviour. Some matters will be taken to the Highways group; behavioural issues are covered later in these minutes.

Old Town Hall: OHPS has applied for this to become a community asset. This was welcomed but it was recognised that there would need to be creative ideas and considerable effort to make the building viable. There is still signage leading tourists to this empty building.

Councillors to report to appropriate officer please.

Fire Appliances: DE to request for appropriate sized fire- fighting appliances via our MP

Updating Flamingo Park: It is rumoured that this will not happen and that the owner may be looking to give up the business.

Bathing water: Pleased to note the improvement. Dick mooted the idea of a smoking ban on the beach. Committee thought this desirable but perhaps public not quite ready to go that far.

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service: Only 4 turned up to the arranged meeting.

Additional agenda item

There has been conflict between residents and traders re levels of noise. This is not a new problem and HOTRA has always campaigned for reasonable respect on both sides but enforcement where necessary. There are 2 issues: compliance with licensing conditions and general noise nuisance. The first should be relatively easy to understand and monitor. Whilst traders in George St have made efforts, including paying for some private security, the loutish behaviour of some of their customers is unacceptable. The complaints re general levels of noise sometimes come within regulation of statutory nuisance. There is a pretty high test threshold and it is untrue that one complaint closes something down under threat of £20000 fine.

It was agreed to request a meeting between traders and relevant officers to set out what are the rights and responsibilities of traders and residents and to cover the issue in the September newsletter.

Ecclesbourne Glen update

The owners of the caravan site have applied for a certificate of lawful use for a storage building, for which no planning application was sought. If their argument is accepted that it was substantially completed more than 4 years ago, and that there are no other reasons to increase the period to 10 years, there can be no enforcement action.

Member concerns

Planning :HBC planning department delays. A resident reports that problems were caused due to waiting for conservation officer delays. **DE to enquire as to staffing levels.** Outline proposal for development in The Croft. No view taken as plans not available. Some concern re disruption during building process.

Salters lane; wall considered dangerous. Can it be grotbusted? Water company cover in High St needs urgent attention.

Many thanks to Ann for her hospitality

Date of next meeting: 14 July, Sinnock Cottage