

East Harptree Parish Council

Village Shop Sub-Committee

Minutes

Meeting One

Tuesday 22nd August 2006

8.00pm - 9.45pm

Upstairs Function Room at the Waldegrave Arms

Present

Mark Calverley, John Fox, Nicky Gibney, Chris Head, Jackie Head, Lisa Jones, Mari Martin, Rodger Martin, Dylan Martlew, Linda Milverton, Bernice Roberts, Jem Thompson-Smith, Kate Towers, Paul Watkin, Patricia Woods

Apologies

Nick Branch, Gill Stobart, Lee Turner

Introductions given

Each member introduced themselves outlining why they were at the meeting and what skills they were bringing.

Elections

- Chair: Chris Head (proposed by Rodger, seconded by Nicky)
- Treasurer: Lisa Jones
- Secretary: Mari Martin

Purpose of sub-committee

- The development of a community shop would normally fit within the context of a Parish Plan which is formed by the community and adopted by the Parish Council. Given the urgency of the situation we will press ahead with the shop planning in advance of the presence of a Parish Plan.
- Parish plan is likely to take 18 months - 2 years to develop whereas timescale for shop would hope to be 6 -12 months.
- Richard Snelling from Community Action deals with Parish Plans and will be asked to talk to us. Chris
- The proposed remit of the sub-committee (previously circulated) was discussed and agreed. The key remit of this sub-committee is to take the community shop to the stage of a feasibility study with recommendations.
- Information to be put on village website. Approach Barry Rider for inclusion on www.eastharptree.org Chris

East Harptree Parish Council

Village Shop Sub-Committee

- Membership consists of those present plus Gill Stobart, Lee Turner, Nick Branch. Suggested including Ann Shirley, and Nigel Hall and possibly someone from the established and/or 2nd generation community within the village. Chris/
Bernice/
Mari
- Important to speak up if a conflict of interest arises. All
- Discussed newcomers/longstanding villagers. Key thing is good communication.

Present Situation

- The shop will close on September 2nd. This is not negotiable. Staff will not be made redundant as there are two vacancies at Blagdon. Steve is already set to leave.
- Nick wants to see a shop in the village and has offered shop fittings.
- Current premises may be available, in addition to at least two alternatives: stables at Waldegrave, “coffee shop” at theatre.
- At its best turnover has been £3000 per week which breaks even.
- Graham Brown (Blagdon Stores) will let committee view books, stock lists and give advice. He is very supportive and could supply stock if shop goes ahead.

Village Retail Services Association (ViRSA)

- Part of larger national charity, Plunknett Foundation. ViRSA supports rural communities wanting to set up and run a community owned shop. They provide practical assistance through a website, a network of community retail advisers, a national office and various publications.
- It has officers to assist groups in setting up
- David Fisher from Axminster will advise us (no charge) Chris
- Bathford and Freshford have just opened Community Shops with assistance from ViRSA – ask someone to come and talk to us Chris

Funding Possibilities

- Many groups offer funding for rural communities.
 - ViRSA – new Village CORE funding programme
 - Rural Renaissance – Regional Development Agency
 - Quartet – Express Fund (possible for emergency shop)
 - Community Action – Village Shop Grant Scheme
 - Mendip AONB – Sustainable Development Fund

Date for Community Meeting

East Harptree Parish Council Village Shop Sub-Committee

- Tuesday 10th October – check availability of hall Lisa
- Put flyer and date in parish magazine – deadline for delivery to Jackie/
Barry Wednesday 30th August Chris

Interim

- Need sub-committee to sort out interim arrangements.
- Have stall at Festival, promotional opportunity. Chris/Kate
- Volunteer service but with sensitivity – cf LINK in Wiltshire and
Dial-a-Ride in Bristol. This could develop into delivery service. Patricia
- Important not to lose the market for a shop but also must not be
diverted from main objective of long term solution.
- Ask a few key people who have depended on shop what their
thoughts are Kate/Linda
- People could be encouraged to use milk, paper and bread
ordering service offered from Blagdon Stores

Agenda Items Next Meeting

- Begin with brainstorm – vision for the shop.
- Set up working groups, those stated on Agenda plus
Emergency Shopping Provision working group (ESP!)
- Premises working group needs to be open minded, free
thinking, with an architectural eye.
- Need a business plan working group to deal with finance and
legal structure.
- Group needed for community research and questionnaire.
ViRSA has questionnaire to use as a starting point. Linda
happy to have them in P.O. and help people fill them in. Linda
- Approach Richie Hester for advice on analysing information Rodge
- Publicity group needs to think about how to communicate with
Parish Council and the community, as well as wider publicity eg
Chew Valley Gazette and Radio Bristol.
- Members to prepare for next meeting by thinking about which
working group they would like to be on and their vision for the
shop. All

**Date of next meeting Tuesday 29th August
8:00 Function Room, Waldegrave Arms**

All