

# Bawdsey Parish Council

## Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2016 at 4.00pm; Bawdsey Village Hall

**In Attendance** – Clls Brian Johnson (BJ) Liz Mark (LM) Rawdon Saunders (RS), Mark Dovey (MD) Andrew Rouse (AR) Jenny Webb (Clerk) WG members: Peter Wain, Graham Turner, Peter Vadden (consultant)

**Apologies:** Clls Chris Mann, Richard Tricker, Andrew Block, SCDC Cll Christine Block

*Meeting called to order by Chair BJ at 4.00pm.*

**Action:**

1. **Apologies: See above**

2. **Chairman's Welcome and Introduction:** Chair BJ welcomed councillors, Peter Vadden and the two members of the WG and apologised for having to call this extra PC meeting which is dealing exclusively with BQVC matters. This has been necessitated by the fact that complications have arisen following the sudden closure of Alexanders College and the imminent sale of Bawdsey Manor; the additional paper work needed to begin installing water on the amenity site in the form of a self-lay application form to Anglian Water and additional questions which have been raised relating to the application for funding from Leader. These questions related to the extent of public funding the BQVC project has already received which has to be under €200,000 in order to comply with Leader regulations.

3. **Update since 8<sup>th</sup> August: Leader Application:** Leader wants a letter from SCDC confirming the actual amount of public funding that has been provided for the project. As owner of the site, SCDC is deemed to be in partnership with BPC. An assessment has been made that approx £70-90,000 will be left over from the £180k earmarked for the water and sewage; £25,000 has been paid from the Coastal Revival Fund and £10,000 from SCC. This means that this will fall significantly below the amount Leader has stated would disqualify BQVC from putting in an application. PV emphasised that this is only Phase 1 of the Leader application. Phase 2 will be more detailed, asking for the economic impact of the project. It is liable to take another 9 months before the outcome of this application will be known. Clls thought that other fundraising measures could be taken while waiting for the results of the Leader application. **Water Installation:** SCDC have given BPC a licence to install water and sewage on the site. However this has been delayed by the need for BPC to apply for a Self-Lay Licence from Anglia Water which is likely to take 4-6 weeks to arrive. The actual work to install mains water should take 8 weeks. The sewage plant could be installed at the same time as the water. This is now likely to be completed in the new year. **Sale of Bawdsey Manor:** With the closure of the Manor, the Boathouse Cafe has been given notice to quit by the end of October. The question arises whether the business partner can afford to wait this long for a decision on whether to progress the build of the new VC. Other imponderables include the length of time it will take to find a buyer for the Manor and what other effects the sale will have. **SWT Outdoor Classroom:** This site, cleared by Graham Smith, has been visited by SWT adviser who highly approved

<p>it. BPC has £4,000 outstanding from an AONB Coast&amp;Heaths grant to spend on this area which will be kept as natural as possible with tree trunks for seating, matting in the middle and access area, possibly with information boards regarding the flora and fauna.</p>	<p>PW</p>
<p>4. <b>Presentation of options from Peter Vadden:</b> PV stressed that 75% of the funding for the BQVC project has been obtained with a shortfall of £98,000. It is hoped that a Leader grant will provide 50% of the shortfall, leaving over £50,000 to be found. Grant funding is becoming harder to obtain on economic grounds. The emphasis now is on community funding which will see people’s lives changed. It stresses the need to provide activities which will deliver positive outcomes for individuals, such as the disabled, young people and other groups. The Visitor Centre is a semi-commercial project which limits the funding opportunities. A social return is expected.</p> <p><b>PV then went on to list options.</b> These ranged from waiting for a funding opportunity to turn up; borrowing the shortfall and repaying it from the cafe’s rent; (Local councils can get provide loans from the Public Loan Board at advantageous rates of interest, currently 1.9%) This would mean paying £11,000 back a year over 10 years; selling share capital, crowd funding or asking for public donations; developing sustainable activities which will bring in an income; further developing the site in addition to the outdoors classroom. This could entail charging for parking, beach huts, a seasonable market etc. Going into partnership with other agencies could thus bring in additional monies; reducing the build costs; handing the site back to SCDC and letting them develop it. <b>The worst option would be to do nothing.</b></p> <p><b>He then went on to cover the risks.</b> These included the risk that SCDC might want the site back; the business partner could pull out; fund providers could ask for grants paid out to be returned if the VC wasn’t built; capital costs could change; another cafe might be built competing with the VC one; Despite a robust risk assessment, BPC did not factor in the possible closure of the Manor. The closure of the Boathouse Cafe will seriously impact local tourism on the peninsula which will be of concern to SCDC.</p> <p><b>Conclusion:</b> He concluded by recommending BPC enter into discussion with SCDC, explaining to them the current situation brought about by new circumstances (closure of Bawdsey Manor) and asking whether BPC could enter into a formal partnership with SCDC.</p> <p><b>Councillor/WG Views:</b> Peter Wain thought that funding could be obtained from immediate use of the outdoor classroom. He suggested BPC ask SCDC for a licence to establish the outdoor classroom and a further licence giving permission for the Parish Council to use it as such even though it did not yet own the land. He explained that SCDC were, in principle, agreeable to BPC charging for use of the outdoor classroom and keeping the sums raised albeit there would have to be an agreed sum to be paid by BPC to SCDC. Suffolk Wildlife Trust would be willing to promote the outdoor classroom. In addition BPC could also ask for a licence to put up a donation box for parking on the site. Councillors agreed the best way forward was to invite PW to approach SCDC and request the two licences in respect of the outdoor classroom and ask for exploratory talks</p>	

<p>concerning any fee to be paid and the possibility of raising funds by seeking donations for car parking.</p> <p>CLIs were also very aware of the potential of losing its business partner and thought they should talk or write to her reassuring her of BPC's commitment to the project and asking for ways to assist her, including inviting her to share in talks with SCDC.*</p> <p>Other views were expressed regarding the build. Some enterprises have used containers which would be much cheaper than the current build proposal although it would not be elevated. Much of the cost of the build is spent on pilings. It was felt that the green build and the attractive design of the building were integral to the success of the proposal to develop the site.</p>	
<p>5. <b>Visitor Centre General Organisation:</b> This item was not deemed relevant at this stage.</p>	
<p>6. <b>Formal Proposals</b></p> <p>a) To open up exploratory talks with SCDC on the possibility of a formal partnership between BPC and SCDC, given the change of circumstances at Bawdsey Quay and given the situation regarding the Leader funding. Chairman BJ proposed and Cll LM seconded these proposals which were unanimously agreed on</p> <p>b) To write a letter to Di Clouting as above.*</p> <p>c) To ask SCDC for a draft licence to enable BPC to use the outdoor classroom as soon as it is ready.</p>	<p>(a) BJ to request a meeting with Laura Hack of SCDC</p> <p>(b) BJ to write to DC</p> <p>(c) PW to contact Laura Hack about outdoor classroom licences</p>
<p>Next regular meetings of the Parish Council to be held on: <b>Wednesday September 14<sup>th</sup> 2016 at 7pm</b></p>	
<p><i>Meeting ended at 5.40pm</i></p>	

Signature: .....

*Brian Johnson - Chair of Bawdsey Parish Council*

Date: .....