

Portreath Parish Council

WAAF Site Working Group - Project Update

1.0 Introduction

An initial meeting took place on the 15th February to establish the WAAF site working group. The meeting enabled attendees to have an open discussion about the project, its background, initial and other options along with the need to select up to 5 members from the community to form the working group alongside 5 councillors. The impact of the forthcoming council elections and need to 'mothball' the project from the 14th March until after the elections in May was also explained.

Five members of the audience put themselves forward to join the working group removing the need for a selection process. It was agreed to have the first meeting of the working group on the 22nd February, that was subsequently moved to the 25th February.

2.0 Update from the 22nd February working group meeting

The working group talked in detail about each of the following options:

1. do nothing – secure, make safe and maintain
2. dispose of/sell the site
3. rent out the site
4. devolve the day-to-day responsibility of the site to a group whose aim will be to improve the ecology of the site. This would be under some form of Trust or Community Interest Group

There were no other options identified. It was also agreed that the fourth option was not one to pursue further due to cost and complexity for what is a small site.

The group discussed vision and evaluation criteria including the challenges of comparing options from both a benefits to nature and financial perspective. There was also a discussion regarding risk and liability, what level of site security is needed to ensure compliance with the council's public liability insurance. There was also a discussion about putting some form of non development or no housing covenant on the site if disposal was the preferred option. From this two questions were identified as needing to be formally investigated with the Parish Clerk.

1. Can the council put a no housing covenant on the site without impacting its standing financial instructions and the need to obtain best value when disposing of an asset
2. The need to be clear on what level of fencing or site security is required to ensure compliance with the council's liability insurance.

The chair of the group offered to produce a draft business case based on the discussions from the two meetings. This would be discussed and updated at the next meeting on the 12th March before entering into the pre-election period where the project would be put on hold until after the elections in May.

3.0 Recommendations

The Parish Council is asked to note progress to date with the project.