

WINKLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on Wednesday 25th January 2012, 7.30pm in Winkleigh Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Bowers, Cooper, Gledhill, Knight, Flockhart, Griffiths, Turner, Hodgson & Watson
Dist. Cllr Lausen

Apologies: Cllrs Stutt & Kenny

Public Period

E1.1.12. CURRENT BUSINESS MATTERS

a) Winkleigh Cemetery Bungalow

Cllr Turner addressed the meeting and queried the openness of lengthy e-mail communications between Cllrs prior to the meeting stressing that she felt it essential that the PC discusses all avenues at a meeting and is seen to be open and transparent in all its business. Cllr Turner stated that she believed that the PC must fully explore all the options available regards the Cemetery Bungalow and not focus on one option.

The Chairman addressed each Cllr individually and asked them for their opinions before full discussions took place.

Cllr Hodgson said that he believed that the Bungalow is a Parish asset set within the larger Parish asset of the burial ground and that any options considered needed to bear this in mind adding that he believed there is a need to maintain some form of dwelling on the site.

Cllr Griffiths queried the PC's role in providing affordable accommodation. Cllr Griffiths stated that a lot of work, due care and diligence had been spent to try to ensure the best outcome for the community as a whole and that he was concerned about the condition of the property and its long term future adding that something radical needed to be done agreeing the PC need to look at all options available including redevelopment of the site and re-investment of any capital.

Cllr Flockhart agreed said that everyone had seen the Surveyors Report but that to date the PC had not formally agreed to approve the report – this she believed would allow the PC to move onto the next step of considering the long term future of the bungalow.

Cllr Cooper stated that the PC have for the last 5 years been discussing this issue and made no ground. He stated that the financial information shows that PC have made a profit on the bungalow and continue to do so stating that he believed that interim repairs could be paid for from the rental income and not be funded by tax payers adding that should the bungalow be demolished and not replaced the PC would lose any rental income.

Cllr Knight stated that she was concerned about the long term potential for the existing bungalow due to its condition but did believe that the PC should consider options to continue the provision of affordable housing.

Cllr Gledhill said that it was clear that the PC had made a profit on the bungalow and that “piece meal” repairs/improvements were entirely appropriate and common on rental properties. He stated that he agreed that long term there are issues about the future of the property but that there were no immediate problems that would require serious consideration of demolition at this point. Cllr Gledhill stated that he believed the PC need to address any immediate issues at the property to keep it rentable while full consideration of any long term future plans takes place.

Cllr Watson addressed the council stating that all comments she was to make had no reflection on the current tenancy or tenants but on the long term future of the property. Cllr Watson said that she could

not see that the PC had a Policy regarding provision of affordable housing and stressed the need for the PC to ensure that public money is spent appropriately adding that the PC had taken professional advice on the condition of the property and that the PC have accepted that the bungalow is beyond economical repair.

The Chairman read out a copy of her e-mail circulated to all prior to the meeting. Cllrs were advised of the various options that the Chairman believed open for discussion. The Chairman said that she believed that detailed investigation into all aspects and options in this matter was essential and that she hoped that this meeting would result in a small team of Cllrs getting together to try to get as much information together as possible to allow the full council to debate further and agree a way forward.

Cllr Turner stated that she accepted that at some point the bungalow will reach the end of its life term and that a radical change will be required but stressed that in the interim immediate work to the bungalow needed addressed . Cllr Turner stressed the need to try to maintain the bungalow as a rentable property while a long term decision is agreed and planned for both practically and financially . Cllr Turner added that she has concerns with the principal of selling off any area within the cemetery due to the sensitive nature of the burial ground.

Cllr Hodgson then addressed the Council and explained the background to the PC originally taking on the burial ground. He stated that the PC must consider the implications of selling off parts of the burial ground as this is a large asset of the council in itself adding concern over a loss of control.

The Chairman referred to extracts from the Surveyors Report. Cllrs Hodgson and Watson raised a number of points regarding the defects including the roof, insulation and damp proofing. The Chairman stated that this was not the time to discuss specific repairs but to work towards a decision and information required to help with this.

Cllrs discussed again at length. Cllr Gledhill said that whatever long term decision is made they can not act on this immediately as more information is required adding that the PC need to look at the present situation and agree what action to take. Cllr Gledhill stressed that the long term future of the bungalow will be a big project that will take some time to come together and reminded all that the council changes every 4 years so those who make the decision need to be sure that it can be implemented. Cllr Watson agreed that the long term project is enormous and will require a great deal of work, that she was concerned that as has happened previously when discussing the immediate situation at the bungalow any long term decision is put off and adding that the PC must be prepared to give the commitment required to this project.

Cllr Hodgson addressed the Council and reiterated Cllr Coopers comments about the rental income more than covering the costs of any repairs suggesting that it is an option to put all the rental income aside to address any issues with the bungalow. Cllr Hodgson also asked in light of concerns over the burial ground should the PC be looking into the value of a building plot on the site as suggested. The Chairman addressed the meeting and stated that both a short and long term decision needs to be made and stated that she felt information regarding the potential value of the site would be useful. Cllr Hodgson stated that the PC's principal response to selling off any land would dictate which future options were available and reminded all Cllrs that as part of their Parish Councillor duties they were also members of the Board of Burials for the Parish and have responsibilities as such. Cllr Hodgson also reminded Cllrs that parts of the burial ground have been allocated for non-christian burial and that there are a number of commemorative tress on the site along with an air-raid shelter which all need consideration. The Chairman again stated that a value would assist in decision making but again Cllr Hodgson stated that he believed the principal needed agreed . Following more discussion Cllr Watson stated that while not recommending selling but purely to provide information she would proposed that the PC request that a Estate Agents valuation is obtained for the cemetery bungalow and bungalow grounds/garden and a second valuation for a larger area of land – there was no seconder Cllr Watson queried if the PC were suggesting that they forego the value of the asset if the PC spend all the income from the bungalow because they wont sell it. . Discussions continued.

[Cllr Turner proposed that the PC get more estimates/quotations for demolition, extending the roof, guttering work, removal of cavity wall insulation and re-rendering to allow full consideration of the options – 2nd Cllr Hodgson: voting 6 for, 0 against, 2 abstentions: MOTION CARRIED](#)

A short discussion took place with the tenant.

Cllr Watson requested that she be removed from the bungalow group due to time restrictions – Cllr Griffiths agreed to join the group.

b) Wind-turbine Applications

Cllr Hodgson addressed the Council and referred to an e-mail he had circulated to all asking the PC to consider a formal response to existing and future planning applications for the erection of wind turbines in Winkleigh Parish. Cllr Hodgson said that as the pc decision was not to approve the application 1/219/2011/FUL he felt the following should be put to the council. “ Wind turbines do have an adverse visual impact on the surrounding area which can affect a large number of people, there are few (if any) benefits for the people affected. Cllr Hodgson stated that he believed that the pc should be trying to do something to address the problem, one option is to try to generate some financial benefit for the parish to offset the loss to the parish. If we are to be seeing more applications of a similar nature then we should be trying to formulate a standardised response. Cllr Watson responded that she did not agree with Cllr Hodgson on 3 main issues : one being that Section 106 can not be used in this way, two that there is community benefit from green technologies with the concerns of an energy crisis and three that the PC would be asking for compensation for loss of amenities for this type of application only stressing that there are many ways in which a persons amenities can be affected and not solely by wind turbines. Cllr Watson stressed the need to find a better way to deal with this.

The Chairman then reported on the TAAG meeting held on 24th January 2012 when the subject of Renewable Energy was on the agenda. The Chairman then addressed District Cllr Lausen who advised that TDC do not have a firm Renewable Energy Policy and that Cllr Watson was correct in that a Section 106 legal agreement could not be used in the way suggested.

Following discussions Cllr Hodgson proposed that Should the district council be minded to approve the application No 1/1219/2011/ful then a section 106 agreement must be entered into with the applicant to donate a percentage (exact figure to be agreed) of the gross revenue generated each year to the parish council. This sum of money would be as part compensation to the community for the general loss of visual amenity to the area.- 2nd Cllr Gledhill: voting 6 for, 2 against, 0 abstentions: MOTION CARRIED.

E2.1.12. PLANNING

- a) 1/10003/2012/FUL: Two storey extension withy Juliet balcony to the rear, Trecarne, Lower Town Winkleigh EX19 8JG : APPROVED (A.i.f) MOTION CARRIED
- b) 1/0005/2012/AGR: Poly Tunnel and pole barn, Land at Worthy Farm, Winkleigh, Devon – Cllr Gledhill proposed that The Parish Council resolved to strongly object to this application and request that TDC fully investigate the functional need of the proposed development . The Council does not believe that this application should have permission in principal and request a detailed investigation of need prior to any decision being made – 2nd Cllr Flockhart: A.i.f: MOTION CARRIED

E3.1.12. REPORTS

The Chairman advised that the Telephone Kiosk in the Square has now been Listed by English Heritage

Cllr Hodgson advised that the diseased tree had now been taken down and the site left safe. Cllrs were advised that an offer of £250 for the wood had been accepted and that the documentation for this would follow. The Council thanked Cllr Hodgson for his assistance in this project.

Cllr Knight reported that work on the footpath to Winkleigh woods was unable to proceed at this point as there is no support from the landowners concerned.

Cllr Knight reported that she is still investigating the suggestion of a voluntary car scheme.

The Chairman reported that she had been in contact with DCC regarding Shute Lane and that DCC would shortly be in touch with the council.

Cllr Watson referred Cllrs to documents produced for Landscape Sensitivity Analysis Assessment and suggested that everyone read them before the next meeting.

Cllr Cooper reported that the grit bins had been relocated as requested and also that the new litter bin for the Square was in place and the original had now been relocated at the lay-by at Berners Cross as agreed.

PUBLIC PERIOD II

There being no further matters to discuss the meeting was declared closed at 9.25pm