

Informal meeting involving some Grade Ruan Parish Councillors and representatives of the Grade Ruan Recreation Ground Committee – 16th November 2020.

NOTES

Purpose of the meeting: for Cllrs to better understand the issues regarding management options for the Pavilion bar, and to understand the current plans and progress thereof. For GRRG to understand the need for closer liaison with the Council and, by extrapolation, the wider community.

The following are points which were noted and discussed. This document does not reflect a verbatim account, does not constitute a legal record, and is available publicly.

- Cllrs heard that the Pavilion is not losing money, but not making as much as GRRG would like. Any new arrangement seeks to open the bar up on more occasions and to increase revenue for further reinvestment. An offer from a local individual happened to come forward at the same time that GRRG were pondering future management. Though it is recognised that perhaps pursuit of an agreement along these lines was premature/rushed.
- Cllrs heard that there is no intention to change licensing hours to extend opening times later. It is not envisaging to be open 7 days a week.
- Staffing is reportedly the key issue. There are not enough volunteer hours to open up as much as GRRG want to. There is a high burden on one main volunteer in this role = 20+hrs pw.
- GRRG expressed concern that the Committee cannot sustain even existing levels of voluntary input, as there is a perceived ever-decreasing pool of volunteers/committee members.
- Cllrs asked what options have been explored. Examples from elsewhere at different models of management were pointed to (e.g. Lizard FC, who have a paid bar manager). A fresh look at the finances would be necessary to see which approaches can work. GRRG estimated that the cost would be around £200pw in wages – though the bar could open more hours to help pay for it. Issues were discussed, including whether paying a bar manager would make other people working behind the bar more reluctant to do so for free. More than one person is needed behind the bar. If then paying additional staff, costs get high. GRRG have not explored price rises and indicated they are not keen on raising prices as the USP is that it is cheaper than the pub. A Cllr underlined that regardless of this, there are big discrepancies in price between Pavilion & pub and urged a serious look at such an option.
- GRRG were questioned on whether they had approached others like Mullion FC, Wendron FC, St Keverne FC to find out how they operate and glean any useful information. The answer was “no”. Cllrs suggested it would be a good idea to do that before making a decision on management; while acknowledging the difference in ownership/management circumstances at GRRG.
- GRRG suggested that employing staff entails unwanted admin and costs (PAYE. Pensions. Holiday. Sickness), and felt it was easier to contract out for x% of profit. The idea of a self-employed contractor, instead of employee, was raised.
- There is a question about whether profits should be taken by an individual, when the idea is that money generated is to go into improving the facilities. Perhaps an expenses claim option for volunteers might be another option?

- There may be anxiety amongst community members over the motive or intentions of the person who has expressed interest. GRRG explained that the person is keen that the Pavilion is kept as a community facility.
- Cllrs believe that the Rec Committee are not able to go ahead with the current management changes without Council permission.
- It was underlined that Cllrs and GRRG reps are 'all on the same side' and that the Council is supportive of the GRRG Committee and its core aims.
- There was discussion about the current offer on the table, including investment into parts of the Pavilion. Some said it was "generous" and a good opportunity; others saw it differently.

Action: GRRG to produce a report which sets out the management options for the Pavilion bar, including analysis of pros and cons of each approach and a recommendation. Ideally this is to be available by the GRRG AGM on 23rd November where the report, with aims and option, can be an agenda item for approval and forwarding to the Council. The report to be submitted to the Council for them to then consider formally at a Council meeting. Mike Fleetwood (GRRG rep role) to lead.

Notes taken by L Dunkley, Parish Clerk.