**To: Ide Parish Council From: Nick Bradley**

**FAO meeting 15 January 2020**

**Date: 6 January 2020**

**Weir Meadow Working Group – Progress Report**

1. The **working group** last met on 2 December 2019.

2**. David Howe,** partner at the legal firm Michelmores, and long standing resident of Ide, has kindly agreed to act fee free for the Council in its purchase of Weir Meadow and the Northern Fields. Nick Bradley wrote to parish councillors on 11 Dec 2019 seeking their authorisation to instruct David Howe. Councillors approved this action, and David Howe has been instructed. Formal ratification of this decision is sought from this Council in session at the meeting on 15 January - see item on the agenda.

3. **Planning application.**

The full wildlife report is still awaited. The architect’s stage 2 fee of £1500 has been paid. Following further discussion of the layout plan for the recreation ground (which was approved by IPC at its November 2019 meeting) by the WMWG and other IPC working groups, dates were set for two public village meetings to update, engage and consult with residents about the project before submitting the planning application in March 2020. It is important to bear in mind that the planning application is limited to ‘outline with change of use’. The planning permission we receive will set out the detailed conditions of design and infrastructure to be met in future submissions. These will be matters for later, once we have acquired the land. The reason for seeking planning permission now is primarily to allow us to raise funds to buy the land. Design details are for debate later on.

4. **Public village meetings.** The two meetings, scheduled to allow the maximum number of residents to attend, will be held on Saturday 22 Feb, 2020 at 13:30, and Wednesday 26 Feb, 2020 at 19:30, both in the village hall. Pete Bishop has agreed to publicise with posters two weeks ahead. Nick Bradley will chair both events. The three main issues will be:

- Why Northern Fields are part of the scheme.

- Layout plan for the Meadow for outline planning application.

- Buying the land.

NB has also booked the hall for 10:30 on Saturday 29 February, in case one of these dates falls through, for unexpected reasons. The booking for 29 Feb could be cancelled with Carol Whitehart as the time draws nearer - PB please note.

5. **Funds for** **Option to Purchase Agreement and Planning Application.**

The WMWG account holds £1,500 currently. Upcoming costs are:

- TDC planning application fee £1,014 (= half the standard fee as a PC)

- C. Commissioners’ Fees in re Option to Purchase Agreement:

Strutt & Parker circa £ 800

Farrers solicitors circa £2,400

**Total upcoming costs: £4,214**

Less funds in hand: £1,500

**Funding shortfall: £2,714**

All costs attract VAT, which we can reclaim 100%.

NB is in the process of writing to community and sporting groups in Ide; and to TDC and Devon CC to enquire about possible contributions towards this shortfall.

These are the costs required to get us to the point at which we can start fund raising for the £170k to buy the land, that is to say: planning permission, and a signed three year option to purchase agreement.

6. The favoured approach when going out for the £170k plus VAT to buy the land remains as previously advised to the PC: to raise as much as possible in the first year of the option agreement by seeking private donations and applying for grants; in year two, if there is still a shortfall, to consider applying for permission to borrow money from the Public Works Loan Board, with a view to servicing any loan from income generated by rent to sports clubs, agricultural income (options are various) from the Northern Fields and, if necessary, seeking consent to increase the precept.

7. NB would like to thank on the Council’s behalf the members of the working group, and those who have donated money, for their work and contributions.

Nick Bradley

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