

Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council called by the Chairman, Graham Lee, and held on Thursday 29th April 2021 at 8pm on Zoom.

Present: Councillors Gemma Allan, Martin Hoffman, Graham Lee (Chairman), Norton Mahy (Vice chairman), David Sims and Mark White. Clerk (Jane Porter) and deputy Clerk (Laura Brooks-Payne).
Members of the public: None.

1. Apologies for absence. None.

2. Declarations of Interest. (Item 3. ongoing re Cllr Mark White. See March Council 2021 item 44).

3. Dixies Meadow advertisement by Savills Cambridge/‘For Sale -Development opportunity’.

See item 53.3.4 April Parish Council meeting

<https://www.ashwell.gov.uk/parish-council/meetings/full-council/2021-meeting-minutes/>

To discuss options and agree future actions following the further meeting with the landowner.

Proposal to close the meeting to the public for an in camera session on the grounds that this item includes matters which at this stage would make disclosure prejudicial to the public interest.

[Standing order 10.i. ‘to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest’]

The proposal was accepted.

3.1 The Chairman reported that Norton Mahy and himself (Graham Lee) had attended a second meeting with the Farris and their agent Savills on 8th April 2021. They had been provided with sketches of 3 possible options for development on Dixies Meadow. Notes of this second meeting had been distributed to parish councillors.

3.2 The Chairman emphasized that whilst the landowner had not put forward a ‘no development’ option this was something that had clearly been expressed by some parishioners. This option should be included in the village consultation that the Parish Council had agreed to undertake before any decisions were made.

3.3 It was noted that Dixies Meadow was a significant, centrally located parcel of undeveloped land and the Parish Council’s objective was to undertake a steering role to ensure that that the best possible outcome for the village was achieved.

3.4 It was reiterated that no decisions would be made without consultation with the village. It was agreed to make every effort to reach out as widely as possible particularly to hard-to-reach groups that were not regular responders to such consultations. The need to put forward the preferred options of the village and not just that of the Parish Council was noted.

Following discussion a proposal was made that further research be undertaken so consultation with the village could be progressed in an informed way. Research would include:

(i) Contact with NHDC re planning policy, the settlement boundary, and the impact of the new Neighbourhood and District Local Plans that were both nearing completion.

(ii) Contact with Ashwell Housing Association and NHDC re village housing needs and the Community Led Housing programme.

It was resolved that the proposal be accepted (unanimous).