



**EFFINGHAM RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
held as a virtual meeting using Zoom
at 20.00 hrs on
Monday 22nd February 2021**

Introduction

Chairman, Vivien White, opened the meeting by explaining how the meeting would be run and advising that all attendees would be muted except when requesting to speak. Vivien stressed that the meeting was a private meeting of members of EFFRA (ie. Effingham residents) and specific invitees. As such attendees were asked not to record the meeting or to take photos. She also stated that Chris Dick had confirmed that he was attending as a resident, not as a journalist.

There were approx.. 50 attending.

1.0 Annual General Meeting

1.1 Minutes of 2020 AGM: approved. proposer: I. Smith seconder: H. Manton

1.2 Matters arising: none

1.3 Chairman's report: Vivien White advised that her report was available on the EFFRA website. She gave a briefing on some salient points, as follows:

- EFFRA work has been dominated by planning applications and associated matters in 2020/21
- The committee gives best wishes to James Wetenhall on his retirement. James served on EPC for 12 years and with EFFRA for a further 5years.
- The committee has been pleased to welcome Bhupinder Mahi who looks after the environmental brief.
- The committee is hoping that the national Heritage Day will go ahead in Sept. 2021.

There were no questions.

1.4 Treasurer's report: Juliet Newton Smith read out her report, which was also posted on the website together with the accounts. The accounts were approved.

proposer: D. King seconder: Lois Driscoll

1.5 Election of Hon. Secretary: Current incumbent, D. King, prepared to continue; there were no other nominations. D. King elected.

proposer: H. Manton seconder: Diane Poole

1.6 Election of Hon. Treasurer: Current incumbent, Juliet Newton-Smith, prepared to continue; there were no other nominations. Juliet elected.

proposer: H. Manton seconder: Lois Driscoll

1.7 Election of Committee: All current members prepared to continue except James Wetenhall. There were no other nominations. Committee elected en bloc.

proposer: Lois Driscoll seconder: D. Higgs

1.8 Election of Road Wardens: All Wardens were willing to continue and were duly elected en bloc.

proposer: D. King seconder: P. Bergman

There are currently 3 roads without a Warden, namely *****?

1.9 Election of Examiner: Current incumbent, R. Donovan, prepared to continue; there were no other nominations. R. Donovan elected.

proposer: Diane Poole seconder: Barbara Henry

1.10 Any other business: none at this stage of the meeting.

2.0 Berkeley Homes (BH)/ Howard School/Effingham Lodge Farm (ELF)

I. smith gave a resume of the history of this application and stated the benefit of having Julie Iles (Surrey county Councillor) and Liz Hogger (Borough Councillor) present to field questions. In summary:

- The first proposal was lodged in 2014 for 159 homes on ELF, 95 on existing school site and 37 on Brown's field.
- The application was refused by GBC, went to Appeal which was passed to the Secretary of State for decision and who approved under very special circumstances clause.
- Subsequent detailed applications have been lodged, mainly concerning the detail design of the new school.
- In recent months, BH has stated that it has a 35% funding shortfall for the school and needs a further 110 homes to be built on additional Green Belt land. A formal application is due to be lodged in March 2021.

There was then a question and answer session.

Q1 (Pat Bleasby): There is extreme concern at this application; what are the chances of it being refused?

Liz Hogger responded: The land involved is not allocated in the GBC Local plan (LP), thus BH have to demonstrate very special circumstances. The original special circumstances were that 295 homes were needed to fund the new school and GBC did not have an up-to-date LP with a 5 year supply of housing allocated. All of ELF is in the Green Belt in GBC LP and also the LP has a 5 year supply of housing allocated. Thus it would appear that there are not special circumstances in the new application (110 homes) to overrule policies in GBC LP and the national NPPF.

The only legitimate circumstance would be if the 110 homes were essential to provide funding for the new school. The Planners would have to establish whether 295 homes is really not enough and to consider the impact on highways, infrastructure, traffic, etc. Also BH have to submit a financial viability report. At the time of the original application such reports were confidential, but now they have to be open to public scrutiny. Thus, yes, it is possible for the application to be refused.

Q2(Jane Buckingham) A: Does this material change mean that the whole application process needs to start again?

Liz Hogger responded: No, but Planners will decide if is acceptable.

Q2 B: will BH have to increase local funding proportionally?

Liz Hogger response: Yes.

Q3 (Robert Pickering): SCC, GBC and EPC all rejected the original scheme. Do any of these now favour the proposals?

Julie Iles' response: SCC did not object to the scheme but did not seek to have a larger school.

Liz Hogger response: GBC refused the original in context of planning policy.

Bronwen Roscoe Stated that it is worth reading the Appeal decision. It was also stated that the proposed new school would be able to accommodate children from the extra 110 homes. Guide used is 25% of a child per home (ie approx.. 25 children). Julie Iles stated that SCC is not concerned about school places. For the proposed Wisley development, there are sufficient places in Guildford schools.

Q4 (Chris Dick) A: Is EFFRA an action group pursuing its own agenda?

B: Did EFFRA seek a mandate from residents before issuing its recent statement?

Response: EFFRA committee is elected at AGM meeting each year to take decisions on behalf of members, like cabinet government. It only comments on applications affecting the village community at large or which are contrary to agreed ENP and other planning policies; it does consult residents from time to time. In this case, there was overwhelming objection by residents in both 2014 and 2016, and overwhelming support for the adopted ENP.

In this connection, it was reported that local resident. Helena Lawrence, has started her own company, "SaynotoBerkeleyHomes", against further redevelopment. She is independent and not affiliated to any organisation. Her petition has over 1,000 signatures to date and she is currently having 5,000 leaflets printed for distribution to residents.

There is also a plan to produce a "How to object" guide. I. smith confirmed that EFFRA would be pleased to help and will keep in contact. Her email is: nomorehomes@outlook.com It was agreed to establish a link between her website and EFFRA's.

EFFRA committed to produce bullets points for objections for residents writing their own letters. Support for this whole initiative was expressed by several attendees and it was agreed that another ZOOM meeting specific to the BH application may be desirable in due course.

In response to a question, Liz Hogger stated that objections needed to concentrate on planning issues. She also undertook to discuss with Planners the way that emailed support for the original application was lodged via the school.

Bronwen Roscoe suggested that it would be good to involve the Press with Helena's work and, given her own experience, she offered to help. Jerome Muscat wondered whether there are any PR experts in the Effingham community. Sue Bird said that she could also assist and C. Dick was willing to contact Helena to put an item in the Dragon.

3.0 Any other business:

3.1 (A) Mandy McVean expressed thanks to EFFRA, EPC and GBC for their efforts in getting the Church St. application refused. She wondered whether the Applicant will appeal? Liz Hogger responded that the ENP was extremely important in winning this refusal, particularly the following points:

- Not a small scale development
- Causing harm to the Conservation Area and adjacent buildings
- Housing mix not compatible.

3.1 (B) Chris Dick had pre-submitted seven questions but he declined to have them read out together with EFFRA responses.

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