

CHUTE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING OF September 6th 2018

Present

Cllr Quirk (Chair)

Cllr Hughes (Vice Chair)

Cllr Taylor

Cllr Hannington

Cllr Parr

Mrs C Wall (Clerk & RFO)

Cllr Blair-Pilling Wiltshire Council

The meeting was attended by eight members of the public

1. To Record any Apologies.

Cllr Haines (Holiday)

Cllr Foxen (Conflicting Engagement)

2. Declarations of Interest.

Members are reminded that, in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, they must declare any personal and/or prejudicial interests and leave the meeting if appropriate.

No Declarations Received

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

To approve and sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of July 5th 2018

The minutes were signed as a true and correct record and Proposed by Cllr Hughes and Seconded by Cllr Taylor

4. Matters Arising:

To discuss any matters arising from the Minutes of the meeting on July 5th 2018

No matters arising

5. General Public – Any questions

Mrs Wheeler the former tenant of the Cross Keys Inn advised that the community asset agreement imposed on the Cross Keys runs out in January 2019 and proposes that it is renewed either by the Parish Council or twenty-One households to sign it as a community asset for a further 5 years

Mrs Wheeler recommended that this is signed by the Parish Council.

Cllr Quirk stated that although he recommended support originally it was obvious that it was not supported by all villagers.

Mrs Wheeler stated her concern is that it is falling into disrepair.

Cllr Hughes advised that the current owners of the pub will update the Parish Council at the November meeting on the pub's future.

Mr Wheeler stated that there are rumours that as the former tenants they did not make a profit and this was incorrect. Some villagers supported the pub more than others and that they were profitable.

Mr Shepherd stated that we should consider that the three previous landlords did not make the pub viable and that it is fair that another public examination is revisited and put forward a case to prove that this can work.

Cllr Hughes stated that we had asked to see the accounts on several occasions but these have not been received.

Cllr Parr stated that we must see the accounts to make a formal decision.

Mrs Wheeler stated that Dr Moore and her predecessor only purchased the Cross Keys to convert it into a house.

Cllr Hughes stated that pubs have closed down all over the country because times have changed and communities do not drink and smoke as they did in the past. He advised that he had worked with a major national pub chain and specialist local pub operators and that they state that the Cross Keys would not be economically viable. The difficulty is that no one so far seems to have come up with plan to make it an economic entity.

Mrs Wheeler stated that they ran it for 18 months, fitted it out and decorated and gave bonuses to their staff and only withdrew because it was untenable through the owner's accusations that they were in breach of contract which was a false accusation and they were anti to make it a success. She also advised that it had been under offer and had fallen through.

Cllr Hughes wanted details from the landlord and the accounts from the tenants and he would like to see the evidence on both sides. He stated that he wanted it to be a viable vibrant pub but the Shears at Collingbourne has also now closed down.

Mr Sheppard stated that if the figures are stated as good that should be enough without having to be given as evidence.

Cllr Parr asked what sort of profit and what were salaries and outgoings and was it enough to be viable as pubs are closing at 18 a week currently which cannot be denied.

Mr Wheeler said that until they sell the pub nothing can happen but we cannot make them sell.

Mrs Wheeler stated that she has spoken to Wiltshire Council to see if it could be compulsory purchased and we should not give up our fight and be trampled over by the current owners.

The four letting rooms had been fully occupied with people coming in from all over the world and with repeat guests.

Cllr Hughes advised that Sirrus would not buy a pub with less than 8 letting rooms

Mrs Wheeler stated that the current owners would not put in any investment and that she offered to buy it but the owners refused to sell. If this could happen and investment put back in it could be a goldmine.

Cllr Parr enquired when the village asset agreement it ran out?

Mrs Wheeler repeated that it was January 2019 and the Parish Council or twenty-one householders have to sign.

Cllr Parr stated that it was no point having it for another 5 years just to leave it empty and will sit there derelict.

Mrs Coward stated that they spent time and money updating it for the previous tenants.

Mrs Wheeler stated that they offered the assets to Dr Moore when they relinquished the tenancy but she refused them and left it empty of fixtures and fittings.

Mrs Taylor asked if it would be possible to see the emails between the two parties.

Mrs Wheeler stated that Dr Moore accused them of being late in paying the rent when this was incorrect as they paid one month in advance. Mrs Wheeler asked for a solicitor's letter stating that they were in arrears which did not happen.

Cllr Hughes asked to see the accounts and offered to sign a non-disclosure agreement. Mr Wheeler stated that he would only give them to the Chair of the Council.

Cllr Parr stated that the property could only get worse so it makes sense to make it a community asset again.

Cllr Quirk stated that we could not force the owners to sell it.

Cllr Parr said what is a viable profit to one company is not to another.

Mrs Wheeler said if owned and run by the same people would work.

Mr Shepherd stated that a family could make a comfortable living out of running this but was not marketed properly. And that we should fight to keep it as a pub.

Mrs Coward stated that she had read an article about a pub bought as shareholders and they employed an experienced landlady and it worked well.

Cllr Quirk asked if the council were willing to sign a further Village Asset Agreement tonight without full council but Cllr Hughes stated we must examine the real evidence from both sides and having seen the evidence that pubs are broken. The Plough at Longparish has closed and which was a highly well-run pub and we must know it could work rather than face another closure.

Cllr Hughes stated that you are asking us to make a decision without any evidence.

Mrs Wheeler said we made it a community asset to protect it without any evidence of the viability.

Cllr Hughes understood that the Lion in Clanville had taken a considerable time to reach break-even despite being family run and much closer to the major local population centres. The Fox at Tangle works through both location and that it is a Thai restaurant.

Cllr Hughes again asked to see the accounts and why they were not willing to disclose them as they could be looked at through Company House.

Mrs Wheeler advised that the company was “The Chute Pub Company.”

Cllr Parr stated that a pub has to have a unique selling point and that although it is at the end of the road he does not want to see it as a derelict pub and should we ask the community to support and put pressure on the owners.

Cllr Hannington stated that he would like to find out more information on Community Assets and drafting a neighbourhood plan may be appropriate and see what would be the benefit.

The Clerk advised that a decision cannot be made by the Parish Council at this meeting as this was not an agenda item and the councillors were not aware of the public’s representation at tonight’s meeting.

This would therefore have to be an agenda item at October’s meeting.

The members of the public left the meeting.

6. To receive reports from Wiltshire County Councillor and Wiltshire Police

Cllr Blair-Pilling – Wiltshire Council

There will be no change in the number of councillors set at 98 at the recent boundary review. which should represent 4291 voters plus or minus less than 10%. If you take the current Tidworth Area we have 1600 more voters. Amesbury also has over 6000 voters. If you take Devises they have less councillors. Add up Amesbury and Tidworth you get too many populations per councillor.

The Public Consultation is now underway and we can comment on this on the website consultation.lgbce.org.uk. ends. A decision has to made by mid-October. At the meeting yesterday, it was agreed that the Chairman and officers are meeting with area boards over the next two weeks with Tidworth and Ludgershall on 19th September and Amesbury 13th.September.

Billed as a session for asking questions and a proposed solution. Not a matter of sitting around as we do not match the numbers so question is to where do we sit as Collingbourne do not want to be part of a town council but would rather be with small parishes with similar issues and where do we see ourselves.

Cllr Hughes stated that we use Hampshire Schools, Hampshire Refuse Tips, Fire and Ambulance but do not want to be part of Hampshire. The current ward does not make sense and the distance inappropriate.

Cllr Quirk stated that he thought we should go North to be represented by a rural councillor.

Cllr Hughes thanked Cllr Blair-Pilling for his support this afternoon at the Eastern Area Planning Meeting to reject the planning application for Lower House Farm.

Cllr Quirk advised that the gulley emptier visited the Chutes in the last couple of weeks and the driver refused to take his machine round to empty the gulley’s as stated the lanes were too narrow.

The Clerk agreed to raise this with the Highways Engineer.

7. Finance –

To accept Liquidity Statement to the end of August 2018

7b. Payments

To approve payment to Acorn Workshops £1705.00

To approve payment to Wiltshire Council for Local Election £1940.35

To approve payment to Ed Quirk for Post Crete & Posts £36.90

To approve payment to R Wall for signpost bolts £14.62

To approve Clerks Expenses for stationary, ink and website £55.43

The above was approved by Cllr Parr and Seconded by Cllr Taylor

8.To receive, consider and comment on Planning Applications as received from Wiltshire Council.

8.1 18/06393/FUL Erection of two story extension & 4 dormer windows to Long View Upper Chute

8.2 18/06497/FUL Single story side extension to Foxcote Upper Chute

8.3 18/06801 Fell six trees at The Cross Keys Upper Chute

The above applications was supported and Proposed by Cllr Hannington and Seconded by Cllr Taylor

8.4 Update on 18/04151/FUL Lower House Farm

This was refused at the Eastern Area Planning Committee on the basis of over development of the site

9. Highways Report

The Clerk advised that the road outside the Hatchet Inn would be resurfaced on September 12th

10. Footpaths Report

Cllr Taylor advised that the footpath by Limmer Pond had not been cleared

11. King George Field Report

The Clerk reminded Cllr Quirk to order the bark for the see saw from ATF. She advised that the football team still had not received a decision about parking from Chute Club who had now installed a fence along the front of the club. We could lose the football if this can not be resolved and they are our main income for the field.

The actual land the club is sited on is currently unregistered and she advised that the club was now registering it in their name. It was agreed to do some research on the original landowners and the gifting of the land.

12. Chute in Need Wind Up Update

The Clerk advised that this had now finally been wound up and a further cheque for £1017 had been received

13. Gateway to Upper Chute Proposal (Cllr Parr)

Cllr Parr circulated his proposal to install village gates to deter speeding through the village.

Cllr Hughes stated that he does not feel that gates are effective and drivers do not slow down. The Village Design Statement also states that street furniture should be kept to the minimum.

Cllr Hannington advised that he had read a study on Cambridge that village gates are a cheaper option than a radar gun.

The Clerk agreed to research the speed indicators.

It was agreed to reconsider a scheme for the future.

14. Chute Cadley Green Trees

The Clerk advised that complaints had been received from residents living around Chute Cadley pond about the Lime Tree and the Maple on the green and that they were far too large for the space and too many Silver Birch's
The Clerk to get a quote to have them crown lifted and coppiced and felled.

14. Any other Business

Cllr Taylor advised that an HGV had got stuck on Forest Lane due to the missing sign. Cllr Quirk suggested moving the sign from the top to the bottom. The Clerk to speak to the Highways Engineer.

Cllr Taylor asked if Mr Harker would cut the Allotment Hedge. The Clerk to speak to him.

Cllr Taylor raised the issue of the digger work at Long View and that the hedge had been disturbed.

No further business was raised and the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.15pm

15. Date of Next Meeting October 4th 2018

Carolyn Wall
Clerk and RFO September 7th 2018