

## Findon Community Village Shop

### Meeting in Findon Village Hall Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2017 @7.30pm

This meeting, facilitated by Peter Goldsworthy as Chairman of FPC, was to provide parishioners an opportunity to share views on the recent closure of the village shop & Post Office. Several other councillors contributed to the debate

An amazing c.300 parishioners were welcomed to the meeting.

The freehold of the village shop & PO is to be sold at auction 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017 with an unknown reserve. The property has been advertised recently at £325,000 and the auction guide price is £325,000 - £350,000. The property consists of the shop and a 2 bedroom 1<sup>st</sup> floor flat with a rental income of approx £9,800.

The Post Office has agreed that they will re-issue the PO licence if the shop were to reopen. All staff are willing to stay (they were given no notice or redundancy pay). Jo O'Dell, the previous owner, confirmed that the shop was profitable a few years ago in 2014, and the income from the Post Office could be in excess of £20,000.

It was suggested that the village buy the shop and run it as a Community Co-operative. The Plunkett Foundation, a UK charity, would be able to help and advice with the purchase and establishment of a company to run the shop. Each member would have 1 vote, and an elected management committee would run the company. Shares in the company would be backed by the freehold value of the property.

The proposal was to issue shares of £1,000 each - with a maximum of 40 shares per person. An amount sufficient to take part in auction needs to be raised by 23<sup>rd</sup> June in order to have all cheques cleared before the auction. Money will be kept in a Parish Council 'caretaker' account, as there is insufficient time to open a dedicated bank account at present. Forms are available from the butchers and on-line via the village website. Payments can be made by cheque or bank transfer. If the purchase was unsuccessful all monies would be returned within 30 days.

The percentage of funds raised against target will be published daily on the village website [www.findonvillage.org](http://www.findonvillage.org). There is also a thermometer, made by 'Men in Sheds', outside the butchers showing how close to the target we are.

Some questions were asked and answered.

What would be the upper bid, assuming funds allowed?

Peter agreed that an offer might be made to current owners Dave & Gayle Stewart, subject to funds, prior to the auction.

If the purchase was unsuccessful would other premises be considered?

If shares were to be sold 6 months notice would be required.

Everyone at the meeting was very positive and supportive of the proposal.

It is now up to the village to support the initiative and get the money in as quickly as possible.