

Appendix 3

Letter of Support from Potton Town Council 1st May 2012



POTTON TOWN COUNCIL

1st May 2012

To Whom it may Concern

Re proposed new Multi Functional Community Hall on the Land East of the Biggleswade Road designated under the Local Development Framework DPD

Potton Town Council is aware of the requirement for a larger multi functional community Hall from the Town Plan undertaken in 2009. Under the plans for the development of the above mentioned site, the land for a Community Hall has been allocated by the Developers who have also undertaken to supply the relevant services for the site, under the terms of the Section 106 benefits.

We are aware that other funds from Section 106 will be allocated towards the cost of the building.

The Town Council is happy to give its support to the steering committee who are to raise the required finance to complete the building and ensure that the project remains self financing.

The Town Council is not prepared to offer any further financial backing to this project and will need to see that the project is going to be self financing from a full business plan.

It should also be noted that the Town Council does not want to take ownership of the Hall and is happy for the ownership to be decided through the Officers of Central Bedfordshire Council.

Yours sincerely

A Leggatt
Chairman of Potton Town Council

Mrs V. Mols, Town Clerk.

THE COMMUNITY CENTRE, BROOK END, POTTON, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 2QS.
TELEPHONE: 01767 260086 Email pottoncouncil@btconnect.com
www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk

3.1 Reference with community plans or council minutes or resolutions demonstrating that the proposal meets local priorities

Minute 31 – 2nd May 2017

31 Potton Hall for All

Members noted the correspondence during April 2017.

Members then discussed the item at length.

It was resolved (i) to fully support the Potton Hall for All project. (ii) the town council would like to take full ownership and responsibility of the community hall land. (iii) the town council also resolved to have a long-term lease (eg in the region of 199 years) with Potton Hall for All on a peppercorn rent of £1 a year. (iv) to allow the charity (Potton Hall for All) to have the community building on the community hall land. (v) that the council fully supports the charities (Potton Hall for All) ownership of the building. (vi) that the Town Clerk writes to Central Bedfordshire Council to advise of the town council's resolution.

Minute 10 – 6th June 2017

10 Appointment of Potton Hall for All Representative

Following the resignation of Cllr Jordan, members were asked to consider a town council representative for Potton Hall for All.

It was resolved to appoint Cllr G. Emery as the town council's appointed Potton Hall for All Representative.

Minute 6 – 20th June 2017

6 Potton Hall for All

Members noted the correspondence.

Members discussed about town councillors meeting with Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) Cllrs Dixon and Shelvey.

It was resolved that Cllrs Gibb and Macdonald along with Cllr Emery meet with CBC Cllrs Dixon and Shelvey.

Cllr Emery mentioned about CBC want to know how the funding shortfall for construction and fit out costs, will be met.

A discussion about the need for infrastructure and services are needed first before housing as per the news item on Look East earlier this evening.

It was resolved (i) to contact Sarah Hughes about obtaining a date to meet with CBC Cllrs Dixon and Shelvey. (ii) to contact Sarah Hughes to obtain a copy of the plans of Henlow Pavilion as offered by Cllr Young in March 2017 so that they can be compared with Potton's Hall for All. (iii) to email Cllrs Emery, Gibb and Macdonald about availability to meet with CBC Cllrs Dixon and Shelvey. (iv) to support the charity as they will be responsible for the buildings construction and will also be the owner of the building on land leased to them by the town council on a long-term lease.

**Extracts from correspondence sent to Sarah Hughes at CBC by Potton Town Council:
5th April 2017**

RE: CB/13/00921/OUT - Land East of Biggleswade Road, Potton

As requested by CBC, Potton Hall for All approached PTC to request that the town council consider approving and supporting Potton Hall for All in making an application to CBC to allocate / reserve £5,000 from the current Section 106 monies available for Community / Village halls for Potton (CB/14/03520/FULL - The Gables, Mill Lane with a spend by date of 13/08/2025) which CBC are holding. PTC approved and supported Potton Hall for All's request in applying to CBC.

Potton Hall for All regularly update PTC and the residents with progress via attendance at various local community events and articles in local publications.

The local publications include page 15 of the Winter 2016-17 Newsletter and most recently page 15 of the Spring 2017 Newsletter, which is currently being delivered to every household in Potton.

<http://www.pottontowncouncil.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Winter-Newsletter-2016-17.pdf>

5th May 2017

RE: CB/13/00921/OUT - Land East of Biggleswade Road, Potton

At the meeting the council resolved to fully support the Potton Hall for All project and the council would like to take full ownership and responsibility of the community hall land.

The town council also resolved to have a long-term lease (eg in the region of 199 years) with Potton Hall for All on a peppercorn rent of £1 a year, to allow the charity to have the community building on the community hall land.

Final part of the council's resolution was that the council fully supports the charities (Potton Hall for All) ownership of the building.

19th July 2017

Your question "... *but we need clarity regarding the last paragraph of your letter to confirm the relationship between the Town Council's ownership of the land and the lease arrangement to the Hall for All group. In particular, can you please let us know who will own the building and who will be responsible for its construction.*"

Answer

The town council has resolved to support the charity as they will be responsible for the buildings construction and will also be the owner of the building on land leased to them by the town council on a long-term lease.

Evidence of Community Consultations and Engagement

A town-wide consultation was initially undertaken in 1994 in order to establish if there was any demand for a large facility that the existing buildings could not provide. Following the consultation, the PH4A committee was set up by PTC to consider how the demand identified could be met, for example could existing facilities be improved or extended to meet the identified needs.

It became apparent that none of the existing venues could be improved and enlarged sufficiently to solve the issues required to meet the demand identified in the community consultations. Consideration was then given to the feasibility of building a new community building.

While the PTC Hall for All Steering committee continued to exist, no developments or opportunities to obtain land for a new hall emerged for a number of years. However, the need for new facilities still remained and this was highlighted in the consultation undertaken in Pottton in preparation for the Town Plan published in 2009.

Pottton Town Plan 2009-2019 – by PTC

A survey was carried out by Pottton Town Council in 2008 as part of the production of the Pottton Town Plan, with a response rate of around 50% of households. Nearly half of respondents agreed that there was a need for a self-financing, larger, additional hall in Pottton.

Also identified was a need for additional sports facilities (e.g. multi-use games area, gym) and an indoor youth meeting point.

In recognition of the local need identified in the Town Plan (2009), Central Bedfordshire Council included site MA5 (Land East of Biggleswade Road) in its Site Allocations policy because of its potential (alongside site MA6) to bring forward a community facility.

Survey March 2012 – by Pottton Hall Committee (reformed group)

A further survey of all households in Pottton was carried out in March 2012, by now 86% of responses were in favour of a new hall as demands on existing facilities increased with the population of Pottton

Respondents identified arts activities that they would like to see provided in Pottton, including concerts, theatre/drama, film, dance and arts & crafts. Sports activities were also identified as requiring a bigger venue including badminton, gym, exercise classes, swimming, football, cricket, trampoline and sports for young people. Respondents were interested in both hiring the hall for sole use or for clubs and groups and in visiting as users or members of such groups.

The historic issues and those raised through the March 2012 community consultation had led the Hall for All Committee to commission an independent Feasibility Study in **September 2012** undertaken by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity, BRCC. This was to re-test the need for a new community building and whether a larger community facility could be built and maintained.

A comparison of Halls available for hire was undertaken for the Feasibility Study. This noted: "None of the premises that are available for hire can be said to be owned by the Pottton community. Most of the venues identified belong to an existing organisation (e.g. school, church, and library) which has priority use and hires the

venue out when not in use. Despite being valuable in providing space for local groups, it is arguable that these halls and rooms are not 'community buildings' in the sense of being equally available to all; neither were they purpose-built for the needs of community groups or the wider community."

Land East of Biggleswade Road development, July 2012 – for the Developer

The developers of the Land East of Biggleswade Road site ran an open consultation in July 2012.

Question 5 asked: "Do you support the provision of a new community hall and if so, what facilities should it provide?" Nearly 60% of respondents did directly and suggested what such a facility could provide:

- Gym / other indoor sports facilities
- Multi-purpose hall large enough to accommodate shows/concerts/exhibitions.
- Staging, lighting & sound / cinema screen
- Large sprung dance floor
- Swimming pool
- Ice rink
- Small meeting rooms
- Changing rooms
- Bar
- Kitchen

February 2013 – User Group Consultation meeting hosted by PH4AG's then architect CIVIC, was attended by 27 stakeholders representing a variety of businesses, clubs, the Town Council, societies and individuals from Potton. We asked: 'What does the hall need to be like for it to be valuable to you?'

The following areas were highlighted as being most important by those who attended.

- Gym, badminton and bowls – indoor sports – available during the daytime
- Over 60s facilities – disabled friendly – bus stop
- Display area which could also be used as art gallery
- Council meetings/ ticket office area
- Separate meeting rooms that are well sound insulated with good IT technology
- Surgery use – maybe as extension later in project
- Kitchen area – well equipped for commercial purposes, and also small enough for groups to make their own coffees and teas
- Refreshment area – near the entrance – gallery type space
- Excellent acoustics, good lighting/sound facilities
- Changing rooms, not necessarily with showers – large enough to house 100 people
- Studio/rehearsal room/workshop
- Enough storage
- Retractable seating for 200 people
- Youth club area

August 2013 Older Person's Survey (for Potton Consolidated Charity - PCC)

A survey conducted by BRCC was sent to all 2,100 or so households in Potton, aiming to identify the views of the Potton community concerning current provision for older people in Potton and how this could be improved – 381 responses were received, representing a response rate of around 18%. This was a wider ranging consultation about provision for Older People in Potton across all areas.

The report concluded that the most significant issues on which the PCC could have an impact are:

- The shortage of suitable accommodation for an ageing population
- Patchy transport services for those without a car
- A growing demand for a range of services and activities to promote independence and reduce social isolation
- The need to ensure that older people in need receive good quality advice and information
- The recruitment, management and co-ordination of volunteers

The Potton Hall for All Committee shared some data from its own surveys during the PCC's consultation. Regarding activities that could take place in a new hall, older people had requested a weekly Lunch Club; University of the 3rd Age events; Indoor Bowls; Afternoon Cinema; Line Dancing; Tea Dances; Ballroom & Latin Dancing; and exercise classes.

Potton Neighbourhood Plan – Potton Town Council – June 2017

The Neighbourhood Plan has responded to the findings of the NP Survey and supports the development of a Hall for All. Policy CI 6 (Community Infrastructure) supports 'Any proposals that support the development and maintenance of the identified community projects'. The Hall for All has been identified for S106 funding and thus has NP support.

Extract from the NP Scoping Report

7 Community Infrastructure

7.1 Introduction

As a small Georgian market town, Potton has a range of community facilities that support the current populous. However, although the core day to day needs of the local community can be met there are areas where there is little or no local provision. Any increase in the population and the change in the demographic is likely to result in these gaps being exacerbated. However, as part of current expansion, land has been provided to the town on which to build a new community hall.

The community has the use of five meeting rooms of varying sizes varying from school halls through to smaller rooms. However, one issue that has been identified is that within the town there is no one large multi-use space that is suitable for indoor sport, weddings or other social events where staging can be used.

Neighbourhood Plan Survey (delivered to all homes in Potton) asked:

Qu 34

Respondents were asked if they would find any of the following facilities useful if they could be made available in the town.

Survey responses showed:

- 71.36% strongly agreed that a community facility like Gamlingay's EcoHub would be a desirable facility.
- 45.98% strongly agreed that S106 monies from developments should be spent on Potton Hall for All (second highest priority after Cycle Path)
- 67 comments were received as additional suggestions for other types of community facilities. The main suggestions included 'Hall for All and more independent cafes.

This is clear evidence that the Hall for All is supported. The Neighbourhood Plan will therefore include the provision of a large community hall as an objective.