

General Meeting Report

February / March 2015

The General Meeting of Chasewater KRC held on 12th February 2015 was chaired by Mike Stackhouse and attended by 14 members and 12 guests.

In his introduction Mike explained that the decision of the South Staffordshire Council to refuse our planning application was obviously a severe set back and now we needed to decide what we wanted to do next.

Election of officers and committee. The routine business of the Meeting was dealt with fairly speedily. No officers reports were presented as last year's accounts were still being prepared. Mike commented that the Club still held just over £500,000 as a cash reserve.

No new nominations had been received for either Officers or Committee Members so the existing were re-elected unopposed.

Appointment of accountant. It was proposed to continue using the Club's existing accountants Jerroms Priddey and no objection was made to this.

Review of planning decision. A copy of the South Staffordshire Council's Planning Committee's decision was available for all to read. Mike was asked which were the main points and his answer was they had looked for as many reasons as possible to reject it.

In a meeting the Club had with the Planning Officer he had requested we make some changes which we did and he said he was considering recommending our application for approval. Unfortunately by the time the application was presented to the Committee he had changed his mind but didn't think to tell us so.

Many of the reasons listed in the decision were things that we had already dealt with but were not removed from the recommendation. i.e. newt and badger surveys had been done, there is no public sewer close by for us to connect into, no fuel is to be stored on site.

Our scheme's inappropriateness in the green belt and possible noise disturbance are in reality very subjective and largely down to personal opinion. The large number of local objections expressed, however superficial they might appear to be, were difficult to overcome and no councillors were prepared to support us.

Mike also commented that the Council and its Planning Officers had proved very difficult to work with.

Our planning consultant has advised that to simply appeal the current



decision will be very risky . The government appointed Planning Inspectors who decide appeals can be very quirky and can decide things on issues that were not considered important at the beginning.

Do we appeal ? Our consultant's suggestion is that we may be better advised to re-submit a revised planning application and try to reduce or overcome as many of the reasons given for the current refusal. The application is still likely to be refused again but a subsequent appeal centred on a small number of factors, and if at all possible only one, might be easier to appeal.

Mike is not convinced that this approach reduces the risks and felt that in view of the amount and vehemence of local objections previously made a further application and a subsequent appeal is likely to only increase the opposition and therefore be even more difficult and risky .

Mike also disappointed by both the way the Council dealt with us and the negative attitude of local residents and councillors he is therefore reluctant to try any application in the South Staffs area and considers they have little chance of success.

What to do now. There was a brief discussion about the alternatives for the Club, i.e. giving the Club a new purpose or possibly closing the club down and finding a way to properly allocate the Club's money. However there wasn't much enthusiasm and members centred on the idea of re-evaluating sites we had previously looked and Mike was asked to re-approach the Wyrley Estate where the site for which we did get planning consent is located.

Mike agreed that he will look at previous site options and re-evaluate them as well as re-starting the search for other locations.

In the end a member suggested there should be a vote to decide if the Club would like to continue and ask the Chairman and Committee to restart the search for a new site. This motion was unanimously accepted without any objections.

No other business was raised and the meeting closed.

Thank you all for your continued support

Renew your Membership. A Membership application form is enclosed with this Report and we hope that despite the setbacks those of you who need to are prepared to renew your membership. If so please return you completed forms to the Chairman.

Mike Stackhouse
Chairman

26th February 2015

