

STEEP PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN Mr Richard Coles

CLERK Mrs Jenny Hollington

Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting held on Monday, 8th February 2010 at 8.00 p.m. at Steep Village Hall

Present:

Richard Coles (in the Chair)	Caro Robinson	David Llewellyn
Fran Box	Terry Cook	Nick Hurst
Jenny Martin	Jo Bell	Charles Gibson

In Attendance: Jennifer Gray (District Councillor)
Jenny Hollington (Clerk)

There were 0 members of the Public present during the course of the meeting.

10/24 APOLOGIES – Vaughan Clarke,

10/25 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS – The Chairman reminded Councillors that any interests should be recorded.

10/26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – It was noted that the next Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council is scheduled for Monday, 1st March at 7.30 p.m.

The Clerk briefly explained to Councillors the advice received from Hampshire ALC with regard to the format of the meeting.

10/27 LEGAL ADVICE RECEIVED SO FAR WITH REGARD TO SALE OF LAND AT CHURCH ROAD

It was **resolved** that in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press for discussions regarding legal advice received so far with regard to the sale of the land at Church Road, and to amend the Brief to Counsel.

This was proposed by Caro, seconded by Nick and agreed 6 in favour.

To discuss and agree the estimate for Counsel - The Chairman asked Councillors whether or not they wished to proceed with the estimate of £1,250 + VAT and Brief for Counsel as advised by Coffin Mew, in order to sort out the legal issues raised by Church Road Representatives with regard to the proposed sale of land for affordable housing, allotments and village green area. The following items were taken into consideration when discussing this issue:

- A letter from a Church Road resident regarding the cost of legal advice;
- A letter from a Church Road resident requesting the provision of allotments on the Church Road site;
- The Solicitor's advice;

The item was discussed fully and the main points of the discussion are noted below:

- There was general consensus that the estimated cost of £1,250 + VAT would in all probability escalate;
- The vote taken at the Parish Council Meeting in September 2008 to progress the scheme to the next stage – a Public Exhibition – has not yet been achieved.
- Establishing the legal position would provide clarity of the way forward;

- In order to approach the Charity Commission for advice regarding the Trust, an in-depth proposal is required;
- Hyde would not be willing to invest in a Public Exhibition without Steep P.C. signing Heads of Terms (which would put Trustees in breach of the Charities Act);
- Concern was raised that the Parish Council did not have enough detailed information or expertise to hold an exhibition themselves and that there would be no point in the Exhibition if the Developer/Planning Authority were not involved/available for comment – in response to this Jennifer Gray confirmed that representatives from EHDC would attend;

Following the discussion Terry proposed that a Public Exhibition should be held at the expense of the Parish Council in order to show the public the plans and drawings received so far, so that the public is kept informed and that the Village can decide whether the scheme should be progressed.

This was seconded by Caro, and voted - 7 in favour, 1 against (David asked that it be noted that he thought the issues of the Trust should be sorted out first).

It was queried as to how the public response would be measured. Issues over the original questionnaire were raised and discussed.

Jenny Martin proposed that a leaflet should be sent via the post to each household giving dates of the Exhibition. Following the Exhibition a Questionnaire should be sent by post to each elector in the Parish to vote as to whether or not the scheme should be progressed, and that certain officers should be invited to attend the Exhibition;

This was agreed – 5 in favour, 2 against and 1 abstained.

The Chairman asked whether Councillors thought it appropriate for Hyde to be invited to attend the Exhibition. Following discussion and after consideration of the Solicitor's advice, it was agreed that Hyde should be invited.

This was agreed – 6 in favour, 2 against (David and Fran asked that it be recorded that they did not agree with Hyde being invited).

The Clerk was asked to write to the Solicitor informing her of the Parish Council's decision not to proceed with the Brief to Counsel for the time being.

To consider a request to release the Solicitor's advice to the Church Representatives - It was agreed that this item should be included on the Agenda of the March Meeting and that the Solicitor's advice that the Parish Council are not in breach of the Charities Act until they enter into an agreement (a binding contract) be recorded in the Minutes.

It was agreed that the Parish Council representatives should meet with the Church Road representatives once more to explain how the Parish Council wished to proceed.

The meeting closed at approximately 10.00 p.m.

R. Coles
1/3/10

