

Notes from the Community Meeting 16/8/2024, Alexandra Hall

Cllrs: Cllr Butterfield-Elsey, Cllr Vugts, Cllr Price, Cllr Coldrick, Cllr Hughes, Cllr Jones, Cllr Hather.

Clerk: Sue Lilly
residents

Residents: 48

Apologies: County Cllr James, 2

Cllr Coldrick introduced the situation and confirming there have been several 'nibbles' at the sale of the Post Office. The meeting is to determine what people are thinking and feeling and some haven't arrived as they feel so angry.

The Councillors introduced themselves, as did the Clerk.

Cllr Coldrick reminded people that they have an open invitation to every council meeting. Post- its and notes were available for people to write what they want is they feel unable to say it in the meeting. Cllr Coldrick then opened the meeting to the floor.

One resident commented that it will just be like the pubs! Close as everything is being run down.

The floor was advised that the recent issues with the Post Office nationally did not affect every Post Office. Banks closing may help Post Offices in the long run. The Clerk read out the estate agent's advertisement that included figures for profit of the Post Office and Shop.

It was unanimously agreed that people wanted the Post Office to stay.

The removal of pension accounts from the Post Office was a big loss, pushing everyone into having bank account.

Running Post Offices used to be by salary, but now it is often by transaction.

County Cllr James sent advice that echoed findings of the Chairman and Clerk, inasmuch that a grant might be available to a Community Interest Company (CIC) to take over a Post Office, but that PAVO (Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations) would need to be brought in to advise. A business plan would be needed by a CIC. The national Post Office are very thorough in vetting potential owners and would not agree if the business was not viable. Information can be obtained on other examples of a CIC taking over a Post Office.

From the Floor:

-Do we have to buy the present building? Might there be somewhere else?

-Some village have Post Office in pubs.

-The mobile Post Office exists could it come back here?

-Builth Post Office is secure with new management.

-A community shop could be a different project.

-The current Post Office/ shop is vital to Llangammarch. It is the heart of the community.

-The actual building- is big.....potential rental of the 'house' part?

-Can we get full funding?.

-A CIC would need to employ someone to run it. Post Office training takes 11 months.

-Suggestion that a Community Interest group is set up first to explore the issue further. Cllr Coldrick suggested people volunteer to be part of a CI group and can leave their names in the box on the table or contact her or the Clerk.

The CI group could get the accounts options for the whole building from the estate agents.

-Employment in Llangammarch Post Office involves a lot of work over the opening hours.

-Renting out the accommodation would not be a problem, it could be free to the manager.

The Council can't do it, as it needs to be a collective project.

Those who expressed an interest in setting up a community interest group (and anyone else) to explore possibilities, in depth, are invited to a meeting on the 6th September at 6pm in Alexandra Hall.