**IDE PARISH COUNCIL**

**Pynes Community Orchard Working Group**

**Minutes** of the second meeting on 15 February 2018, held in The Hub, 1 High Street, Ide 7.30pm

**PRESENT:** Peter Cloke (Chairman), Nick Bradley (Ide PC Chairman), Andy Bragg, Barry Hookins (IPC rep), Richard Sharman, Trevor Gardner, Carolyn Tysoe

**In attendance:** Mel Liversage (parish clerk) and Charles Staniland, Chairman of Orchard Link

1. **The chairman welcomed** Charles Staniland and the group gave their introductions.
2. **Apologies:** Mark Thomas, Julian Perrett
3. **Notes** from the last meeting were accepted
4. **Matters arising** a) Andy to chase Peter Skinner’s valuation

b) Julian Perrett has agreed to be secretary, vice chairman to be appointed.

**5. Progress with Church Commissioners:** Nick is negotiating the purchase for the parish council. The Church Commissioner’s letter arrived only late this afternoon, declining our first offer for the Orchard and confirmed there is an unsolved dispute related to the land at the dismantled railway: and that Western Power do have a right of way to the substation. RS asked if there was a Wayleave in operation, meaning a payment by Western Power to the owner. As the current tenancy ends 28 September 2018, we need to press forward quickly, Nick has agreement from the group to make an increased offer taking account of the costs of boundary fencing, the amount of remedial works needed and ongoing boundary/site disputes. It was felt buying, not leasing the land was the preferred option as this assured the greenspace and amenity for the next generations of the village. The group encouraged Nick to be very proactive with negotiations as the Church Commissioners have been rather tardy with communications.

**6. Response from HMRC about VAT:** The Church Commissioners have confirmed that VAT would be chargeable on the land, HMRC have confirmed that IPC could reclaim this cost.

**7. Stage reached in Neighbourhood Plan.** Nick confirmed the submission version of the NP has met the current legal and procedural requirements to proceed to the Publication Consultation Stage which will run from 26 February to 13 April 2018. An independent examiner will be appointed during this time. The Orchard is identified as Local Green Space within the Plan.

**8. Next steps:** Nick will negotiate and keep the group informed by email. Three (PC, CT and NB) members of the group are attending an Orchard Link course on 4 March 2018 on restoring neglected orchards. Nick is a member of Orchard Link.

**9. Charles Staniland** outlined his involvement with Orchard Link, a 3year project in South Devon which has culminated in the production of a very helpful website, [www.orchardlink.org.uk](http://www.orchardlink.org.uk). He suggested stocking the orchard with mixed fruit - apples for the cider, which provides an important product, along with pears, plums and damsons. He would encourage biodiversity, wildflower sections and using sheep for grass management as this gives wider people involvement. He gave ideas for communal tasks such as making benches, provision of storage facilities and social events, such as wassailing, wheelbarrow jousting, cooking with the products, and Apple Days to encourage membership. He said finding the right key personnel was important, along with good communications and signage. An alliance with the school led to more young family participation. Assessment of the trees and a clear plan was vital to making it a success. Grants are available for Community Orchards, along with lottery and crowd funding, which are good sources for raising monies to buy the Orchard.

**10. Any other business:** Exminster is the nearest Community Orchard scheme and the group will arrange a visit in June or July. Allotment spaces might be considered within the Orchard.

**11. A provisional date** for the next meeting was set for 12 April 2018 at 6.30pm in The Hub.

Mel Liversage 17 Feb 2018