

Minutes of virtual BCC meeting held Thursday 4th February

Present

Ruth Bull (Trustee/Bradwell Chair), Steve Barnes (Trustee/BCC member), Susanne Kelly, Nicholas Mannoukas, Geraldine O'Grady, Tim Fox, Richard Sanders and Debbie Sanders. Apologies from Simon Thompson and Mary Grimson.

Agenda

1. Opening prayer, welcome, attendance/apologies.
2. Personal Update - how is everyone?
3. Bradwell update: short spoken report from the Centre Team including Tim's Objectives/Bradwell priorities, 11 Acres.
4. Budget monitoring for 2020/21, update from Richard and Tim.
5. Energy performance report from the new system.
6. Brief feedback from the Trustees Meeting held on Mon 1st Feb particularly relevant to Bradwell.
7. Preparations in readiness for reopening - possibly May 2021: programme (Nicholas and all) volunteers, Covid-readiness at Centre, etc. Outreach and publicity for bookings: Web, Facebook etc
8. The budget for 2021/2022. Note: Bradwell has prepared some business and scenario planning options, and we now need to firm up a realistic budget recommendation for the Trustees.
9. Any other business
10. Decisions, actions, future meetings.

1.

- Meeting was started with an opening prayer from Richard.
- RB mentioned that Clare Stone would like to join the committee, and this was unanimously agreed upon.

2.

- We started with a brief catch up on how everyone has been managing over the last few months. Everyone is finding lockdown difficult for various reasons and looking forward to a return to normality. 3.
- TF gave an update from the Centre. This started with a discussion of the recent publicity in the Observer and Radio 4, highlighting the potential impact of Bradwell B on the Community, Chapel and local area. There were congratulations for Tim from all the committee for getting this in the public domain. He mentioned that there had been some criticism of the Observer article, however the Chapel committee were very supportive.
- SB asked about Bradwell B and RS answered that he attended a virtual meeting of the Bradwell B Community forum on the 3rd February. The forum is a discussion platform for the developer and local communities and organisations. There were around 40/50 people taking part and the focus of that meeting was on the generic design assessment and ongoing environmental impact studies. The slides will be distributed to committee members. RS urged that the Community should take a view on this development. RB pointed out that the Trustees had written to the developers and did not feel that it was part of Othona's mission to be a campaigning body. Comments from the committee were that

this event threatens the existence of Othona Bradwell, which is against the mission, the plans show that access to the site here would be across the power station land if compulsory purchase went ahead and that the size of the new power station will make it visible all over the peninsular and across the estuary. We should focus on the visual impact and the presence of an ancient monument in close proximity.

- There has been a great effort put in mainly by Clare Gough to recruit new Trustees and Joanna Evans has been appointed as a Central Trustee. Joanna is trained as a lawyer and works as a barrister/judge. It was agreed that that it would be beneficial to include Joanna in any Bradwell B opposition planning if she is happy to help.
- NM asked about the reclaimed 11 acres. TF answered that this was ongoing. At present there is no point in spending much on this land if Bradwell B were to go ahead as this land would be part of the compulsory purchase order. It was originally retained due to the potential risk of flooding. We do need to fence the land to mark the boundary with the farm and discussions are ongoing with the farm manager to find the cheapest option for this. The plan currently is to use this space for overflow camping during the summer enabling more activities like the virtual Greenbelt festival during August Bank holiday last year.

4.

- RS presented the financial position for the end of this financial year. The original base budgets were drawn up by Angie. We are expecting a small operating surplus. This is largely due to government support including furlough, generous donations from the Community, income from opening in the summer and retaining all four of the ESC volunteers for the whole year coupled with tight control of costs. After depreciation costs offset by a £10,800 grant from Essex Community Foundation we are expecting a Company deficit of less than £30,000. The original base budget assuming no opening gave a Company deficit of £130,000.
- The committee thanked Richard for taking the role of temporary Bradwell Treasurer.

5.

- RS reported on the performance of the new energy system. All seems to be running as expected with a few minor glitches.
- We used 1 load of wood pellets during the first 6 months of operation but the last load over the winter has only lasted 6 weeks. He suggested that we would probably need 6-8 loads per year. The first RHI payment for £1,135 will be paid to Central and will contribute to reducing capital costs.
- During the summer, the increased solar panels led to a high level of electricity generation and the generator was hardly required. However, during the winter months, the generator is required on most days even with very few people on-site. This highlights the need for the extra wind turbine. In terms of carbon footprint this usage is equivalent to running four cars with average mileage for a year, this is better than the previous situation but needs to be reduced.

6.

- RB gave a brief update from the recent Trustee meeting. There has been a very successful drive to recruit additional Trustees and a new Treasurer, Michael Hunt, has been

appointed and will be formally adopted at the next AGM. As mentioned previously Joanna Evans has accepted a position and there are three others under consideration.

- Both Centres prepared a detailed report for the Expert Finance Group which Clare had assembled. This report included current demographics for visitors, site maintenance requirements and forward planning. The report for Bradwell will be made available for all the committee to view. The main conclusion from the group was that both Centres should work more closely with each other, but development should be led by the local committees.
- Membership fees should remain at £12 as this low fee encourages people to make additional donations.

7.

- RB suggested that the earliest we would be able to open would be May 2021. It would be good to have a programme available for people to plan ahead.
- Volunteers will be needed to help before and during opening. At the moment we don't know if the bid for 5 ESC volunteers for this year will be successful. If it is not, then we will need committed volunteers over the summer period.
- SB suggested running some working weekends and weeks possibly prior to full opening to get the site ready.
- NM has been in touch with the leaders of the summer weeks for last year and will check if any are available for this summer. Difficult to plan ahead at the moment as we don't know what the rules will be by then. It was agreed that to have a fairly flexible plan would be good. The virtual events from last year gave a good sense of Community as well as raising income from donations. GO offered to help with organisation for virtual events this year. It was agreed that NM, SK and GO will discuss how this would work during the next month.
- Clare has suggested a lent course using resources from The Clewer initiative, this is a 5-week course looking at modern day slavery. SB and DS both expressed an interest in helping with this. It would run via zoom on Thursday nights before dedication.

8.

- Richard and Tim have put together a budget for the next financial year. This was based on 3 different scenarios (A, B & C). In C the Centre would be closed due to covid restrictions and only require someone here to act as a caretaker. In case A, there are no restrictions at all, and the Centre operates as normal. The more realistic scenario is B where there is limited opening and some form of social distancing remains in place for most of the year. It is difficult to plan due to the unknown pandemic situation, we can not guarantee that the current rate of donations will continue and in this financial year we were fortunate to have a grant to help with basic survival of the Centre. RB suggested submitting alternative versions of budget B.

9.

- We need to build in a business case for the new wind turbine and look at whether we can divert some of the future donations into this fund.
- SK suggested we look into carbon offsetting options in more depth as a fundraising method. TF mentioned there might be a new government initiative available from March. RS mentioned that we are registered with LoCase (Low Carbon across the South East). They have just announced that they have more funding available now and can potentially provide grants of up to £10,000. We have the possibility of a £10,000 grant from the

Wind Farm but need to match this with our own funding. There is currently a fundraising campaign by Angenita to raise money by sponsoring her swim across the Blackwater estuary. Clare Stone has lots of experience in environmental project funding and should be a great asset in going forward with this.

Action Points

- RB to contact Clare Stone regarding committee membership.
- RS to make slides from Bradwell B forum available.
- DS to make Bradwell report available.
- NM to start putting together a plan for a summer programme.
- NM, SK and GO to discuss virtual programme.
- RS to put together information on wind turbine prior to next meeting.
- All to bring ideas and thoughts about our response to Bradwell B to next meeting and circulate by email beforehand.
- Strategy Meeting on 6th March 2021, again by Zoom.