



BEMBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

The Clerk to the Council,
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Minutes of **BEMBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL** Extraordinary Council meeting held on the **3rd July 2018 at 7.00pm** in the Large Hall, Village Hall, High Street, Bembridge

Present: Cllr K Fagan (Chairman), Cllr S Weedall, Cllr M Donlon, Cllr M Sullivan, Cllr L White, Cllr R Widger, Cllr G Stillman, Cllr M Curtis, Cllr A Steane, Mrs E Goldring (Clerk) and Mrs J McDade (Assistant Clerk)

Public: IW Cllr B Tyndall, County Press and 44 members of the public

PUBLIC FORUM – this is a meeting held in public not a public meeting

Cllr Fagan welcomed Cllr White to her first meeting, and looked forward to working with her.

Resident: Appendix A

Resident: It was pointed out, during the public forum, that the planning committee meetings were conducted in exemplary fashion. It was also noted that deploying two clerks, at these meetings, for four councillors, seemed an extravagant use of resources. It was also pointed out that moving the lengthmen at a cost of £16,000 was a considerable expense; moving the public conveniences to an expensively refurbished kitchen site was a further expense, while making the relatively new kitchen less satisfactory was another expense. The precept was reduced slightly to £159,000 when the repair, maintenance and renewal costs of parish assets was so high that the sale of 5/7 High Street seems to some to be the only solution to the financial problem. Such financial improvidence would have been advised against by the clerk who is rated the best on the Island. Why has the Clerk not been listened to by the majority of the councillors?

Resident: I understand this Poll was called under the Localisation Act 2011. It appears that any decision to ignore the result of such an overwhelming vote under this relatively recent and enormously complicated Act would be unprecedented. I am concerned that very considerable Legal costs would be involved in sorting it out. Has this aspect been considered and has any provision been made for that?

Resident: Agree that financially it is right to sell 5/7 High Street and is the most sensible option. The new 'Trust' option is interesting but not practical. There has been a parish poll which 602 electors voted no but this is relatively small to the total number of electors 3,224, though notice must be taken of the result. Believe it is best to sell 5/7 but there should be a 2 month cooling off period where a committee of both sides of the council and some members of the public set up to discuss the way forward. In reality £300,000-£400,000 for maintenance works of 5/7 and Village Hall does not magic its self out of thin air so where does it come from precept rise? Loan? Or sell 5/7? All this needs to be evaluated.

Resident: Is there no way that fundraising or lottery funding could be considered for works and not moving the toilets. In previous village always raised money via fundraising.

Resident: The poll has been decided and as stated has no legal bearing on the parish council. There are 3,224 electors of which 833 voted, which means 75% did not vote. 19% of the electors voted no. Have been to every meeting bar one since last September, and if the decision to sell is rescinded that is a whole year wasted. Since 2017 matters have been looked at, discussed and gone to the vote. A large majority of councillors voted to sell carrying out their duties. Stand firm and carry on with the sale.

Resident: Democratically you should accept the poll result.

Resident: No alternatives but to selling 5/7 is ridiculous. What about raffle funding which would draw tourism and be a better option. Selling a cornerstone of the village we lose dignity as well.

Resident: Agree with giving a breathing space which could give time for unity in the parish. Excluding 5/7 discussion when been talking about for a while, we need to know where the councillors are singing from. Democratically we should be able to hear the discussion and the reasons must be given. There are no vast financial implications and we need to know where you all are coming from and how you are making the decisions and why.

Resident: Lots of figures being bandied around, agree with a cooling off period where figures must be agreed on by both parties. It is common sense to sort the figures and not the emotions.

Resident: Don't understand what is going on. Can see both sides of the argument. Are there any leases on 5/7? If selling with proper leases then new owner would have a fixed income.

Resident: No tenants might be more attractive to new owners, though not an option.

1. 81/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence

Apologies received from Cllr Weaver because of work commitments.

Non-attendance Cllr Millington

2. 82/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

82/18/01 To receive declarations of pecuniary or other interests relating to items on the agenda
Cllr Curtis declared a pecuniary interest in item 6.

82/18/02 To consider requests and grant dispensations if appropriate
None received

3. 83/18 PARISH POLL

To note the result of the Parish Poll held on 28th June 'Do you want Bembridge Parish Council to sell 5/7 High Street yes or no'

- Need to accept the poll result as overwhelming majority. Realise the poll is not legally binding on the PC, but the PC represents the electorate. The village is becoming divided so need to listen to voters. Need to take time and set up a finance committee to work on a three year forward plan.
- Majority of two successive councils with all the facts/information and finance have made the same decision to dispose of 5/7 High Street building with safeguards in place. We have stuck to procedure. We have followed all legal requirements. We were elected to make decisions for Bembridge. The electorate of Bembridge is 3,224, 834 voted in the poll called by 12 parishioners, 602 voted No that leaves 2,622 who either voted Yes or were happy to leave decisions to the elected Parish Councillors. For this reason, noted the poll result but still stand by the decision to dispose of 5/7 High Street.
- Following due diligence on finances, note the poll but still stand by the decision to sell.
- The facts and figures have not changed, so note the poll but stand by decision to sell 5/7 High Street
- PC is run by rules and regulations which we have to be adhered to. As per information that is out in the public domain, have not changed view on selling 5/7 and need to work together for the village not just one property.
- Listened to some good points but still back sale which was a democratic vote.
- Poll result more democratic than PC vote. Figures show that 6% voted yes and 94% didn't. Not legally binding but would be foolish to ignore. Councillors have responsibility as they

stood on a platform to save 5/7 and that is what is expected. Village will not thank the Council. There was no consultation.

- Individual councillors have their own views and make their own decisions with the facts presented to them.

RESOLVED: Noted the result of the Parish Poll held on 28th June 'Do you want Bembridge Parish Council to sell 5/7 High Street yes or no'

4. 84/18 BY-ELECTION

To consider purchase of poll cards for by-election cost £650-680 (Budget £5000 spend to date £0)

RESOLVED: Agreed not to purchase of poll cards for by-election cost £650-680

8 in favour 1 against

5. 85/18 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED: Agreed that in accordance with s.1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public will be excluded from the following item, having due regard to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

7 in favour 2 against

7. 87/18 STAFFING

8. 88/18 LEGAL CORRESPONDENCE

6. 86/18 PROPERTY 5/7 HIGH STREET

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To confirm date of the next meeting of the Council – 17th July 2018

Meeting Closed: 8.45pm

Signed:.....

Dated:.....