Ide Parish Council

Pynes Community Orchard Working Group

Minutes of a Meeting held at 6pm on 14 March 2018

 in Ide Memorial Hall

1. Present: Peter Cloke (chairman), Nick Bradley (Parish Council Chairman), Mel Liversage (Parish Clerk), Carolyn Tysoe, Julian Perrett, Richard Sharman, Trevor Gardner, Barry Hookins.

2. NB explained the progress made with escalating offers for the purchase of the Orchard since the last meeting. After three offers , each double the previous one, the Church Commissioners provided an “in the region of” figure per acre which they considered the orchard was worth on the open market as amenity land. [The figure is not quoted in these published minutes as it remains commercially sensitive until negotiations are concluded.]

3. The Church’s asking price is higher than the valuation at open market value commissioned by Ide Parish Council, but by a margin which the meeting felt was within the expected range of opinion.

4. We went on to discuss the area of disputed ground on the north east border, the expiry of the current tenant’s lease, the feasibility of raising the sum required, the time frame of practically managing the purchase given we will need a reasonable period for fund raising, and the possibility of securing the sale with a deposit.

5. We agreed to proceed, and to respond by bidding £x,000 per acre, which is £1,000 per acre less than the CC’s suggested IOR asking price. We also agreed not to insist on prior resolution of the dispute over the contested patch of ground before purchase, if the CCs were to accept this offer.

6. We agreed the need to instruct solicitors promptly if the price was agreed. This will trigger spending, and an early task for the group will be to raise initial pump priming money to cover these up front expenses. NB clarified the position of buyer and owner: the Parish Council is the buyer, and will be the owner. Funds will be raised by and channelled through the Parish Council.

7. We agreed that PC and NB would arrange an early meeting with the CCs in London to discuss and agree the several practical issues arising, if our offer is accepted.

8. We agreed that a joint meeting of the Parish Council and this Working Group should be called if and when the price is agreed and the purchase moves ahead.

9. Next PCOWG meeting Thursday April 12, 2018, at 6.30 in The Hub.

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