

Minutes of the Monxton Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 10th October 2023, 7.30pm at Abbots Ann Village Hall

Present: Cllr Mike Cleugh – Chairman
Cllr Hugh Corroon- vice chair
Cllr Cathy Barbone
Cllr Camilla Elwell
TVBC Susanne Hassleman
Heather Bourner – Parish Clerk
1 Member of the Public

Apologies:

Apologies for absence had been received from HCC Chris Donnelly, TVBC M Flood & Cllr Rupert Staines.

1.WELCOME.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

There were no declarations of interest.

3.PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

Richard Greenwood, planning consultant and agent for the owners of the Black Swan, attended the meeting to provide notice and share information in relation to the recent (third) application for a change of use of the Black Swan to a family home. He said the proposal is for the permanent change of use and repair works to create a home for a young family. He and his clients believe the pub is no longer viable and that the building cannot provide suitable accommodation for a viable pub. He said there are no known hospitality operators, or people willing to re-open the pub or other community use interested in taking on the property. He said they believe the pub closed in 2016 because it was not attractive enough and not enough people went there, he also suggested The Hawk is a very good local pub.

He went on to say they saw the impacts of allowing the change of use to a house, would be sustainable and meet a clear housing need and would be a long-term viable use for this Grade II listed building.

He said the proposals will preserve and enhance biodiversity and accord with the TVBC Local Plan flood risk policy. Finally, he said the owners plan to restore the entire building including the signage which will be retained.

The previous two applications have been for a temporary change of use, and this latest application is in relation to a permanent change of use. The application was received and validated by TVBC planning as of the date of the meeting and is available for viewing on the TVBC website, application reference 23/O2579/FULLN.

In addition to the application information available publicly on the TVBC website, Mr Greenwood noted that a pub viability “expert” had been appointed to provide a report on the viability of the pub and its current valuation. Mr Greenwood also noted that this Viability Report has only been made available to TVBC planning and not the public for confidentiality reasons but can be provided following any Freedom of Information Act applications to TVBC Planning.

There was some discussion regarding the viability of the pub, in particular Cllr Corroon questioned how a pub without a car park could be viable and queried how any marketing exercise of the pub without a car park could be seen as complete. He asked if the Viability Report submitted to TVBC planning in connection with the application could be available to the Parish Council despite it not being publicly available. Mr Greenwood said he could ask his clients for this. Cllr Barbone asked if there had been any offers to buy the pub and Mr Greenwood said no although it remained on the market and an offer could be made at any point up to just before a decision is made by the planning authority. *[As noted in the Myddleton & Major Marketing Report submitted in the application – see page A3, this statement by Mr Greenwood is not correct. An offer to purchase the pub for £50,000 was made on or prior to 4 July 2023 and refused shortly thereafter]*

Cllr Cleugh expressed his concern about the deterioration of the building, in particular given that no work has been carried out at all since the purchase of the building 18 months ago and several areas especially the windows were now beyond repair. He showed all present photographs of the building taken recently.

There was also discussion about the financial viability of a project to renovate the building which was purchased for £400,000 and would take up to £350,000 to complete. During the time the pub had been listed as an asset of community value the asking price for it was £250,000 the current sale price is £300,000. Mr Greenwood confirmed that the Viability Report provided valuation details both in relation to the pub with and without the car park.

The Parish Council will consider the application in more detail in the coming days (as it was only validated as of the date of this meeting) and will hold an extraordinary meeting to discuss further as necessary.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chairman agreed to sign the minutes of the previous meetings of 18th July 2023 as a true record. All agreed.

5. VILLAGE HALL REBUILD UPDATE

Cllr Cleugh reported an offer from the owners of Bec House to provide land in their paddock for a village hall along with funding for foundations could not be accepted due to the impact on the CIL funding already agreed and the extended time needed for new a planning application, which may not be allowed. Initial advice regarding foundations was found to be invalid as new foundations are required. This will increase the cost of the build however precise figures are still awaited. It is hoped the building work will begin in late October.

The Clerk summarised the village hall management finance as below

- Held in Barclays account-30/09/2023
- Current account £951.50
- Savings account £35.90
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6. PLANNING.

Applications since previous meeting: -

1. 23/02277/FULLN- convert green house to garden office-Bec House-no objections

Applications to be considered

1. 23/02472/TREEN- tree works, The Saeter, Broad Road-no objections
2. 23/02253/FULLN-erect shed and greenhouse, Meadow Lodge- no objections

Confirmation of outcome from TVBC

1. 23/01741/FULLN-demolish 7 replace garage-Old Hoyles, Abbots Ann Road-permission
2. 23/02070/VARN- variation conditions of extensions, Cambridge Cottage-permission

Amport House

The application for change of use at Amport House is to be heard by TVBC Northern area planning committee on 12th October. Officer recommendation is for approval.

Well and Westwell Cottages, SP11 8AW

Confirmation has been received that the planning Inspectorate APP/C1760/W/22/3305139-appeal has been dismissed. This means the cottages will need to be re roofed with thatch.

7. SUNNYBANK & FOOTPATHS

Cllr Barbone reported the footpaths will be cut over the next 2 weeks. She said despite asking farmers some hedges remained uncut.

Finally she reported a householder had raised concerns about the ditch opposite Brookside that it is not dug out enough for excess water. The last heavy rain had seen water running into the drive way. The Clerk will report this to HCC.

8. TRAFFIC MONITORING

Councillor Elwell said she has not been able to download any data from the machine as she is unable to locate the software disc.

The Clerk provided details of the company that the machine was purchased from and Cllr Elwell with contact them direct to obtain details so data can be retrieved.

9. ENVIRONMENT

Cllr Cleugh reported Southern Water works are ongoing with works in Monxton High Street progressing well and work planned in Thrupton and Fyfield to reline the main sewer and private laterals.

10.FINANCE

To note balance in Lloyds bank as at 30/09/23 £92620.93

Resolved: that the following payments be approved and transactions authorised

Payments to agree-

Clerks' salary £133.52 per month and HMRC £33.20 payments by SO Oct, Nov, Dec
Shaun Rushton £380.00
Shaun Rushton £240.00

Payments to be made

Clerks' expenses (May to July) £51.27
Shaun Rushton £200.00
BDO LLP £378.00

Details of a draft budget for 24-25 had been circulated. Cllr Barbone asked that funding for hedge/grass/footpath maintenance be increased by £500. Cllr Cleugh said the precept figure should be increased in line with inflation. The Clerk will make changes and recirculate figures so an agreement to the level of precept could be approved.

14.BOROUGH & COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

HCC Chris Donnelly had sent apologies

TVBC Councillor Maureen Flood had sent apologies

TVBC Councillor S Hassleman reported on a TVBC climate action plan and financial help for home owners with such things as insulation and double glazing including those who live in listed buildings. She is seeking guidance from the TVBC conservation officer regarding what can and cannot be done to listed buildings.

She also highlighted Thriving communities' workshops which are to be held across the borough- the next to be held at King Sombourne Village Hall on 1st November. She encouraged Cllrs to attend and highlight what was important to their community.

Finally, she highlighted the TVBC resilience forum on 28th October at Kings Sombourne Village Hall.

15. CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk reported a letter from Lloyds Bank confirming paper bank statements will cease to be sent by post.

16.Items for next meeting

There were no items noted for the next agenda

17.CLOSE OF THE MEETING

The Chairman thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting.

18.DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 9th January 2024, 7.30pmThrupton Village Hall

Further meeting dates in 2024 were agreed as May 14th, July 9th & October 8th.

