

## **MINUTES OF THE FIRE ENGINE HOUSE MEETING**

**Held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2026 @ 10am**

Present: Cllr Ruth Harrison (Chair), Cllrs Olivia Kennard and Ellen Cocking

To pass on the discussion outcomes of the feasibility of the request from a resident for the Fire Engine House to become a café to Ellen Cocking

We met at the Fire Engine House to look at the location.

It was noted that the parking is not guaranteed for a large number of visitors to the proposed cafe. Ellen commented that she was looking for a strong uptake from the village and it's general footfall. With regards to outside seating Ellen was proposing some collapsible tables and chairs. Olivia pointed out that this may be limited and needed to be passed by the Richard's Educational Charity. Ellen also suggested the use of branded picnic blankets.

**Action:** Ellen will mock up some table and chair visual scenarios to pass to Olivia to put forward before the next meeting for the Richard's Educational Charity on July 10<sup>th</sup>.

Ellen herself posted on Facebook with regards to the Fire Engine House being used as a café and had received a lot of positive feedback.

A discussion took place regarding the financial implications of the setup and running the café in the village. We iterated we do wish her to succeed with the café but were unsure of the viability and overheads involved. Ellen stated she has several people who are helping her, builders, accountants as well as a legal contact to get this business up and running. It was reiterated that Ellen need to be sure that she had enough finances to complete the conversion and cover the first year costs.

**Action:** Café business observations and projections to be sent Ellen.

Storage facilities for the Street Market Committee & the road maintenance scheme. This cost would need to be covered by Ellen. She mentioned costs of £50 a month at Roosters though Olivia was quoted the higher initial costs of up to £80 + VAT.

**Action:** Street Committee to confirm what items need to be retained to size the storage requirements and thus the cost to be covered by Ellen.

We discussed the current action by the Street Market to put a pay as you go meter into the Fire Engine House. We made Ellen aware that electricity was needed to supply the Street Market and for the Christmas tree on the Little Rec. Ellen agreed that she will be able to provide connectivity, but wanted the electric usage cost to be covered by the Street Market Committee.

**Action:** Find out where the Street Market Committee are with this process and where their outlay and Ellen's electrical work overlap. Ellen to speak to Rob (Street Market Chair) directly she confirmed Simon has passed on his contact details.

Ellen confirmed that the building will comply with building regulations and not change the building to any great degree. (Bare brick/stone walls) She commented that there may be a trench required to be dug around the outside of the building to prevent any damp ingress.

Ellen mentioned that she needed a provisional agreement from the Parish Council as soon as possible so she is able to move forward and commit more money to setting up the café.

She asked for confirmation of the rent for the building and requested a 5 year Lease agreement with break clause. We stipulated that this should include the required electricity use and be drawn up & paid for by Ellen's representative. The rent will affect the business rate. Also confirmation of what date the rent will begin. On opening or when conversion work begins?

**Action:** At the next parish meeting, 6<sup>th</sup> July the council to vote on whether to allow the Fire Engine House to be rented. to Ellen for repurposing as café.

We suggest a rentable value and start date. Suggest a reasonably low rent that covers the storage cost for the first three years to help establish the café and for the rent to begin on opening of the café itself though this can be evaluated more as required.

**Action:** Council to check with our insurance that we still cover the building but contents and damage is covered by Ellen.

Meeting closed at 12:00