

MINUTES OF THE AGM OF THE TOWN HALL WORKING GROUP HELD FEB 20 2008.

Present W Aron, R Fisher, J Benton G & M O'Neill J Tempest

Apologies J Fisher.

Chairs Statement.

The situation regarding ELDC remains the same with no commitment. The business plan is starting to come together but with ELDC insisting on a document produced by a professional consultant we need to make a decision on how to progress as the funding required is beyond the level that can be raised from the community. (to be discussed)

Election of officers all officers re-elected unopposed.

The chair said that he still believed that more people will come on board if and when ELDC commit but it is the uncertainty that is putting people off. Mrs Body has gone to live abroad but her son in in the Black Swan has offered to help with any fundraising but did not have time to sit on the committee.

Significant public opinion is moving in the direction of saving the town hall the chair said many people in the shop are upset at the prospect of demolition. Mrs Traves, Mr Chester would welcome support from the group with regard to a public meeting. GON said we should give support and advice as individuals but we could not become directly as a group as some of us don't live in Horncastle. We must be seen as a separate community group and not get involved in the politics of the town also it could alienate us with ELDC and damage our credibility. It was decided that any support will be on a individual basis.

Mrs Dymoke had expressed an interest in chairing the Town Hall Committee if the project goes ahead the chair said it was always the intention to reform a committee if the project goes ahead our group is just to get it to that stage. The former Mayor Mr Stevens has said he wants to be involved reservations were expressed by GON however the chair said as we are open to all it was not a consideration.

Treasures report.

R Fisher said that the funds were still static around the £1100 mark he will supply exact figures to be signed post the meeting. Care needs to taken regarding limited funds for essential items only and more fund raising is required. GON said unless we move from the present position of stalemate people are not going to give easily.

Secretary's report.

A reply had been received from GOEM regarding ELDC which suggests that if policies and legal entities are not in order that the Monitoring officer should be informed prior to the Ombuds man. The chair said this was a difficult rope to walk politically and would seek advice from Dennis our legal advisor.

The local papers have been contacted and have said that due to space there is limited notification of meetings when the project is running they will be happy to give public notice of formal meetings. The way ahead.

The Chair said that Robert Bells (Colin Low) will provide professional help regarding the costing and other aspects of the business plan. The chair explained that he could not sit on the committee as it would be a conflict of interest. Dexter and Sharp have offered professional help regarding the projected cash flow.

Mark Anderson and Karen have said that they can not do any more work unless it is paid for up front. The chair said that an architect David Ashton Hill had been in contact and would help the group and advise on a free basis. MON said we need to be careful regarding conflicts of interest on the committee so it was decided to accept the offer without a committee position.

It was decided to continue the present strategy regarding the business plan as we had no option due to professional costs being unattainable.

Political back ground.

There has been a lot of muddying of the water at council level, this seems to be ongoing and needs to pan out to know where we are going which could take some time. There is talk from some quarters about a local referendum which would have major impact on the group ie if a no for retention is given then we are effectively dead in the water. If a yes for retention is given then the group must progress the finalisation of the business plan.

It was decided that we should wait for the referendum result before carrying on any more work as it could be a waste of time.

Signed Chair

Sec.