

Gamlingay Environmental Action Group

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting, 11 February 2012

Present: Brycchan Carey (BC); John Mossman (J Mossman); Jennifer Docherty (JD); Mike Brettle (MB); Peter Condon (PC – Minutes); Sarah Sanders (SS); Nick Hardiman (NH); John Mercer (J Mercer)

Apologies: None

1. Review of previous meeting's minutes (12 November 2011) and matters arising.
 - a. Agreed that the minutes were accurate
 - b. Matters arising:
 - i. 2.d.i: MB had difficulty finding carbon emission benchmark figures for households and villages that he could rely on, so these were not gathered.
 - ii. 2.d.ii. MB reported that the thermal imaging camera had been booked for a weekend at the end of February 2012. He has some bookings for households that wanted thermal images taken. There are still some places available. The thermal imaging will be free of charge.
 - iii. Agenda item 3, the publicity event will be put back to May, instead of April
 - iv. Transport survey report is still to be produced and published in the Gazette. J Mercer suggested that because of the delay some of the report findings might be out of date. NH replied that there had not been any significant changes.
2. Reports
 - a. Co-ordinator:
 - i. BC stated that the AGM would be permanently moved to the GEAG January meeting
 - ii. BC informed the meeting that the planning application for the Wind Turbine has been submitted to the Parish Council and that he has sent a letter in support of the application on behalf of GEAG. There will be a Parish Council meeting on 14th February to discuss the planning application and there will be a half hour slot before the meeting for members of the public to make their views known. Due to work commitments BC is unable to attend that meeting; JD said that she would attend the meeting and speak in support of the application on behalf of GEAG. J Mercer also said that of the letters received by the Parish Council, 60 were in support of the application and 19 were against. Whilst on the subject of the Wind Turbine, MB informed the meeting that the Government had recently issued a "comment" about feed in tariffs to the effect that there may be a (further) reduction in the income gained from FITs. There will be a consultation forum and responses from interested parties should be submitted by 26th April 2012.
 - iii. Station Road development. BC said that the Station Road development plan was moving forward, but at a slow pace. To date the plan includes provision for a new cemetery, better footpaths and a possibility of more allotments.
 - iv. Green End development plan. BC commented that the Green End development plan was more advanced and that it was still intended to be a 50/50 balance between residential and industrial development.

- v. BC informed us that GEAG had been offered a permanent slot to speak at Parish Council meetings. J Mossman agreed to deputise for BC, when BC is not available to attend.
 - vi. BC did not refer to the GEAG spring event, as this was a separate agenda item
- b. Treasure's report:
- i. PC reported that £85 was still to be forwarded from previous treasurer. PC to pursue
 - ii. The Parish Council will allocate grants to groups who can prove their entitlement and an application will be made in due course (MB/PC)
 - iii. Payment for the hire of the Mezzanine for the GEAG February meeting (the first GEAG meeting in The Hub) has been made. PC has spoken to the Hub manager about paying procedure for future meetings.
 - iv. J Mercer informed the group that prices for the hire of the Mezzanine would be going up, but did not have any further details. BC reminded PC that the other major expenditure to remember is the hiring of a pitch at the Gamlingay show.
- c. Hub representative
- i. JM informed us that the Hub was in very good situation and was thriving. The financial situation looked good, with bookings for the coming year already covering the estimated running costs. There are also some bookings already made for the following year. There is an official (invitation only) opening of the Hub at 1.30pm on 23rd February with Andrew Lansley in attendance, followed by an open evening event that all may attend.
 - ii. JM mentioned that the area immediately outside The Hub had still to be developed and that he had been consulting with SS about possibilities for a planting scheme. The Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) has a community assistance scheme that may provide some funds.
 - iii. JD raised a point about whether it would be a good idea to have an explanation of how the technology behind The Hub worked and how it might impact on an individual's thinking in relation to their own living environment. Should such an explanation be displayed prominently in The Hub. Discussion ensued and may be followed up after the February GEAG meeting which will include a guided tour of The Hub.
 - iv. BC raised a point of potential conflict of interest as J Mercer is now both on The Hub committee and is the GEAG representative who casts a critical eye over The Hub management and their proposals and procedures. As things stand there is no conflict that can be specified.
 - v. J Mercer closed his report saying that we can all be proud of The Hub, now that it is completed, mentioning that it has generated a lot of professional interest amongst architects, some of whom will be coming from other European locations to look at the completed project. There was unanimous agreement that The Hub is indeed something to be proud of.
- d. Green Living / Gazette
- i. MB told us that he intends to submit pieces to the Gazette about the Transport survey, The Hub, and the GEAG spring event (see below). Those wishing to, or obligated to, contribute to those submissions please be aware of publishing deadline dates.
- e. Transport

- i. NH informed us that there is now a bus timetable prominently displayed at Sandy Station.
 - ii. NH stated he will have the transport survey ready for submission to the Gazette editor in March
 - iii. NH said that there was nothing to report from Sustrans, but that the cycle path routes between Gamlingay, Potton and Sandy was still a priority interest.
- 3. Discussion of GEAG spring event
 - a. BC stated that we should set a time and a place for the event and decide on how to publicise it.
 - i. It was decided that the event should take place in The Hub on the 16th May. BC will write to Tony Juniper of Friends of the Earth to see if he will come and speak at the event.
 - ii. It was decided that PC will hire a larger area in The Hub for the event to take place
 - iii. J Mossman felt that the GEAG event might be an opportunity to raise some funds and publicise ecological initiatives by inviting ecological companies to come and exhibit at the event. J Mercer also felt this would be a good opportunity. J Mossman stated that he will be going to a Green Home open evening in Comberton in March and will be on the lookout to see if anything similar is done there. J Mossman will report back in March.
 - iv. BC circulated a leaflet / booklet template provided by SPEP. BC and NH will become the editorial team to provide content and pictures for the template. The intention is to leaflet the whole village prior to the May event. SPEP will pay for all printing costs.
- 4. Door knocking
 - a. BC felt that it would be a good idea for GEAG members to knock on doors to explain what GEAG is about to people on a personal level. After discussion it was generally thought that we might re-visit this idea after the Spring event.
 - b. Another suggestion from BC is that we should invite SPEP to host an event in The Hub. J Mercer to raise this with Siobhan of SPEP.
- 5. Dates and content for future meetings.
 - a. February 15th Guided tour of The Hub
 - b. March 15th Film show. J Mercer to organise showing of Into Eternity
 - c. April 18th Speaker from within GEAG. Probably [sorry, forgot name], from RSPB to talk about the work he has been doing to protect vultures from extinction in Asia
 - d. May's meeting will be the Spring event.
- 6. AOB
 - a. BC announced that Fay ? is organising a garden event in support of Parkinson's disease. If any GEAG member would like to open their garden to the public in support of the event then contact Fay.
 - b. MB informed the meeting that the Department for Energy and Climate Change were currently in discussion about the possibility of shale gas extraction in the South Cambridgeshire area. Some discussion ensued and MB said that he would talk to Bridget Smith about it
 - c. A date was set for the summer barbecue to be held in J Mercer's garden – 7th July
 - d. Meeting closed at 12.30pm