

EFFINGHAM RESIDENTS AND RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF AGM AND PUBLIC MEETING HELD IN CATHOLIC CHURCH HALL, EFFINGHAM ON 1ST MAY 2014

Present: approx.. 45 residents

1.0 Annual General Meeting

1. Minutes of 2013 AGM: approved
2. Matters arising: none
3. Chairman's report: previously circulated with April newsletter.
4. Treasurer's report: presented by Roy Donovan and approved.
Proposer(P): Juliet Newton-Smith, seconder(S): M.Holt.
5. Election of Examiner: Ivor Gillespie had already advised that he would retire in May2014. He was thanked for his good services over many years and presented with a half case of wine as a token of the Association's thanks.
Roy Donovan was elected Examiner. P: Ivor Gillespie, S: F. Helps.
6. Election of Secretary: David King was elected. P: Barbara Henry, S: Lois Driscoll.
7. Election of Treasurer: Juliet Newton-Smith was elected.
P: F.Helps, S: Vivien White.
8. Election of Committee: The following were elected en bloc:
Pat Bleasby, Chris dick, Julie Iles, Peter Mott, Vivien White.
P: Lois Driscoll, S: F.Helps.
David King and Juliet Newton-smith are also members of the committee by virtue of being elected officers. Parish councillor, Liz Hogger, sits as a co-opted member.
9. Election of Road Wardens: Wardens were re-appointed en bloc with approval of the meeting.
10. Change of name of the Association: Proposed change to "EFFINGHAM RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION" was approved, and use of the acronym "EFFRA".
The website address, not yet fully operational, will be: www.effinghamresidents.org
Keith walker pointed out that businesses still pay rates, not council tax. Committee undertook to ensure that businesses would be included as members of the Association, possibly requiring a change to the Constitution.

11. Any Other Business

11.1 Barbara Henry expressed the wish, agreed by all, that EFFRA should work closely with Effingham Parish Council (EPC) with regard to the Howard/Berkeley Homes proposals.

11.2 James Nicholls called for members of the gypsy community to volunteer to sit on Surrey Gypsy Forum.

2.0 Public Meeting

The meeting followed immediately after the AGM.

1. Planning: Roy Donovan reported that there had been approx.. 30 applications in the previous year, mostly extensions and mostly not controversial. Recent applications include:

--- Access gates to Effingham Place: application refused by GBC on grounds that “by virtue of prominent location, design and height they would be an incongruous and urbanising feature in the street scene which would have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of this rural area”.

--- Equestrian centre at St. Theresa’s School: this would be well hidden within the school grounds and the committee did not consider there were grounds to object.

Where Certificates of Lawfulness are applied for, the committee is not empowered to comment. Also for the period 30-5-13 to 30-5-16, larger single storey extensions are permitted developments (8m for detached houses, 3 to 6m for semis and terrace houses).

Two major projects are in the pipeline, namely:

--- Preston Cross Hotel: plan to convert and extend into a Care Home. This is a brownfield site and in principle would seem to be an acceptable development, despite the loss of the only other hotel in Bookham.

--- Howard School/Berkeley Homes project: the outline details of this project have been given in the April Newsletter, but basically it comprises a new 2000 pupil school on Effingham Lodge Farm, plus 300 dwellings spread over Effingham Lodge Farm, The existing school site, and Brown’s field. See discussion reported below under AOB.

Guildford Plan, which is to set out the vision for the Borough for the next 20 years, is due out for consultation in approx.. July 2014. Residents are encouraged to make their views known to GBC.

2. Any Other Business

2.1 Regarding the Howard project, James Nicholls spoke strongly against building on Brown’s field in particular. In discussion, it was made clear by Ian Symes (vice-Chairman, EPC) that EPC have been strongly advised that it must not take a position on the proposal or express a view in advance of the actual planning application

being lodged. There is no reason however to stop EFFRA from expressing views, as it did in responding to the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) correspondence in Dec.13/Jan.14. Tony Flynn reported that Berkeley Homes declined to answer his question at the “Drop-in Session”: “What is the break-even point on number of dwellings?” It was stated that GBC has been approached for additional funding of around £4M. David King reported that in speaking to Howard CEO (Mrs. Barnfield), she had stated the obvious that there is a minimum number of pupils for a secondary school to be viable. In response to the question: “How many is that?” the reply was “500”.

A show of hands was called for on the question: “Who is against the project proposals for building on greenfield land in the Green Belt?” The response from the approx.. 45 residents present was unanimously **AGAINST**. There was not a single vote in favour.

2.2 Surrey Gypsy Forum: James Nicholls advised that he has been elected Chairman of this Forum. He also said that police funding has been reduced.

David J. King (7-5-14)

