

Hadnall Parish Council

Record of Public Meeting held online, 27th July 2020 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs J. Slater (Chair), J. Harrison, A. Amos, B. Bell, B. Davies, N. Duxbury. Cllr A. Brisbourne joined the meeting later. Clerk – A. Utting. Also 3 members of the public.

Introduction: The Chairman outlined the proposal as follows:

Hadnall Parish Council is seeking to purchase the plot of land formerly known as Saracens car park. The land would then be owned by the Parish Council on behalf of the whole community. The Council's view is that this is a key piece of land at the centre of the village that could be available for use as public amenity space over future years, rather than being used in the short to medium term for further housing development.

The purchase price is £150,000. The Parish Council has recently been successful in securing external funding of £100,000. To complete the purchase the PC is proposing to borrow the sum of £50,000 over a 30-year period.

It is not uncommon for public bodies such as parish councils to borrow against clearly defined capital projects or for the purchase of assets such as this. A specialist lending facility called the Public Works Loan Board is set up specifically for this purpose.

The Parish Council is keen to consult with as many local residents as possible on this proposal. Following this meeting there will be a consultation period lasting 6 weeks. Responses may be submitted online or via a postal survey. The Parish Council will take all responses into account before reaching a decision on whether to proceed with the loan application.

Discussion: The following questions were raised:

Q: *If the purchase is successful, what will the land be used for?*

A: It will continue to be used as a car park for the foreseeable future. Any other proposed use of the land would be subject to public consultation and planning consent, but there is no change of use envisaged at present.

Q: *How will the land be managed?*

A: The Parish Council would be responsible for managing the land. They would undertake upkeep of the land. It is probable that they would install a height limiter at the entrance to the car park and signage indicating that use of the car park is at the user's risk.

Q: *Would the land be insured?*

A: Yes, it would be added to the Parish Council's insurance policy.

Q: *Would that include costs of recovery if the land was misused and damage caused?*

A: Yes, we would have to make sure that this was part of the cover.

Q: *Who would be able to use the car park?*

A: The car park would be for public use. At present, it is used by workers and visitors to local businesses, as overflow parking for the church and village hall, as overflow parking by residents (easing on-road congestion), and by anyone wanting to visit the village.

Q: *What is happening to the Saracens building?*

A: The owner plans to convert the Saracens into rented apartments. The planning proposals include parking for those residents on the Saracens site.

Q: *Is it possible that the Parish Council would re-sell the land in the future?*

A: This could always remain a potential option for any future council, acting in the best interests of the village. Any such scheme would need to be proposed and voted on at a meeting of the full council and would most likely be the subject of further public consultation.

Q: *If the Parish Council does not purchase the land, what will happen to it?*

A: We cannot be sure, but the strongest likelihood is that it will be used for property development (4 dwellings) as per previous planning application.

Q: *How do residents take part in the survey?*

A: The link to the online survey will be on the Parish Council website and the Hadnall Village Facebook group. Copies of the postal version may be obtained from Councillors or by direct application to the Clerk.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.

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