

**Minutes of Little Bealings Parish Council meeting held with members in remote attendance (via Zoom) at 7.15pm on Monday 5 October 2020**

**Present:** Mr I Ransome (Chairman), Ms D Head, Mr D Hunter, Ms H Saagi and Mrs M Wilson. Dr Hopkins joined the meeting just as it ended and gave his apologies.

**In Attendance:** Mrs C Ramsden, Clerk to the Council

**Also Present:** County Councillor Andrew Reid (for part of the meeting) and District Councillor Colin Hedgley, the agent for planning application DC/20/3514/FUL and eight residents/members of the public for all/part of the meeting

Two attendees advised that they were recording the meeting.

### **1. Apologies, Declarations of Interest and Dispensation Requests**

Apologies were received from Mr M Garnham, who was away. It was **RESOLVED:**

- To accept the apologies for absence.

Declarations of a personal interest in item 3.1 on the Agenda, DC/20/3514/FUL: Change of Use of a Vacant Public House to Residential Use - Admiral's Head, Sandy Lane, were made by Ms Head, Mr Hunter, Mr Ransome, Ms Saagi and Mrs Wilson, as they had all pledged to buy community shares in the pub.

Declarations of a personal interest in item 3.1 on the Agenda, DC/20/3514/FUL: Change of Use of a Vacant Public House to Residential Use - Admiral's Head, Sandy Lane, were also made by Ms Head, and Ms Saagi as they were members of the Friends of The Admiral's Head (FoTAH) and the joint Parish Council FoTAH Working Group.

Declaration of a personal interest in item 3.1 on the Agenda, DC/20/3514/FUL: Change of Use of a Vacant Public House to Residential Use - Admiral's Head, Sandy Lane, was also made by Mr Hunter as a member of the joint Parish Council FoTAH Working Group.

### **2. Public Participation Session**

Councillor Reid was advised that his report to Councillors would be circulated to Councillors and considered at a future meeting.

One member of the public wished to speak, but it was not possible to hear him for technical reasons.

### **3. Planning**

#### **3.1. DC/20/3514/FUL: Change of Use of a Vacant Public House to Residential Use - Admiral's Head, Sandy Lane**

The following points were made by Councillors:

- FoTAH should be thanked for its extremely thorough contribution to the submitted objections to the planning application, which drew attention to the new Local Plan and policy SCLP 8.1 regarding change of use applications for Assets of Community Value (ACV) – ie they would not be permitted.
- Wording in paragraph 8.5 of the new Local Plan potentially offered a contrary view to policy SCLP 8.1 but the policy wording was clear and East Suffolk Council (ESC) should be asked to follow policy when determining the application
- The other points made by FoTAH should also be supported by the Council
- The number of objections made indicates that the community wants the property to remain a pub
- The views expressed during the Parish Plan Reviews in 2013 and 2018 also supported retaining the pub
- Clarification of paragraph 8.5 had been sought from ESC, regarding whether the listing protected an ACV from a change of use permission, but no answer had been received. It was noted that the statement in 8.5 was made in the context of the value of the ACV to the owner
- It was pertinent that the listing as an ACV did not provide protection against change of use in itself
- There were a large number of objections, more than for the previous application for a change of use, and also 10 supporters. It was important the Council represented the large number of objectors
- Policy DM30 had been replaced by SCLP 8.1 and if ESC applied the new policy it is against the change of use
- When the previous application for change of use was considered the parish was classified as a Local Service Centre; in the new Local Plan it is a Small Village.
- When the previous application was made the property had not been marketed for sale and the applicants had not established that there was no buyer.
- At the Review held into the decision to list the Admiral's Head as an ACV for a second time, the reviewing officer commented that it was unlikely that the owners would be able to sell the Admiral's Head as a public house for what they paid for it; it would be quite a bit less
- There is a big difference in value between selling it as an ACV and as a commercial venture
- The local press had recently carried an item about another pub which had been granted change of use by ESC, but that had been after four years of active marketing it for sale. The Admiral's Head had been marketed, but was now off the market again
- The issue was about the reasonableness of the approach of the current owners. They had had at least two proposals from sources that thought the pub commercially viable. There had also been the outright refusal to consider a resident's approach. The 'Red Book' valuation offer from FoTAH had also been rejected
- There was clearly interest in buying
- More objections were made than to the previous application; people were very interested in retaining the Admiral's Head as an asset

It was **RESOLVED:**

- To object to the application for change of use for the following reasons:

- Approval of the application would be contrary to policy SCLP 8.1, which states that proposals for the change of use of a registered ACV will not be permitted
- Refusal of the previous application had been on the grounds that it did not comply with Local Plan Policy DM30 (now superseded by SCLP 8.1): the Admiral's Head was an important community asset, the owners had not marketed the Admiral's Head for sale and had not shown that the Admiral's Head was not viable as a public house. It is still the case that the Admiral's Head is an important community asset. It has now been marketed for sale, and there has been interest from prospective purchasers and so the owners still have not shown that it is not viable as a public house.
- The Admiral's Head has been successful in the past and there is demand for a pub in the village. Other local pubs in the area are also successful, suggesting that the Admiral's Head could be viable.

### 3.2. Update on Previous Applications and Enforcement Matters

#### 3.2.1. DC/20/3387/FUL: Erection of two-storey dwelling and formation of vehicular access to Martlesham Road – Bealings Holt, Martlesham Road

District Councillor Hedgley reported that the application was being considered at the ESC Referrals Committee the following day. The Chairman advised that he had emailed District Councillor Fryatt reminding him of the Council's grounds for objection and why the whole of policy SCLP5.4 should be considered – ie the community impact of the proposal on the whole of the road

#### 3.2.2. ENF/2019/0303/USE: Enforcement Action at The Chestnuts, Martlesham Road

District Councillor Hedgley reported that he was awaiting a reply as to when enforcement action would be taken. Trading from the premises still appeared to be taking place. The Council's formal complaint to ESC would be made in due course.

## 4. Suffolk County Council Division Boundary Revision Consultation

It was noted that the proposals from the Boundary Commission placed the parish in a division with Woodridge, rather than a proposed more rural Grundisburgh and Wickham Market division. As the A12 formed a natural boundary for the development of Woodbridge it was **RESOLVED**:

- To contact the other affected rural parishes with a view to making a joint as well as individual representation to the Boundary Commission.

District Councillor Hedgley advised that there had been a similar debate when the District ward boundaries were being determined and he had made a personal objection to the proposals.

County Councillor Reid advised that he understood the Council's position and its relationship with the other rural parishes, but the divisions would be determined wholly with the objective of obtaining divisions of equal size, in terms of the number of electors.

## **5. Finance - Expenditure**

It was **RESOLVED** that the following expenditure be incurred:

- Business Services at Community Action Suffolk: Insurance Premium: £154.28 (S111 LGA 1972)
- Community Action Suffolk: OneSuffolk Website Hosting Fee: £48 plus £12 vat (S111 LGA 1972)

The bank statement and cheque book reconciliation for the first two quarters would be considered at the meeting to be held on 2 November.

## **6. Date of Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting of the Council would be on 2 November 2020 by Zoom.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 7.50pm.