

THE HARPENDEN SOCIETY COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday 24th March 2014 at 7.30 p.m. at Quaker Meeting House
MINUTES

Present: Chris Marsden (CM), Barbara Ouston (BOu), Anthony Steele (AS), Eric Midwinter (EM), Ron Taylor (RTa), Mike Waddilove (MW), Arnold Allen (AA) –first 10 minutes only, Tim Riley (TR), Harry Downie (HD), Donald Robertson (DR), John Davis (JD), Alan Jackson (AJ), John Harris (JH), Helen Clothier (HC), and Bob Fletcher (RF).

1. Apologies for absence were received from Caroline Fleming (CF), Victoria Evans (VE), Ann James (AJa), Penny Ayres (PA),
2. CM welcomed the new members of the committee – John Harris, Heather Clothier and Harry Downie.
3. Minutes of the meeting on 27th January 2014, previously circulated, were approved as a true record.
4. Matters arising not on the Agenda:
 - a) CM reported that he had discussed the lack of parking with Tesco but was not optimistic that any improvements would result.
5. **Treasurer's Report**
 - a) AA was reported that the 2013 accounts had been circulated prior to the meeting. The accounts were approved by the Committee.
 - b) CM thanked by AA for the excellent work he had done during the past 3 years in getting the accounts into shape and maintaining them.
6. **Secretary's Items**
 - a) RF reported that the Rothamsted public meeting to discuss the new GM trial being planned is now scheduled for the 24th April.
 - b) The Committee agreed to renew the Society's public liability insurance with the existing supplier.
7. **Strategic Local Plan**
 - a) CM reported that, with the help of David Rankin, a meeting had been convened of a few interested people, including from the St Albans and Harpenden Green Belt Associations, St Albans Civic Society and Redbourn Council.
 - b) The result of this is that a new district-wide group has been formed to both monitor and contribute to progress of the emerging St Albans' District Strategic Plan. This group is called District Residents Voice on Planning Matters (DRiVe). The group aims to speak with one voice on behalf of a significant number of concerned residents.
 - c) TR reported that the current housing demand was being driven by the requirements of affordable housing and Over 55 housing. Greenbelt development is not best suited to meet this demand as both of these groups benefit more from being nearer the centre of towns. It was stated that brownfield sites should be fully exploited before greenbelt sites are considered and it was thought that this approach is currently not included in the emerging SLP.
 - d) The Committee agreed to expenditure of up to £1,000 to contribute to the funding of a planning consultant should this become necessary.
8. **Addition sources of funding**
 - a) EM briefly summarised his paper on this subject which had been circulated prior to the meeting.
 - b) The Committee agreed that sources of funding additional to the subscriptions were necessary and could be either project based or a contribution to the general running costs of the Society.
 - c) EM, HD, CM and RF to meet to discuss recruitment of a person who would be responsible for fund raising. **Action CM.**

9. Membership Secretary's Items

- a) The Membership Secretary's report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting.
- b) BOu stated that the Society had lost 49 members last year and gained 30 new members. The Society now has 633 household memberships.
- c) CM thanked BOu for her excellent work as Membership Secretary and wished her well.

10. Newsletter Editor's Items

- a) The Newsletter Editor's report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting.

11. Publicity Officer's Items

- a) The Publicity Officer's report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting.
- b) RTa reported that some savings had been made on the AGM expenditure (possibly c £1,000).
- c) The Schools Competition had had some very high quality entries but the volume of entries was significantly down compared to last year. This was due to several teachers who had supported last year's competition being absent through illness or having left their schools and several schools having other projects in place that prevented them from concentrating on the Society's competition.
- d) WH Smith have donated the prizes this year.

12. Press Officer's Items

- a) CM reported that CF had agreed to take on the role of Press Officer after Steve Gledhill's resignation because of pressure of work.

13. Working Group Reports

- a) **Public Order:** The Public Order report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting. AJ reported that there was no CCTV in the Lydekker Car Park. ***AJ & DR will progress this with HTC and/or SADC.***
- b) **Environment:** The Environment report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting. JD reported that the protest around the airport expansion were now concentrating on Section 25 of the Localism Bill.
- c) **Transport:** The Transport report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting. DR reported that a list of issues had resulted from the 30th January public meeting and these were being prioritised and progressed.
- d) **Education & Leisure.** The E&L report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting. EM stated that he was planning a meeting of the E&L Pulse Group to discuss issues regarding the type of secondary school that was needed.
EM and CM reported that the library pilot trial was up and running and the Library had now given their approval for it to continue past the pilot stage.
The Park Café campaign is still continuing but there has been a delay in liaising with the town's football clubs.
The Committee agreed to reserve £500 for the 2015 schools competition and £500 contingency expenditure re library, arts centre and secondary school etc. activities.
- e) **Health & Social Welfare.** The Health & Social Welfare report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting. EM reported that the next meeting of the Red House Forum was scheduled for the 27th March. CM and JH had both contributed to the Gateway Review. The Committee agreed that £500 could be reserved for possible Red House campaign expenditure in 2014.
- f) **Built Environment.** Discussed in item 7 above. CM reported that he was leading on this temporarily in the absence of Richard Thomas.

g) **Economic Activity.** RTa reported that meeting was being arranged with Harpenden retailers to discuss revitalising the retail partnership.

14. **Any Other Business**

a) HD agreed to produce a budget for the next meeting. Members should inform HD of any large items of expenditure that may be required in 2014.**Action All.**

15. **Dates of the next meetings:**

Committee meeting dates: 12th May 14, 14th July, 22nd Sept, 8th Dec, 26th Jan 15, 23rd March 15.

Speakers meetings: 26th March 2014(AGM), 24th April (Rothamsted), 25th Sept, 23rd Oct, 11th Dec, 29th Jan 15, 26th Feb 15, 26th March 15

Other Events: 14th June (Common Discovery Day), 25th June (Summer Visit).

16. The meeting closed at 9.40 p.m.