

Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet

Residents Association

www.bowersgifford.org.uk

COMMITTEE TO FIGHT THE PLANS TO

BUILD ON BOWERS GIFFORD & NORTH BENFLEET GREEN BELT

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING WHICH TOOK PLACE

at the BENBOW CLUB on 16th October 2013

The Chair opened the meeting at 7.35pm.

Attendees

Rose Griffin (RG) Chair; George Smith (GS); Carole Turkson (CT); Derek Twidell (DT); Laura Watts (LW) .

Apologies received from Gary Lee (GL); Tracy Calver (TC); Tina Whitham (TW).

DT acted as minutes secretary.

Approximately 33 members of the public attended the meeting plus 5 committee members and 2 guests.

1. Summary of the work of the Management Committee

- The Residents Association (RA) was formed because the parish council did not wish to fight an aggressive campaign against Nottingham Council's proposal to build on our greenbelt. The chair summarised the work over the RA's first year.
- A website was set up by Tina Whitham and Tony Fay (funded by Robin Walter).
- A Forum had also been set up by Tina Whitham and Tony Fay.
- Set up an email database to keep residents up to date.
- Set up a petition.
- Assisted with letter writing to Basildon Council and MP.
- Prepared detailed responses to each of the plans submitted by Nottingham Council's developers.
- Prepared detailed objections to the Appeal.
- Provided evidence to the Landscape Partnership which fed Basildon Council's draft core strategy.
- Invited councillors and MP to speak at our meetings.
- Attended and spoke at the Development Control & Traffic Management Committee which refused Nottingham Council's planning permission.
- Successfully fought the proposed HGV training Centre at Sadlers Farm.
- Carried out fundraising and social events e.g. Coffee Mornings & Table Top Sales.

2. Update on Little Chalvedon Hall Farm Appeal

An Appeal has been submitted by Nottingham Council which is to be heard in February 2014. Members of the RA are preparing a detailed response to the appeal and the chair has registered as a witness. Stephen Metcalfe (our MP) and Basildon Council continue to support us.

3. Treasurer's Report / Auditor's Report

TC, the treasurer, could not attend due to overseas work commitments. DT went through the income & expenditure account and balance sheet and advised residents that the accounts had been audited. There were no questions. Balance in the accounts was £629.78 as at 31st August 2013.

4. Auction of Santus Circus Tickets

Two family tickets had been donated by Santus. These were auctioned and sold for £10 each.

5. Election of Officers

The chair said that the committee wished to amend Section 5 of the constitution to increase the number of members from 7 to 8. It was explained that only BG&NB residents could vote. The amendment was proposed by Christine Barlow and seconded by Linda Livermore – the motion was carried by all members present. The current committee were re-elected en-bloc – proposed Jeni Bavister, seconded by David Salt – the motion was carried by all members present. Rose Griffin proposed Jon Horwood as the eighth member of the committee, this was seconded by George Smith – the motion was agreed by all members present.

Rose Griffin proposed that Carole Turkson should again be co-opted as member representing Pitsea and all members of the elected management committee agreed.

6. Guest Speaker – Susanna Caira-Neeson, Choices Family Support

Ms. Caira-Neeson had been speaking to the RA for some weeks about the potential to turn Little Chalvedon Hall Farm into a community farm if Nottingham Council's Appeal were refused. She advised the meeting of the benefits that community farming, e.g. interaction with animals, could provide to people who were physically or mentally ill. School children could visit the site.

She suggested that the farmhouse could be converted to provide accommodation for soldiers who had been injured; the farm used to help prepare unemployed including ex-offenders for employment.

Ms. Caira-Neeson took questions from the floor. Dr. Morris from St. Andrew's Healthcare, who was in the audience, said that he had had experience of such farms in previous hospitals where he had worked and found them to be most beneficial.

It was evidenced by a show of hands that the majority of the residents present would support a community farm in the area.

The Chair advised that the farm was still rented to the Lambert family and presumably this would continue if the Appeal failed. However, Choices Family Support proposals were very interesting.

The chair thanked Ms. Caira-Neeson for coming along and for her continued support. The RA and Choices Family Support would keep in touch.

7. Any Other Business

David Salt proposed a vote of thanks to the hard working committee.

The meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.

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