

Ansty and Staplefield Parish Council

The minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Ansty and Staplefield Parish Council held in Ansty Village Hall on Tuesday 22nd October 2019 at 7:30pm.

Members present: Brad Williams (Chairman), Bob Birthwright, Dhana Mahendran, Peter Bushell, Maria Fielding, Simon Stokes, James Steadman, Jon Gilley, Crispin Salimbeni.

Also present: Liz Bennett (Clerk), 7 members of the public.

PUBLIC SESSION

The Chairman outlined the purpose of the meeting and invited members of the public to speak.

John Thorpe spoke on behalf of the Ansty Village Centre project and gave thanks to the Parish Council for their input and support. There is an acute need for the village centre which the Parish Council recognised by its inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan. The project will deliver a substantially improved building and car park. The total cost is £1.4m which the project is very close to achieving. If the Parish Council agree to their donation then a very good case can be made to Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC), to get the final amount and construction can begin in January 2020. The project is now at a critical stage and any delays to the project could mean that some of the agreed funding will be lost. The decision tonight is crucial to the project.

A member of the public asked if the project has planning permission and about the status of the cricket nets. John Thorpe responded that the building does have planning permission and that the nets were originally included in the application. However, a suitable location could not be agreed at that time and the nets were dropped from the application. The cricket nets will therefore be determined as part of a separate application and the intention is to locate them away from the houses that border the Ansty Recreation Ground.

A member of the Ansty Village Hall Trust commented that many people in the village have been working on this for over 20 years and that the new facility will make a big difference to the village.

Another member commented the £100k donation from the Parish Council was promised a long time ago and the Parish Council should vote for it tonight.

A resident commented that the Consultation Event had been well attended and people demonstrated a lot of energy and enthusiasm for the project.

1. Apologies for absence.

All members were present

2. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

The Clerk explained that after taking advice from the MSDC solicitor she has granted dispensations to the Councillors who are members of the Ansty Village Centre Trust

and Ansty Village Hall Trust. They are Jon Gilley, Crispin Salimbeni and James Steadman. The dispensation was granted because the donation is of such significance that it should be debated by Councillors representing the whole parish. This means that the Councillors can take part in the discussion and vote this evening.

3. Results of the public consultation for the Parish Council's proposed donation to the Ansty Village Centre project.

The consultation outline and results had been circulated to the Councillors prior to the meeting. The Clerk outlined the details of the public consultation which ran from 13th October to 18th September 2019. The consultation was advertised on the three parish notice boards, on the website and by emails to four parish resident associations. An event was held on the 28th September in Ansty Village Hall. Papers from the event were made available on the Parish Council website for those who were unable to attend.

The Consultation Event was well attended, and 90 consultation responses were received on the day with a further 52 being received by email or in the post. The responses were 100% in favour of the project and the Parish Councils £100k donation to the project, of which £25k will be a public works loan.

The Chairman commented that the consultation was run in accordance with the requirements of the Public Works Loan Board and the Sussex Association of Local Councils.

4. Parish Council financing of a donation to the Ansty Village Centre project.

A paper outlining the financing of the donation and budget implications was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. The Clerk talked through the paper.

The Parish Council has been building up a Community Buildings reserve over the last few years to help with the Ansty Village Centre and Staplefield Pavilion. The proposed donation to the AVC project can work as follows:

February 2020 donation from reserves	£25k
March 2020 donation from reserves	£25k
April 2020 donation from reserves	£10k
April 2020 donation from precept	£15k
May 2020 donation using public works loan	£25k

The draft budget shows that there is no need to increase the precept beyond an inflationary 2% in order to fund the donation to the project. There will still be money available for Staplefield Pavilion or other community projects.

The public works loan will be repaid within 4 years and at current rates will cost £6614 per annum.

The Clerk was thanked for her work on this project.

5. Vote on the proposal to donate £100k, of which £25k will be a public works loan, to the Ansty Village Centre project.

The Chairman provided a summary of the project status and challenges. The project is benefitting from s106 contributions from several developers. Thanks go to Elaine Clark at MSDC for her hard work on the s106 contributions. The leases are being worked on with MSDC and there is a meeting with MSDC next week to discuss a contribution from them to meet the final funding target.

Parking will be a concern during the construction phase and the AVCT will work on a plan to try and reduce the disruption along Deaks Lane.

The Parish Council would like the AVCT to consider offering a discount to all parish residents for membership or bookings at the new village centre.

The vote took place and it was unanimously AGREED to make a £100k donation to the Ansty Village Centre project. £75k will come from reserves and £25k will come from a public works loan to be taken out by the Parish Council and repaid over 4 years.

6. Any other matters for noting or for the next agenda.
None.

MEETING CLOSED

DRAFT MINUTES SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION.