



MINUTES OF THE BARHAM PARK TRUST COMMITTEE **Thursday 8 October 2015 at 3.00 pm**

PRESENT: Councillor Pavey (Chair) and Councillors Hirani, McLennan and Southwood

Apologies were received from: Councillor Denselow

1. Introductions

Councillor Michael Pavey (Chair) opened the meeting by stating that he would usually welcome contributions from the audience, however indicated that he would not be doing this at today's meeting.

Members of the Committee agreed that minutes of the previous meeting and any matters arising would be dealt with at the next meeting, scheduled for 28 October. Before inviting contributions from Members of the Committee, Councillor Pavey apologised to the applicants that this process had taken so long. He indicated that the process had, at times, been shambolic.

He continued by saying that Members of the Trust had been given unclear, and sometimes contradictory, information. Councillor Pavey clarified that much of the confusion centres on the interviews, conducted in August. He provided assurance to all applicants that the interviews had all been conducted professionally and in good faith.

Councillor Pavey stated the report for consideration underplays the importance of the interview stage in this process.

Councillor Pavey informed the Committee that a Freedom of Information request had already been submitted about the process. He stated that three interviewers had been unanimous in their opinion as to the strongest bid.

Councillor Pavey closed his introductory remarks by expressing his frustration that the process had taken well over three months and that Trust Members have been given inconsistent advice throughout.

2. Declarations of interests

None declared.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED:-

that consideration of the minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 September 2015 be deferred to the next meeting.

4. **Matters arising**

Deferred.

5. **The letting of Unit 4, The Lounge, Barham Park Building Complex**

Councillor Pavey reminded Members of the Committee that Committee Members face a simple choice: to let the Lounge to the Friends of Barham Library, to Pivot Point or to rerun the tender process.

Councillor Pavey invited each Member of the Trust to give their views on these choices and we will then hold a vote if necessary.

Councillor Pavey read out a statement from Councillor James Denselow. He indicated that this would not count as a vote.

“Sorry I can't be with the Committee today but I would like to express my support to the Friends of Barham Library proposal to run the Lounge building. I am on record already expressing my support to community libraries in this new era of massive Coalition and now Conservative cuts to local government. FOBL have shown great resilience and imagination in fundraising some £50,000 and building a stock of 10,000 books and deserve their chance to be based in a more secure location. Alongside ACAVA they will bring community services and involvement to one of Brent's fantastic green spaces”.

Councillor Margaret McLennan indicated her support for Pivot Point Community Development Foundation. She said that although she had not attended the interviews, she considered the officers' report. She said that the interviews were an important but not the most vital aspect of the process. She said that deliverability was relevant and for this reason, she preferred the bid of Pivot Point Community Foundation.

Councillor Ellie Southwood indicated her support for Friends of Barham Library.

Councillor Krupesh Hirani indicated his support for Pivot Point Community Development Foundation. He referred to paragraphs 4.0 to 4.7 of the officers' main report and said that in his view, the bid of Pivot Point Community Development Foundation was slightly better.

Councillor Michael Pavey indicated his support for Friends of Barham Library. He said that the FOI process would show that at the interview stage, he awarded the highest marks to Friends of Barham Library. He said he accepted legal advice that these interviews were not binding. However, he also felt that having awarded these marks in a fair and transparent process, he should only change his mind if presented with new information. Councillor Pavey said that the officers' report accurately summarised the original written submissions but it did not provide any new information to challenge the scores that he awarded at interview. Consequently, Councillor decided to stick with the impartial judgement that he made at the interview stage and support Friends of Barham Library's bid

None of the Committee Members voted for a rerun of the tender process. Councillor Pavey asked for a show of hands for Pivot Point Community Foundation (“Pivot Point”) and Councillor McLennan and Councillor Hirani voted for Pivot Point. Councillor Pavey asked for a show of hands for Friends of Barham Library and Councillor Pavey and Councillor Southwood voted for Friends of Barham Library.

Councillor Michael Pavey stated that each bid had therefore received two votes.

Arnold Meagher, Principal Lawyer, confirmed to Committee Members that, in the event of an equality of votes, the Chair would have the casting vote.

Using his casting vote, Councillor Pavey confirmed the Committee’s decision to lease Unit 4 The Lounge to Friends of Barham Library.

Councillor Pavey said that throughout this process, there have been allegations that Friends of Barham Library are a politically motivated organisation and that they have a difficult relationship with other tenants of this building. The Trust has awarded this contract based strictly on the bids put before them. Councillor Pavey said that the Trust would ask that Friends of Barham Library continue to show political neutrality and work cooperatively with all sections of the local community.

6. **Any other urgent business**

None.

The meeting closed at 3.13 pm

M PAVEY
Chair