

**Minutes of the**

**Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting**

**of Oakley Parish Council held on**

**Thursday 8th July 2021 at 7.00pm**

**in Oakley Village Hall**

The meeting is open to all members of the public and the press. Residents are welcome to attend and can address the meeting during Public Session

**Please inform the Clerk if you are unable to attend.**

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| **MINUTE**  **NUMBER** | **SUBJECT** | **ACTION** |
| **EO 1** | **Present**: Mr J Mole (Chairman) Mr D Cherry (Vice Chairman) Mr D Pearce (Councillor)  Mrs A Staff (Councillor) Mrs J Grey (Councillor) Mrs P Pointer (Parish Clerk)  **Apologies:** Mr J Smith (Parish Councillor), Mr P. Kilpin (Parish Councillor) |  |
| **EO 2** | **Chairman’s Welcome and address**  Mr Mole opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for attending. He went on to say that the Parish Council have called the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting in order for members of the public to raise any comments or questions with regards to the proposed purchase of The Chandos Arms. He went on to say that each house in the village has now received The “Parish Council Proposal” letter, this notice was circulated to provide the village with information about the proposed purchase of the Chandos Arms by Oakley Parish Council and to request your feedback. |  |
| **EO 3** | **Public Forum**  **Fourteen members of the public attended.**  Mr Mole informed all that during this item the members of the public forum can raise any concerns or comments they have regarding the proposed purchase of Chandos Arms.  He went on to inform all that the proposal is that the Parish Council purchase the Chandos Arms by means of a Public Works Loan and at present work is on going to meet the criteria for completing the form for submission.  Mr Mole informed all that the pub will be purchased at the agreed price of £350K plus VAT although as part of the building is listed the VAT amount will be £63K and not the full £70K.  A Public Works Loan is a loan which would be given over 50 years and the interest rate stays the same for the full 50 years as it is on the day the loan is taken out. The loan is secured on the Parish Council Precept so from day one the pub will be owned by the village.  Mr Mole also reported that in the background work that has been completed it has been realised that the potential rent on The Chandos Arms would be a figure between £21 & £25K although we are hoping to charge a lower rent the potential figures the figures would cover the cost of the loan annually.  He explained if all goes according to plan then completion date of the purchase would be 16th September 2021  He explained that a Survey on The Chandos Arms has taken place and nothing to daunting had been listed in the Survey. It would seem a ballpark figure of around £58K will need to be spent over the next five years, but we first want to concentrate on buying the pub, then we will look at the layout of the pub and what we can spend.  A resident asked a question with regards to the Thatch on the roof and JG explained that in the Survey it was stated there is a slight repair needed, but that as the Thatch is a very good quality Norfolk Reed which lasts up to 50 years we estimate there is at least 20 years left before the Thatch would have to be considered for renewal. JM went on to say that of course general décor within the pub will need an update and we would also have to consider updated the living accommodation particularly the bathroom before we could engage a new Landlord/Manager. A member of the public asked about the kitchen – JM reported it is in good condition and has not long been updated.  Mr Mole explained that at present if the purchase takes place the plan is to have Dawn & Stewart return to manage the pub in mid-September and they will be under contract to run the pub until mid-January 2022 when the pub will be closed and the refurbishments will take place and we would hope to be ready to open in early spring with a new Landlord/Manager in place ready to open.  In the unlikely event that this venture fails for any reason, there are back up plans the PC have already discussed which are:   1. The Parish Council would have sufficient funds to cover costs in the short term. 2. As the loan has to be attached to the Precept of the Village, if in the event we had to use the Precept the cost per Band D per household would be 60p per week. 3. We have a large amount of money in the asset of The Chandos Arms and should in the future the venture fails and it has to be delicensed and sold, there is more than enough money to cover the loan payments.   Mr Mole also informed all that at present the way forward that has been discussed is that once purchased then a separate Community Benefit Society would be set up to run the pub possibly on a 99-year lease. Or a separate committee set up to run The Chandos Arms either way there will be a member of the Parish Council will sit on the committee and this Society/Committee will run the business of The Chandos Arms.  As the Comments and questions came to an end the public applauded and congratulated the Parish Council on all the work that has been put into the proposed purchase of the Chandos Arms. All the public agreed that they are behind the project fully. |  |
| **EO 4** | **Discussions on The Chandos Arms**   1. **Update on Purchase Progress** 2. JG informed all that she is in the progress of completing all the forms for the Works Public Loan Application, she has circulated the draft notices to all the Parish Council Members and has highlighted parts that she needs help with gaining the information. All agreed to respond to JG. JG went on to say and all the PC agreed that it is vital we get the paperwork correct before applying as we have a very short timeline as Punch Taverns have said if contracts are not exchanged on 16th September 2021 and they propose to pull out and apply to have the pub delicensed. It was agreed that that is what they are hoping will happen, so we have to ensure it does not. 3. JG went on to say that we have now engaged a VAT expert through a recommendation from The. Plunkett Foundation, as this had to be done at short notice Mr Mole had given permission to go ahead before this evenings meeting. The cost will between £1500 and £1750 with 20% discount as members of the Plunkett Foundation   **Mr D Cherry proposed that PC agreed this amount as it is important we establish the VAT position and Mr J Mole agreed and seconded this.**  **All Parish Council members present voted to agree**  **Mr Pearce pointed out it would be best for the PC to have Completion at the end of September 2021 for the quarterly VAT claim.**   1. It was agreed that we need to obtain a loan for £500K – this would be a cost of £17K per year repayment for the loan. It was also pointed out that there would be no reason why we could not re loan in a couple of years if needed on refurbishments. 2. JG asked if the Parish Clerk new what a “General Power of Competence” was? Clerk said she will find out and report back to JG. 3. **Discussions took place on Financial Recovery if project goes wrong** 4. If tenant left, we would put in a new tenant 5. In short term PC would cover costs followed by The Precept 6. Sell off part of land for development 7. Sell off the whole building value being around £850K | **DC**  **DC** |
| **EO 5** | **Voting**   1. **Next steps to be taken** 2. Arrange Extraordinary meeting for Thursday 15th July 2021 to Propose and Vote on   Resolutions  Public Work Loans paperwork  And any other outstanding matters that need to be discussed, voted on or approved**.** |  |
| **EO 6** | **Any Other Business**  None |  |