

MINUTES

FLADBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of Fladbury Parish Council held on Wednesday 7th, 2023 at the Sports Pavilion, Fladbury at 7pm.

PRESENT: Chairman I Southcott, Vice Chairman G Mills, Cllrs. D Day, P Hill, A Hughes, N Manser and M Neilan plus 14 parishioners

1. **APOLOGIES** – none received.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None declared.

A request was made by Cllr Mills for the agenda order to be altered to allow parishioners the opportunity to make comments AFTER Agenda Item 4 below – this was declined by the Chairman.

3. PARISHIONERS

The meeting closed for ten minutes for any parishioners to address the Council.

Chair Southcott invited parishioners to make comment. One parishioner made reference to the fallen finger post sign in Anchor Lane. Cllr Mills would address this.

4. **THE FIELD & THE NAIT** – *To consider and formally approve or otherwise the proposal set out and circulated by email to Parish Councillors on May 24th involving the acceptance of the gift of the land as contained in the Last Will and Testament of David Wynn and further described in his Letter of Wishes with the exception of the requirement to establish a trust to manage the land in question.*

Furthermore, to consider and formally approve or otherwise the proposal to agree to seek a net selling price of £17,500 for the section of land described in the valuations presented by Bomford and Coffey and Fisher German with no historic or other costs to be imposed upon the Parish Council by the estate and for appropriate restrictive covenants to be in place to protect the nature of the section of land in question.

Chair Southcott reported on the current position with the Executors of David Wynn's estate and the urgency to move forward with accepting the gift of the field and Nait. SPAB want to purchase a small area of land (3.7% of the total area) to increase the viability of the Mill. The Executors had set a deadline of 31st May for the Parish Council to accept the gift with the opportunity to sell part of the land to SPAB. Failing to do so would result in the 'gift' being imposed on the Parish Council and, in addition, the PC having to be responsible for security and other costs estimated at £13k incurred since the death of Mr Wynn. Guidance and advice had been taken from two firms of solicitors.

Various updates had been presented to parishioners at the at the last two Annual Parish meetings, April 2022 and April 2023 as well as at two public meetings specifically called to consider this matter.

Chair Southcott also reported that the release of part of the land and changing of the boundaries was a wish of Mr Wynn before he died – this is evidenced in an extract from a 'Letter of Wishes' of Mr Wynn and shared with Cllrs at the meeting.

Two valuations have been obtained, one for approx. £5k and a second for £45k. A proposal by the Chairman to Cllrs to agree on a net figure of £17,500 and no liability for any security or other costs had been circulated to Cllrs via email. Six Cllrs were supportive of agreeing with two against (one now resigned). Those supporting the proposal were mindful of Mr Wynn's initial wishes (now supported by sight of the Letter of Wishes) and felt the time had now come to draw a line under this matter, to accept the gift and move on. However, the Clerk reminded Cllrs that any decision would need to be ratified at a formal parish council meeting – hence this meeting tonight.

Cllr Mills asked why SPAB had initially turned down the offer of the extra land? Chair Southcott said that they need to increase the viability of the Mill, and this would enhance any car parking and holiday let opportunities and as their consideration of the viability evolved, it would seem that the acquisition became of greater importance.

Cllr Mills said that the Parish Council was to serve the village and that the £1,600 spent on the second valuation was a waste of public money. Chair Southcott reminded Cllr Mills that the initial valuation was for just £5k and that the Council had agreed to seeking a second valuation of its own. By accepting the £17,500 (less legal costs to date) we would also not be liable for the security costs and would have money in the bank to meet our own legal and other costs as well as funds to invest in the gift.

Cllrs Day, Hill, Hughes, Manser and Neilan said they felt that Mr Wynn's intentions and wishes were clear and that we should now be working towards a legal agreement with legally binding protective covenants, a financial plan and maintenance plan. Mr Wynn had made it clear that the land should remain as riverside land, with no grazing except sheep or significant tree planting – a vision shared by the parish council.

Cllrs Day and Hughes considered that challenging the guidance would be costly and time consuming.

Proposal One: To consider and formally approve or otherwise the proposal set out and circulated by email to Parish Councillors on May 24th involving the acceptance of the gift of the land as contained in the Last Will and Testament of David Wynn and further described in his Letter of Wishes with the exception of the requirement to establish a trust to manage the land in question.

All Cllrs voting to support this proposal.

Proposal Two: to consider and formally approve or otherwise the proposal to agree to seek a net selling price of £17,500 for the section of land described in the valuations presented by Bomford and Coffey and Fisher German with no historic or other costs to be imposed upon the Parish Council by the estate and for appropriate restrictive covenants to be in place to protect the nature of the section of land in question.

Chair Southcott and Cllrs: Day, Hill, Hughes, Manser and Neilan voted to support this proposal with Cllr Mills voting against.

There will be a public meeting in due course to advise parishioners of the details of the formal legal agreements, terms and conditions. A request was made by Cllr Neilan that these be shared with village residents in advance of the public meeting, and this was agreed.

Cllr Neilan reported that he was satisfied that his initial qualifications had been addressed.

Cllr Mills thanked the parishioners for their attendance, and Cllr Hughes thanked Chair Southcott for steering this meeting.

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Cllr Mills again asked that the parishioners present be given the opportunity to comment at this point in the meeting. The Chair responded that the public participation element of this meeting had already occurred and that there would be adequate discussion for debate at the forthcoming public meeting.

3. OTHER MATTERS FOR INFORMATION / FUTURE DISCUSSION:

- Appeal – development in Broadway Lane (34 homes) was held with Chair Southcott and Cllrs Mills and Neilan in attendance. A decision is expected early July.
- Sandy Insall had decided not to stand again as a Cllr. The parish council will be recognising her service as Cllr.

4. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday 19th June 2023 at 7 pm.