



Leybourne Informal Community Meeting

These notes are to provide an overview of the discussions and matters raised at the informal community meeting held on 1st March 2024 in the Community Centre. Approximately, 20 residents attended.

Chair: SallyAnne Logan, Independent Chair

Director: Nic Bowler

Exec Team: Mark Dodson, Interim Management Finance Consultant

Key Notes and Outcomes

- Residents welcomed increased communications
- Residents welcome the new look Service Charge bill from Preim – felt it is more transparent and easier to understand
- Short term, the team are focusing on a number of priorities. We ask that residents bear with us whilst we have reduced resources and move forward with key items such as recruitment, embedding the Preim contract and increasing the number of directors on the board. Once these key elements are in place, we can pick up the projects work again
- How will residents be communicated to going forward and be involved in shaping priorities and projects?
 - Business plan development later in the year. Resident working groups will take place to help shape ideas for inclusion
 - CIC are looking at regular community forums. A suggestion was made to have committees for each road/area or to have reps from each area
 - We can set up project working groups when required (start and finish groups)
 - Preim and CIC Newsletters
 - Social media, What's App and web site communication for soundbites and promoting community events/news
 - Preim provide key information through their channels (AGM notifications, community forums)
- 2022 Community Consultation
 - The team are reviewing the outcomes of the community consultation completed last year and will be considering the outcomes in terms of our programme and priorities for this year
 - The feedback from residents will also help to shape the business plan to be developed when the new senior person starts

- Staffing/Resourcing
 - Currently no senior role (previously community development manager post) so Mark Dodson and SallyAnne Logan are providing interim operational support
 - Aiming to appoint to the senior role in the summer at which point SallyAnne and Mark will step away from day to day operations
 - Some residents asked about the role and its responsibilities. SallyAnne explained that it is quite a specialist role as you ideally need an individual who can operate a small organisation, understand communities and community development, can support and coordinate a board of directors, understand the service charge legislation and manage contracts. It is quite unique. The team will be doing some benchmarking to establish salary comparisons to ensure it is pitched right
 - Community development officer is moving on to Leybourne Parish Council. We have appointed a new person who starts 6th March
 - Taken time to consider what the CIC needs now in terms of its staffing support and going forward, enabling a reshaping of the roles to fit the required functions and responsibilities
- Board
 - SallyAnne is currently Independent Chair with tasks to help increase the number of board members and help to induct them as well as to ensure robust policies and processes are employed to help transparency and compliance. She will probably be around for 12-18 mths and then step back once the new board is embedded
 - Currently two directors so need to increase the number of people to help set and implement the strategic direction of the organisation
 - Director recruitment campaign to be launched shortly. Residents are encouraged to apply. SallyAnne can be contacted if residents would like to talk first
 - Director's role is voluntary. Training and support will be provided
- Pricing Policy Review
 - Mark is working with Stephanie on benchmarking the pricing to hire our facilities against others locally
 - Residents asked whether there will be a resident discount. Mark explained that with the offsetting of the income from hires to the costs of running the facilities, residents are already getting better value. It is something we will take away and consider
- Community Events/Programmes
 - Residents asked whether there could be a return of the craft market and possibly knitting/crochet clubs
 - Sports activities were mentioned eg walking netball. Mark to meet with residents who have links, information and skills to offer
 - Youth club – a proposal has been provided to directors by a group of residents, which is currently being considered
 - Stephanie will be leading on running activities and events. Please get in touch
 - There is a gentleman on the development who plants bulbs and pays for them out of his own pocket. Mark to reach out to him with a view to doing an article on 'local heroes' who volunteer their time.

- The Future of the Cows and Possibly Sheep
 - The CIC now owns the cows but not the sheep
 - Their daily welfare is being provided by a group of resident volunteers (who we are very grateful to) and it has been agreed with them that they will care for them for up to three months when a decision should be made by the board
 - The volunteers have provided a proposal to the Board for their long term care and ownership which promotes the benefits of sustainable grazing
 - The Board will consider the proposal next week at the Board meeting
 - Residents asked if they could have a say in the future of the animals. SallyAnne suggested a Survey Monkey approach once we are clear on all the options and costs. SallyAnne pointed out that the ultimate decision however is that of the Board
- Service Charge Bills
 - Residents should have received their bills
 - Tatum, our Preim Estates Manager, held a resident surgery on Tuesday and about 20 residents attended, which is fantastic!
 - Preim will be holding similar surgeries in the future, likely quarterly
 - Mark talked through the CIC and service charge costings, explaining how the budgets are made up and that the income from each of the CIC facilities is now offsetting some or all of the charges for running those assets. Only the costs of running the facilities can be covered and therefore any other 'profit' will be used by the CIC for community events/programmes and investment our facilities/land
- Manor House and service charge billing
 - Some residents are confused as to what they are paying to whom. It was explained that any of the common areas within the Manor House are managed by Trinity. The communal heating and outside space is through the CIC
- Project Delivery
 - Most of the projects have been put on hold. This is due to resource and being sure that the finance is available at the right time to deliver them
 - The project with Laineys Care Farm is a priority and subject to securing reassurance that Planning permission changes are not required, and resolving a number of other matters, we hope to resume this great project and get it on the ground
 - The allotments and community gardens project are related to this. £35k has been secured from the Parish Council. Further thought will be given to this project to ensure we have the resources to operate it in the longer term but it is another great project for the community. One resident asked whether allotment holders will park – this is one of the elements which needs further thought
- The AGM and changes to The Articles
 - The AGM is on 19th March, 7pm at the Pavilion
 - SallyAnne apologised for the QR code not working and asked that residents who have registered do so again please. A poster has gone out this afternoon to residents on social media platforms and via Preim
 - We need 75 resident members to be present to be quorate. If we are not quorate, the changes to the Articles cannot be voted on. SallyAnne asked for residents to support attendance through word of mouth

- You do not have to pre-register, but it helps if residents do as the pre-administration can be done ahead rather than on the night
- The community meeting will continue regardless of whether the AGM is quorate
- Adopting TW roads and paths
 - Residents asked about the progress regarding the adoption process for the transfer of roads from TW
 - This issue is holding up sales
- Preim Contract
 - Preim are settling in well and have done a lot in the two months since they started
 - Issues are being responded to swiftly and with pace eg fly tipping
 - Residents thanked Preim for this support and services
 - One resident asked whether the standards of landscaping maintenance will be improved. An example was given at the entrance to the site on Bannister Way. SallyAnne suggested that this land (as it is off the highway) may not be in the CIC's ownership. It may be KCC Highways
 - Residents were asked to feed any concerns to Preim, who will respond. If there are dips in the quality of maintenance, Preim will deal with them
 - Preim deal with everything that is to do with estate management. The CIC deals with the operations of the community buildings and community projects/programmes.

Thanks were given to those who attended and took time from their evening to listen, share ideas and concerns with the CIC team.