

**STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET PARISH COUNCIL****FULL COUNCIL**

MINUTES of a Special Meeting of the COUNCIL held at 7.00pm on Wednesday 7 December 2011 at the Friends' Meeting House, Chapel Hill, Stansted Mountfitchet, Essex

**PRESENT:** Cllr G Sell (Chairman), Cllrs D Brett, B Gott, J Hudson, P L Jones, T Owen, R Rawlinson, J Rich and V Trundle

**ATTENDING:** Mrs R Clifford – Clerk  
A-M Grant and J Henry – West Essex PCT  
Dr Sue Humphrey – Redlands GP Surgery  
T Sims and B Bampton – Pelham Structures  
2 press  
11 members of the public

**270 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs C Dean, I Evans, J Loughlin, J Salmon and W Stiles.

**271 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST -** None.

**272 PROPOSED NEW HEALTH CENTRE**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the guests. He said it was good news that the planning application for the re-development of the Castle TVR site had been submitted.

Ms Grant stated that she had worked on various possible sites for the proposed new health centre, but the Castle TVR site had been the preferred option now for quite some time. The new facility, when complete, would consist of a GP practice, consulting rooms, accommodation for health care assistants, district and school nurses, speech and language and podiatry services as well as an NHS dentist. The latter would have three consulting rooms with two dental surgeons based there. A dedicated lift will be provided for patients, along with a staircase.

Fifty car parking spaces are allocated to the rear of the site for this centre, with increased public parking available in the UDC Lower Street car park following a re-plan of that area by Pelham Structures. The PCT will not charge for car parking.

The GP surgery in St John's Road has been under a lot of pressure for some time because of its inadequate facilities – not least trouble in recruiting staff – and this new centre will sort out many problems for them. In response to a query from the Chairman regarding whether consultants will be brought in to work from the centre, Dr Humphrey confirmed that the GP Commissioning will include this.

On behalf of Pelham Structures Mr Bampton said that with all of the pre-planning work which had been undertaken, it was hoped that the planning application would be determined within the 13-week timeframe, ie by the end of February. Three tenders have already been received and they will be pushing for a start in 2012 with a build period of just over one year.

Cllr Brett asked whether there would be any increase in the number of GPs. Dr Humphrey stated that it is not unusual for a GP to have 2,000 patients. There are also two nurse practitioners. The surgery will be looking at increasing GP or NP numbers to ensure that patients see the right person for their needs. It is a question of mixing skills and they are currently reviewing their appointments to establish what the needs are.

Cllr Jones stated that this meeting had been called after the Parish Council had learned that alterations were to be made to the plans and these could delay the project. Ms Grant assured everyone that the changes which had been made were minor and had come about because the SE Partnership Trust had only just taken over and they were required to review their needs prior to submission of the application. They remain in support of the project and made alterations to their office space and not the consulting rooms.

Tom Sims stressed that the car parking has been carefully designed to give priority to the elderly and disabled, close to the entrance to the centre. There will be a designated 2m wide footway for pedestrians right along the entrance road into the centre and the entrance will not be shared with the residential accommodation. The retail area will also have a restricted separate access. The re-design of the Lower Street car park has increased the number of parking spaces from 96 to 162 including the 50 for the health centre.

Cllr Jones asked if there were any services which will not transfer into the new centre. Ms Grant replied that children's services will largely be provided from the Spangles Children's Centre and the transfer from Crafton Green to that site is already underway.

Mr Woodcock referred to the land at Foresthall Park which is no longer required and asked whether funding from the developers (of FHP) would be available instead. Mr Bampton stated that if it was used towards the construction of the building, then the rent payable by the PCT would reduce. Ms Grant confirmed that this was the plan and that the funds should be paid to the PCT and by them to Pelham Structures.

Mrs Hollis stated that, realistically, it will be 2014 before the centre is open – the PCT will have disappeared by then under the Government's reorganisation and she asked who would be protecting our interests in the centre? Mr Hendry confirmed that the Trust is due to expire in April 2013 and responsibility for all premises will pass to the national commissioning board who will take on all rent commitments. The Chairman asked whether the PCT could give everyone present assurances that this project will not be jeopardised. Mr Hendry replied that there could be no guarantees but they had been directed to carry on as normal and he was very confident that there would be no issues.

Cllr Jones sought confirmation that, provided planning consent is granted, there should be no major issues arising. Mr Hendry confirmed that this was the case as during the scheme's development the PCT Board had changed and the new Executive is fully in support.

Mr McDonald stated that the PCT/developers must have undertaken a review of the risks – one of these is that the planning application is not approved – what are the others? Mr Bampton stated that this would be the issues around highways. The junction is seriously flawed. Neither Pelham Structures nor Essex County Council were happy with the original proposals, so new consultants were instructed and they have stated that the best way to deal with traffic flows is a 4-way mini roundabout. ECC are not keen on these either, but they are supported by national policy and Pelham Structures now believe this is the best scheme available.

Mr Woodcock then stated that he has planned a public meeting to be held on 20 January to raise awareness of the planning application and to encourage public support for it.

Cllr Jones asked whether there was any pedestrian crossing in Lower Street proposed within the planning application. He was told that there was not. If there was, Cllr Jones believed that this would require the removal of most of the on-street parking available adjacent to the shops and would kill off their trade and he would not be able to support that. Mrs Kadir took the opposite view believing that the health centre will bring more trade to the shops. Cllr Sell agreed that the footfall would be greater if the pharmacy was located on the site also.

Mr Collins asked if the dental surgeon would be full time? Ms Grant confirmed that he would be as he was moving there from Saffron Walden.

Cllr Sell drew the meeting to a close by thanking everyone for attending. He wished the project good speed and hoped we would all be celebrating the opening in 2014.

Meeting closed 8.05pm