

## ROTHERHAM DISTRICT CIVIC SOCIETY

### Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> January 2011 at 7.00 p.m. at Woodlands Club

**Present:** B. King (Chair), S. Crowther (Honorary President), B. Fletcher (Treasurer), S. Davies, M. Hoggard, D. Sykes, I. Hawkridge.

1. Apologies: G. Boothman, R. Eddington, P. Hawkridge, P. Nowill.

2. Minutes of the last meeting: The minutes of the meeting of the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2010 were accepted as a true record. N. B. The meeting scheduled for 7<sup>th</sup> December was cancelled due to the severe weather conditions.

3. Matters arising:

- (i) Archives and Local Studies relocation – no progress.
- (ii) Three Cranes/George Wright buildings – there is some funding within the Council's T.H.I. project but it has to be 'matched' with a private sector partner
- (iii) Bluefin Insurance – This was last renewed via the Civic Trust. B. Fletcher to clarify at the time of the April renewal whether they will only insure the Society if we are part of 'Civic Voice'.
- (iv) Lunchtime meetings – Woodlands would cost more to specially open the building up during the day. Details of the Park Hotel awaited from the Secretary.
- (v) Sheila Cameron Award – the Secretary was asked to push this further and follow up and recover the Environment trophy from the Learning Disability Service.
- (vi) Quiz and lunch - late February or March 18<sup>th</sup> provisionally agreed. Open to members and spouses. The Chantry Room at the Brecon has a limit of 16. B.F to progress.

4. Organisational review: Nothing to report.

5. Social committee: See 3 (vi) above.

6. Listed buildings and conservation areas:

New shop front and sign, 2 Effingham Street for Harvey and Thompson.

7. Major applications: Nothing to report.

8. Correspondence:

- (i) Scarborough & District Civic Society Blue Plaques booklet.

- (ii) YHACS Heritage at Risk survey of buildings not already included in the English Heritage survey – no volunteers to undertake this. Some suspicion as to the motives. No action to be taken.
- (iii) YHACS minutes of the Selby meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2010.
- (iv) Rotherham Heritage Association minutes 8/11/2010 – Boston Castle funding bid still progressing; Clifton Park fountain now has a Victoria Cross plaque.
- (v) Friends of the Peak District – availability of speakers - £30 charge – File for future reference.
- (vi) Gayle Mill Trust, Hawes – day trips – File for future reference.
- (vii) Reel News activist video collective – subscription £50 p.a. – no action.
- (viii) Civic Voice ‘Your Voice’ Issue 6. I.H. specifically highlighted that the Blackburn & Darwen, and Swindon societies had re-named themselves as Civic Voice as part of their ‘strategy’ to 2013.
- (ix) Civic Voice ‘News Alert for December’ – I.H. detailed salient points of the coalition Government’s Localism Bill and the new power for a neighbourhood forum to prepare ‘neighbourhood plans’. The official explanatory notes to the Bill say that *in many cases, it is expected that existing residents associations or civic groups will become neighbourhood forums*. Where a neighbourhood plan is prepared it must fit in with national planning policy and strategic elements of the Council’s Local Plan and be subject to a public referendum. The Civic Voice briefing paper suggests that major landowners, volume house builders, or a major supermarket chain may provide the advice and guidance necessary to support local communities in the preparation of the plan.

The Bill also states that civic societies etc will have a legal right to identify important community assets such as museums, libraries, pubs, and shops and be given an option to come forward with a funded business plan to take them on if the asset goes on the open market.

The Localism Bill was viewed with extreme concern by members. I.H. expressed the personal view that he would not volunteer to support a process that is being introduced at the same time as local authority town planning departments are being drastically reduced in size due to budget cuts.

#### 9. Treasurer’s report:

Current a/c £1,055 -93.

B.F. highlighted the fact that currently there is a surplus of only £110, due to the recent expenditure on printing the four booklets. He was very conscious that the Society should try to avoid incurring a loss on the years trading.

#### 10. RMBC minutes: Nothing to report.

#### 11. Fund raising:

The ‘A Pub Crawl Through History’ booklet was printed and published in December.

#### 12. Items under review: Nothing to report.

13. Any other business:

I.H. briefly reported upon the matters discussed at the quarterly meeting with RMBC officers in December:

- (i) Peter Thornborrow, Conservation Officer, has retired and is not to be replaced. Matthew Peck, a Development Control Officer, has been drafted in to work with Jon Bell on conservation matters.
- (ii) Paul Woodcock, the Head of Regeneration and Planning is now responsible also for Libraries, Museums, and the Civic Theatre. Seems to be responsive to the Society's view that the Civic Theatre be retained and a cultural area be developed in the Doncaster Gate area. Some of his comments were however potentially at odds with those of Karl Battersby.
- (iii) Turnpike Wharf / Westgate Chambers – abandonment of residential options.
- (iv) Wentworth Woodhouse – recent positive meetings with the owners.
- (v) Local Enterprise Partnership formed with Sheffield, Barnsley, Doncaster and North Derbyshire and agreed by HM Government. Deadline for Regional Growth Fund bids early January 2011.
- (vi) T.C.N. Express in final legal stages of acquiring the present Civic Office (Walker Place) site potentially for redevelopment as a Tesco supermarket.

In relation to (vi) above, I.H. drew attention to the recent publication by CABA of a design review of 30 recent developments entitled 'Supermarket-Led Development – Asset or Liability?' which focuses upon the practice of putting 'a large rectangular building and car park in the middle of towns' and the extent to which 'this undermines place making'.

The meeting closed at 8.30 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING TUESDAY 1<sup>st</sup> FEBRUARY 2011 AT 19.00 HOURS**

**AGENDA**

1	Apologies	25 minutes
2	Minutes of previous meeting	
3	Matters arising	
4	Organisational review	10 minutes
5	Social committee	
6	Listed buildings and conservation areas	5 minutes
7	Major planning applications	5 minutes
8	Correspondence	20 minutes
9	Treasurer's report	5 minutes
10	RMBC minutes	15 minutes
11	Fund raising	
12	Items under review	15 minutes
13	Any other business	

