



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

A meeting of the Economic Development Working Group will be held on  
Wednesday 5 February 2020 commencing at 4pm at The Walronds

**DATE:** 30 January 2020

### AGENDA

1.	<b>APOLOGIES:</b> To receive apologies for absence.
2.	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:</b> <i>Councillors are reminded of the requirement to declare any interest, including the type of interest, and reason for that interest, either at this stage of the meeting or as soon as they become aware of that interest.</i>
3.	<b>MINUTES:</b> To approve the Minutes of previous meetings held on 2 December 2019 (Appendix A) and 29 January 2020 (Appendix B).
4.	<b>19 HIGH STREET:</b> To receive update report on progress to-date.
5.	<b>PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENT ON 9 FEBRUARY:</b> To receive an update on progress to-date and agree any action needed.
6.	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS RELATING TO 19 HIGH STREET.</b>
7.	<b>DATE &amp; TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING:</b> To be agreed.

**This meeting is open to interested members of the public to attend**

**Everyone welcome**

## APPENDIX A



### Summary of a meeting of the Economic Development Working Group held on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2019 at 4:00pm at the Town Hall

**Present:** *Town Council:* Councillors: James Buckowski, Janet Johns, Lloyd Knight, Martin Smith (Chair) & Judy Morris – Town Clerk  
*Farmers' Market:* Sarah Jones & Jenny Radford

**Clerk:** Maria Weston (Deputy Town Clerk)

It is noted that this meeting is being recorded.

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIR:** To elect a Chair for this Working Group.

**RESOLVED:** That Cllr. Smith is elected as Chair for the Economic Development Working Group.

Proposed: Cllr. Buckowski Seconded: Cllr. Knight Vote: All in favour

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT:** None.

**3. TERMS OF REFERENCE: To agree the Terms of Reference for this Working Group.**

The Terms of Reference for the Economic Development Working Group were agreed as follows:

- To explore the feasibility of acquiring 19 High Street (Cullompton) in order to improve the economic prospects for the benefit of the whole town.

**4. CURRENT SITUATION:**

**19 High Street, Cullompton (formerly Harlequin Valet Dry Cleaners):**

It was agreed to explore the feasibility of options for this site on behalf of the Town Council, for the purpose of facilitating a covered Market area and business start-up venue. The Clerk circulated a plan of the site.

Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) hold a charge over the site and have instructed Thorne & Carter Estate Agents to market this. There has been no interest so far but it is recognised that the situation is timely.

**5. WAY FORWARD:**

Cllr. Smith spoke about a site called Cobblestones where they have approx. 14 no. log cabins for traders. Each unit, approx. 3-4 metres wide, has an electricity supply. Most of the traders that have had use of a unit have moved into a shop on the High Street - this is therefore a very effective way of getting businesses started.

Discussion ensued with regard to potential ideas for how the site (no. 19 High St.) can be utilised:

- Having a walkway through the site from Station Road to the High Street with a glass covered area (frontage & roof) containing 'market' units was discussed. It was agreed that using glass would promote an open, airy and welcoming space whilst also ensuring traders would feel their units were secure. NB: A steel framed structure (girders) in place could enable a mezzanine floor to be added at a later date should this be required.
- Cllr. Smith has spoken to the Market House with regard to access to the rear of the site. The Market House currently use 3 no. parking spaces at the rear of the site but are happy to use alternative spaces in the Forge Way/Station Road car park if these can be offered to them by MDDC (specifically for their use). This will enable access all the way through no. 19 from the rear of the site to the High St. at the front.
- An electricity supply would be required.
- WC provision, located outside of the secured glass boundary would enable accessibility at all times and could be utilised not only by traders but by members of the public.
- The condition of the site needs to be explored e.g. condition of the walls of both the Market House and the Baptist Church – do these require underpinning? NB: It was felt that a condition survey would have been carried out when MDDC took a charge over the site and as there are no buttresses in place this would suggest that the walls are secure.

Operating as a Co-operative rather than as a Council run project may prove to be the most effective way to progress, certainly in terms of obtaining grant funding as this would have community involvement. It was agreed that a plan would need to be drawn up for purchasing the site to be run as a community project – this should highlight what income can be reasonably expected and demonstrate the potential benefits to the town.

It may be worth reviewing the agreement that the Council has with MDDC in terms of the existing WC provision. Perhaps asking for capital to be released rather than having a replacement WC facility. This money could be invested into this community project which would benefit the town.

## **6. SUMMARY/NEXT STEPS:**

- Clerk to liaise with MDDC (Legal Services) to confirm the mechanism to progress this project - to establish:
  - i) The exact situation with regard to the purchase of the land;
  - ii) Who owns the site and details of the charge MDDC has;
  - iii) Who is selling the site;
  - iv) If the Council could be offered some time to explore options for the site (time to explore feasibility and to formulate a plan)
  - v) If MDDC has any surveyors reports and if the Council could have copies
- Investigate:
  - i) potential partnership working e.g. MDDC
  - ii) potential income which can be generated from this project
  - iii) forming a Co-operative and whether this would be feasible for this project
  - iv) grant funding streams
  - v) who the 'over-arching' body will be (to administer this project)
  - vi) likely installation (structure) costs – Architect

- Liaise with both Local & District Councillors to gauge support for the project - Arrange a site visit.
- Liaise with the Town Team and Culm Valley in Business (CViB)
- Farmers' Market representatives to contact His Royal Highness Prince Charles, Prince of Wales, to request support for this project.

6. **DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING:** Agreed as Wednesday **29<sup>th</sup> January 2020** at **4:00pm** at the Town Hall.

*With no further business, the Chair thanked attendees and closed the meeting.*

---

It is certified these Minutes are a true and accurate record of the meeting:

Signed: .....

Name: .....

Date: ...../...../.....

DRAFT

## APPENDIX B



### Summary of a meeting of the Economic Development Working Group held on Wednesday 29 January at 4:00pm at the Walronds

**Present:** Cllr Martin Smith (in the chair) and Cllrs: Kate Haslett, Janet Johns, Lloyd Knight and Russ Murch, Jenny Radford (Farmers Market).

Mrs Judy Morris: Clerk

Also in attendance: Jane Campbell, Steve Eastland, Iain Emmett, Roy Gould, Ashley Hellier, Debbie Lochhead, Helen Newman, Stuart Newman, Zoe Newman and Judy Smith

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and all those present introduced themselves.

He then explained the purpose of the meeting i.e. to progress the exploration of the feasibility of acquiring 19 High Street, Cullompton, in order to improve the economic prospects for the benefit of the whole town.

Progress to-date was summarised and it was explained that the intention was to prepare a Business Plan by the end of February 2020 to be considered by the Town Council and, if supported, to then be submitted to Mid Devon District Council.

It was stressed that nothing has been agreed, just ideas.

1. **APOLOGIES:** Received from Cllr Justin Lochhead (personal).
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:** Steve Eastland declared a personal interest as he is the architect that had provided the initial designs.
3. **MINUTES: To approve the Minutes of previous meeting held on 2 December 2020:** It was agreed to defer this item until the next meeting.
4. **HARLEQUIN VALET SITE: To receive update report on progress to-date:** Progress reported as follows:
  - Meetings with MDDC Planning Officer and Conservation Officer and then a separate meeting with MDDC Economic Development Officer.
  - Town Council support for the project.
  - Consideration of ways in which to raise the capital to purchase the site and whether the Town Council might be prepared to buy the site and then lease to a Community Interest Company (CIC).

- Investigating grant opportunities such as the National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund.
- Suggestion of a two storey development with artisans 'at work' units on the ground floor and business start-up units on the first floor. The idea is that people may start with a small basic unit and then progress to a larger unit in the town centre. This has been shown to be successful for businesses such as Silhouette Clothing and Moments who both started with small units at the bottom end of the town and then moved into larger units in the town centre.
- Investigating the most appropriate mechanism to run the project. A Company Limited by Guarantee has been set up and registered with Companies House. Any profit made by the company will need to go back into the community.
- Investigating the possibility of opening up an access from Forge Way, contact made with the adjacent property owner. Waiting to hear back. It was suggested that there is a Public Right of Way through the adjacent property. This will be ratified.
- Artist's impression of possible use of the site prepared to show what can be achieved.
- Approach by Grand Design (TV company interested in following the progress of the project). It was **AGREED** to follow-up on this approach.
- In response to a question it was confirmed that each individual unit within the development will need to have its own address and be registered separately for Business Rates purposes

**5. WAY FORWARD: To agree future actions and way forward.** The following actions were agreed

(i) **Approach PETROC and Exeter University** School of Environment & Science with a view to generating interest in using the opportunity as a means of skills training. A positive response from the educational establishments can be included in the Business Plan. **SE** will provide details of contacts and **RM** will make the approach.

(ii) **Assess construction costs (SE will prepare an assessment and forward to MS)**

(II) **Pubic consultation** to be carried out Saturday 9 February in the Baptist Church 11am-2pm.

- Find out if it's possible to let people see into the site from the pavement, possibly by opening the door and putting a barrier across. **MS**
- 3D model to be displayed and put on a laptop to generate discussion and ideas. **SE**
- 10 minute presentation every half hour.
- Ask VitaminSea to provide nibbles.
- Exhibition Boards and A Frames can be obtained from the Town Hall.
- Post-it notes for collecting people's ideas, also blank site layout plans.
- Source flip charts (**JJ and KH** offered to set up the exhibition boards).
- Count number of people attending the consultation (**JS** offered to do this, counter can be obtained from Town Hall).
- Subscription list (Town Council will draft appropriate disclaimer form that can be completed by anyone interested in being involved in the project).
- Event to be promoted as a 'Community Open House'.

**6. DATE & TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING:** Wednesday 5 February 4pm-5pm at the Walronds.

*With no further business, the Chair thanked attendees and closed the meeting.*

---

It is certified these Minutes are a true and accurate record of the meeting:

Signed: .....

Name: .....

Date: ...../...../.....

DRAFT

