

**MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF KELVEDON PARISH COUNCIL
MONDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2007 AT 8.00PM AT COUNCIL CHAMBER**

PRESENT: Cllr C Martin in the Chair, Cllrs Mrs J Anderson, R Bunting, Mrs J Coates, Q Colborn, T Dixon, G Dossett, J Hackworth, Mrs L Hill, L Raison. Clerk and Clerk's Assistant in attendance.

Thirteen members of the public.

44/2007 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Cllr Foster

45/2007 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None

The Chairman welcomed members of the public and explained that there was one item on the Agenda, namely the proposed car park at the rear of Kelvedon House. The Meeting was duly adjourned.

46/2007 PUBLIC QUESTIONS:

The following amendments were agreed at the Meeting of 6 March 2007.

Item 2. Chairman's reply to read: The Chairman replied that the land was purchased solely for community use, and that the development of the car park was seen as part of that. Mr Marshall stated that when he was Chairman of the Parish Council it was envisaged that KCA would develop the land and fund it.

Item 4. Mrs Sue Ramsden's statement to read: Mrs Ramsden, Forth House, Coggeshall Road, applauded the Council in trying to save unnecessary expense but questioned whether it might turn out to be a false economy if the car park needed to be dug up at a later date to improve the surface water drainage arrangements for a community facility. Cllr Mrs Hill questioned whether the soil samples were correct.

Item 5. Cllr Hackworth's reply to read: Cllr Hackworth stated that the total cost of the car park as designed would be in excess of the £100,000 originally projected.

Item 9. Mr Clive Ramsden's statement to read: Asked whether the Council would benefit from the KCA building a new community centre on the Council's land, assuming the Council granted an appropriate lease to the KCA, since KPC would receive a valuable asset at the end of the lease period. In reply the Clerk stated that the new building could possibly be a liability, depending on the terms of the lease and the state of the building should it be returned to the Council. In response, Mr Ramsden suggested that any such new building would be at least a benefit to the community at virtually no cost to the Council.

Original Minutes of Public Questions

1. *Mr Clive Ramsden, Forth House, Coggeshall Road: Noted his letter on agenda. Concerned that there may be changes to the proposed surface water drainage at the car park, in order to keep costs down.* The Chairman replied that a Steering Group, comprising Cllrs Hackworth, Dixon and Raison, had been formed to study details of the plans and that it was proposed to appoint Mark Jones of Jacksons plc as Project Manager, who would liaise with the Steering Group and the contractor. The Steering Group would report back to Council Meetings where final decisions would be taken on major matters.

2. *Mr Ian Marshall, New Town, Coggeshall Road: The land had been purchased by the Council under his Chairmanship, with a view to a site for a future community centre, including car parking. Was this still the case?* The Chairman replied that the land was purchased solely for community use, and that the development of the car park was seen as part of a new community centre. Cllr Dixon noted that the proposed layout of the car park was according to guidelines demanded by BDC for a car park adjacent to a community centre. *Mr Marshall: Keeping costs down for the provision of a car park will increase eventual costs of a community centre.*

3. *Dr Tony Kent, Brockwell Lane: Asked if there were financial pressures on the Council.* The Chairman replied that full funds were available, but that the 'ideal' option was more expensive than various possible alternatives, which were being explored.

4. *Mrs Sue Ramsden, Forth House, Brockwell Lane: Applauded the Council for saving money and questioned whether the soil samples could be incorrect?* Cllr Mrs Hill replied that extra spending on reports could not be done until the access land had been purchased.

5. *Mr David Curtis, 1 Argyle Court: What difference of expenditure is being discussed?* Cllr Hackworth stated that the total cost of the car park as designed would be in excess of £100,000. KCA had commissioned Chelmsford Borough Council, who had obtained full planning permission and had also employed Jacksons plc to draw up detailed engineering drawings, which had formed the basis of the tender. It had subsequently become apparent that the surface water drainage system was designed to cope with the water, not only from the car park but also from any future building adjacent on the remainder of the site. Cllr Hackworth had therefore questioned whether the Council should be prepared to install a system which he saw as providing a part subsidy to KCA for a future building, Enquiries were therefore in hand as to whether the car park needed to be built in the way it has been designed and whether it could be built more cheaply using a self-draining system.

6. *Mrs Carol East, 14 Teal Way: The above point had not been clarified at last year's Meeting.* Cllr Hackworth replied that at that stage the engineering drawings had not been received and the issue is to whether the Council is prepared effectively to give a subsidy to KCA.

7. *Mr Martin East, 14 Teal Way: Understood that the project was to build a community centre in two stages.* Cllr Raison replied that if the car park was built to current specification, it would be 15 years before any repair work was needed. Planning permission for a community centre in the village centre required 37 car park spaces, whereas a community centre on the outskirts of the village would require 74 spaces.

8. *Mrs Sue Ramsden: Please explain a self-draining car park.* Cllr Hackworth replied that it involved a base of hardcore and sand with 'grasscrete' top surface, i.e. concrete blocks with holes in to allow grass to grow. He was awaiting replies from Mark Jones as to whether this type of drainage would be allowed by the planners and the Environment Agency. Cllr Raison added that the planners had stated they would not allow surface water from the access road to drain into the High Street and that the Conservative Club had agreed to construct their own surface water drainage system for their new car park. Cllr Dixon argued that the cost should be looked at on a long term basis.

9. *Mr Clive Ramsden: Asked whether the Council would benefit by granting the KCA a lease on a building on their land.* The Clerk replied that it depended on the terms of the lease and was looked on as an investment for the benefit of the community.

10. *Mr David Curtis: What effect will there be on the Council Tax?* Cllr Hackworth replied that although there would be a small percentage rise in the Parish Council element, the effect on the total Council Tax bill would be negligible. The Council had to act in the best interests of the tax payers and build a car park to the best value for the village. He added that in 2002 the Village Appraisal had shown greater support for a car park, than for a community centre.

11. *Mr Eddie Harbott, Barnfield, off Maldon Road: Having had talks with the Environment Agency concerning local flooding, he believed that they would only allow a full scheme to be installed.*

The Chairman reconvened the Meeting.

47/2007 STEERING GROUP REPORT & MATTERS ARISING:

The report of the most recent Steering Group meeting had previously been circulated to Members. Cllr Hackworth reported that Mark Jones had been asked to investigate the possibility of having a cheaper form of surface water drainage and that he expected a reply within two weeks. If the cheaper option were to be chosen, extra work would need to be done at a later date should a new building be constructed.

48/2007 FINANCING THE PROJECT:

Cllr Hackworth presented a report on how the project was to be financed. This had been considered by the Finance Committee who were confident that the funds available to be borrowed, plus grants received to date, plus monies from the Reserve Account were sufficient for the current proposals. Concern was expressed that delays to the project could have implications for costs. An increase in the precept of £5 per household was anticipated. Cllr Mrs Hill expressed concern that the Reserve Account should not be depleted and it was agreed that a sum of approximately £20,000 should be set aside for future projects.

At this stage Cllr Raison proposed, seconded Cllr Dixon, that a vote be taken on whether to start negotiations with the preferred contractor before receiving replies to the queries raised from the Steering Group meeting of the 23 January concerning surface water drainage and any planning implications arising therefrom. Result – Two for, seven against, one abstention. The proposal was defeated.

49/2007 TENDERS/CONTRACTORS – PROGRESS REPORT:

Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings Act) 1960

This item contained commercially or otherwise confidential matters which were taken in Private Session, minuted separately.

The meeting reopened to the public and the Chairman summed up the decisions of the Council as follows:

1. Mark Jones be appointed as the Council's Project Manager, subject to reading of contract implications.
2. Information awaited from various bodies through Steering Group and Mark Jones.
3. Preferred Contractor C chosen in principle, subject to the information awaited, on basis of which Mark Jones would negotiate.

The Meeting closed at 10.30 pm.

