

1).

THIS HAS BEEN A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY – NONE OF IT GOOD!

WHEN PETE SARGENT, AS THE THEN CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL UNVEILED HIS PLAN FOR THE FORMER BLUE X SITE WE ALL SUPPORTED IT. WE THOUGHT - WHAT A FANTASTIC VISION AND OPPORTUNITY FOR THE VILLAGE.

(Document).

MANY PEOPLE SAID DURING PUBLIC MEETINGS – I BET YOU ARE GOING TO DEVELOP IT.

THE COUNCILLORS AT THE TIME, AND I WAS ONE OF THEM, GAVE THEIR ABSOLUTE WORD THAT THIS WASN'T THE CASE - BECAUSE WE BELIEVED THAT WAS TRUE.

READING FROM THIS DOCUMENT WRITTEN BY PETE - - THE ONLY DEVELOPMENT ENVISAGED WAS, AND I QUOTE – “BUILDING A SMALL NUMBER OF PROPERTIES AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS AND MADE GENUINELY AFFORDABLE - THIS CAN BE ACHIEVED BY APPLYING FOR AN EXCEPTION SITE.” END QUOTE.

AN EXCEPTIONSITE IS JUST THAT – LAND OF NO COMMERCIAL VALUE, WHERE SPECIAL PERMISSION IS GRANTED TO BUILD DWELLINGS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE.

AREAS SUCH AS THE DOCTORS FIELD, WHICH IS IN THE DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARY OF THE VILLAGE, OR THE BROWN FIELD SITE WHERE THE CURRENT BUILDINGS ARE CAN NOT BE ‘EXCEPTION’ SITES.

BUT - IN A LETTER SENT TO THE GOVERNMENT ON 8TH AUGUST 2018 PETE SAID – “IF FOR ANY REASON IN THE FUTURE THERE IS A FINANCIAL CRISIS, WE ALWAYS HAVE THE OPTION TO RAISE FUNDS BY SELLING OFF PART OF THE ASSETT.”

2).

IN OCTOBER 2020, JUST SIX MONTHS AFTER NPC RECEIVED THE GOVERNMENT LOAN AND PURCHASED THE SITE, THE CIC ADHOC PLANNING COMMITTEE MET FOR THE FIRST TIME –

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING, WHICH ARE FULLY VERIFIED, RECORD THAT THOSE PRESENT INCLUDED – PETE SARGENT, JULIAN LUCKETT (WHO IS LISTED AS THE HUSBAND OF CIC CHAIR JUDITH O’CONNOR), JONATHAN STRONG AND CAROL BIGGS.

THEY RESOLVED TO RESEARCH A ‘CIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY’ AND TO APPROACH LOCAL DEVELOPERS ABOUT THE POTENTIAL FOR BUILDING A COMMERCIAL HOUSING ESTATE ON THE DOCTORS FIELD. THE BROWN FIELD AREA WAS ALSO IDENTIFIED AS A POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITE, PLUS AN AREA FOR THE ‘EXCEPTION’ SITE.

THEY REALLY SHOWED ENERGY AND INITIATIVE ON THIS, AND SPOKE TO JENNIFER OWEN CONSTRUCTION, THE DEVELOPERS OF THE HIGHFIELD SITE ADJACENT TO THE DOCTORS FIELD AND SUBSEQUENTLY, SINCE HE LEFT THE COUNCIL, PETE HAS BEEN CONTACTING COUNCIL MEMBERS, SUCH AS JACQUI HARDING WHEN SHE WAS CHAIR, SAYING THAT THE DEVELOPER HAD CONTACTED ‘HIM’ AND THAT THIS COULD BE ‘MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL.’

SO – JUST SIX MONTHS AFTER IT WAS BOUGHT – WHERE WAS THE FINANCIAL CRISIS TO JUSTIFY THE SELLING OFF OR DEVELOPMENT OF St FRANCIS FIELD LAND?

3).

THE FIRST TIME MOST OF US ON THE COUNCIL BECAME AWARE OF THIS CIC PLAN WAS JUST A FEW MONTHS AGO! INDEED, FOLLOWING THE CIRCULATION OF THE HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY, COUNCILLOR ANTHONY WONTNER SMITH STATED PUBLICLY AT A PARISH MEETING HIS REGRET THAT EVERYONE THINKS THAT NPC ARE PLANNING TO USE THE SITE FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT.

OUR NEW COUNCILLOR BEN DALLIMORE KNEW MORE THAN WE DID, BECAUSE AS A RESIDENT OF HIGHFIELD, A NEIGHBOUR HAD SUPPLIED HIM WITH A MAP PRODUCED BY THE CIC. THIS MAP IS ON SHOW (*POINT*).

THIS PROPOSAL BY THE CIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE COMPLETELY BETRAYS PROMISES MADE TO THE GOVERNMENT IN THE LOAN APPLICATION AND TO THE PARISHIONERS OF NORTHAM OVER TWO REFERENDUMS. IT ALSO BREAKS OUR WORD AS COUNCILLORS.

IN A QUESTIONNAIRE SENT BY THE CIC TO PETE SARGENT ON THE 26TH JUNE 2021, DURING THE HANDOVER OF THE SITE, THE CIC ASK - IS JULIAN LUCKETT BEING PAID FOR HIS WORK, PETE REPLIES “PRO BONO – AT THE MOMENT.”

THEREFORE THE HUSBAND OF THE CIC CHAIRMAN JUDITH O’CONNOR IS POTENTIALLY IN LINE FOR PAID WORK FROM THE CIC – YET SHE ALSO WENT ON RECORD ON SOCIAL MEDIA, SAYING ST FRANCIS FIELD WAS PURCHASED TO SAVE IT FROM DEVELOPMENT.

THERE IS A CLEAR RISK OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS HERE, LET ALONE THE BETRAYAL OF PROMISES TO THE VILLAGE.

4).

DURING MY RESEARCH, I RECENTLY DISCOVERED OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES REGARDING THE RULES APPLYING TO PARISH COUNCILS – THESE STATED THAT WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF ANY MAJOR PROJECT, THE VILLAGE MUST BE FULLY CONSULTED – THIS IS NOT OPTIONAL. END QUOTE.

YET NONE OF THE CIC DIRECTORSHIPS WERE ADVERTISED AS THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN, SO THAT A FAIR CROSS SECTION OF VILLAGERS – YOUNG AND OLD WITH DIFFERANT SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE – COULD APPLY. IN FACT AT A SITE VISIT BEFORE THE BLUE CROSS WAS EVEN BOUGHT, PETE INTRODUCED JUDITH AS “THE FUTURE CHAIRMAN OF THE CIC.”

SO THE WAY THE CIC WAS SET UP AND DIRECTORS WERE APPOINTED WAS LEGALLY INCORRECT.

ALSO THE CIC ARE BOUND BY REGULATION TO OPEN UP THEIR MEMBERSHIP AND THEN MEMBERS CAN VOTE TO REMOVE DIRECTORS – YET JONATHAN STRONG SAYS HE HASN’T ESTABLISHED THE RIGHT CRITERIA YET AS TO WHO CAN JOIN. THE MEMBERSHIP SHOULD BE OPEN TO EVERYONE WHO LIVES IN THE VILLAGE – IT’S NOT DOWN TO THE CIC TO ‘ESTABLISH THE RIGHT CRITERIA.’

THIS BRINGS ME TO THE CIC INTERNAL EMAILS – DEBBIE EDWARDS, WHO CAN’T BE WITH US THIS EVENING DUE TO ILL HEALTH, WAS A CIC DIRECTOR. SHE WAS SO CONCERNED ABOUT THE WAY THE CIC WERE BEHAVING, THAT SHE CONTACTED ME, AS WE WERE BOTH ON THE NPC/CIC LIAISON COMMITTEE.

I IMMEDIATELY REFERRED HER TO THE THEN CHAIR JACQUI HARDING WHO DEALT WITH HER DIRECT – I WAS ONLY COPIED THE EMAILS AROUND A MONTH LATER.

5).

JONATHAN STRONG AND OTHER COUNCILLORS HAVE SAID THAT I WENT BEHIND EVERYONES BACK IN DEALING WITH DEBBIE, JONATHAN EVEN REPEATED THIS AT A PARISH MEETING 2 WEEKS AGO – THIS IS NOT TRUE –

JACQUI DEALT WITH DEBBIE DIRECT, THERE IS A WHOLE TRAIL OF EMAILS BETWEEN THEM AND JACQUI USED THIS INFORMATION TO CONFRONT COUNCILLOR MALTBY, WHO HAD BEEN FEEDING INFORMATION – FALSE INFORMATION – TO LAUREN SAPSTED, THE EQUINE TENANT.

THERE WERE OTHER DISTURBING ISSUES HIGHLIGHTED IN THESE EMAILS. JACQUI AND VICE CHAIR TONY BIGGS WERE SUPPOSED TO RAISE THESE AT A SPECIAL MEETING WITH THE CIC – ALL OTHER COUNCILLORS WERE EXCLUDED FROM ATTENDING –

SO WHAT WAS IN THOSE EMAILS?

ON THE 28TH JUNE 2021 ONE CIC DIRECTOR EMAILED ALL THE OTHER S SAYING THAT HE FEARED HE MAY HAVE OPENED UP A ‘CAN OF WORMS’ AS NO ONE ON THE COUNCIL KNEW ANYTHING ABOUT THE YEOMANRY RENTING STORAGE ON THE PROEPRTY OR ABOUT THEIR METAL DETECTING ACTIVITES.

THIS KIND OF THING WAS NOT UNUSAL – THE FIRST COUNCILLORS KNEW THAT AN EQUINE TENANT HAD BEEN MOVED ONTO THE SITE WAS WHEN THEY READ ABOUT IT ON FACEBOOK.

AN EMAIL FROM THE 28TH OCTOBER REPORTS A DISCUSSION THE CIC HAD WITH COUNCILLOR MALTBY ABOUT HOW TO TRIP UP THE DIY LIVERY PROPOSAL.

THIS NEXT EMAIL IS THE KEY ONE – PETE SARGENT HAD COMMISSIONED ELECTRICAL WORK ON THE HUB SO THAT THE CIC COULD OPEN THE POP UP PUB. AS A CIC PROJECT IT WAS DOWN TO THEM TO PAY FOR THIS. HOWEVER IN AN EMAIL FROM 21st AUGUST THEY DISCUSS

6).

TRYING TO ROLL THIS INVOICE INTO THE COSTS THAT THEY PRESENT TO THE PARISH COUNCIL TO PAY.

WHEN CONFRONTED WITH THESE EMAILS, FIRST JUDITH AND THEN JONATHAN WALKED OUT – THIS IS RECORDED IN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING.

AFTER THAT JACQUI AND TONY CHOSE NOT TO PURSUE THESE MATTERS AND THE ELECTRICAL COSTS WERE EVENTUALLY FUNDED OUT OF THE START UP FUND THAT NPC GAVE TO THE CIC AND I WAS PUBLICLY BLAMED FOR THE FALL OUT. IT WAS NOTHING TO DO WITH ME – JACQUI DEALT DIRECTLY WITH DEBBIE.

IN THIS SAME EMAIL THE DIRECTOR SAYS THAT PETE IS “possibly shielding himself behind CIC because he carried out work without complying with NPC’s procurement rules.” SO THIS MEANS THE CIC HAD FULL KNOWLEDGE THAT PETE BROKE PROCURMENT RULES. THIS WAS NOT UNCOMMON.

FORMER CHAIR, JACQUI HARDING ALSO COMPLAINED OF THIS. IN AN EMAIL SHE SAID HE DISPLAYED COMPLETE DISREGARD FOR THE FACT THAT HE WAS NO LONGER IN OFFICE AND CITED AN ISSUE WITH THE St FRANCIS FIELD DRAINS WHERE WORK HAD BEEN COMMISSIONED.

INVOICES WOULD SUDDENLY APPEAR ABOUT WHICH SHE HAD NO PRIOR KNOWLEDGE – I GOT CHATTING WITH A PERSON IN THE PUB ONE EVENING WHO TOLD ME HE STILL NEEDED TO INVOICE FOR WORK ON THE BUNGALOWS. JACQUI DIDN’T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THIS, I HAD TO GIVE HER THIS FELLOWS CONTACT DETAILS.

PETE VERBALLY AGREED TO CHANGES IN THE EQUINE TENANTS WRITTEN CONTRACT WITHOUT REFERRING BACK TO COUNCIL. WHEN, WITH JACQUI’S PERMISSION, I CONTACTED HIM TO ASK ABOUT THE ARRANGEMENT FOR THE BUSINESS RATES, HE REFUSED TO TELL ME. THESE DISPUTES WITH THE TENANT OVER WHO IS LIABLE

7).

FOR VARIOUS THINGS HAVE STILL NOT BEEN RESOLVED, EVEN THOUGH A NEW CONTRACT HAS BEEN AGREED.

PETE IS STILL REGULARLY ON SITE – HE IS DESCRIBED AT PARISH MEETINGS AND IN THE MINUTES AS A VOLUNTEER! MEANWHILE COUNCILLOR FARMER AND I CAN NOT GO TO ST FRANCIS FIELDS FOR FEAR OF WHAT THE CURRENT EQUINE TENANT MIGHT SAY ABOUT US. WE NOW REGULARLY FORWARD ANYTHING SHE WRITES ABOUT US TO THE POLICE – IN VIEW OF HER FALSE ACCUSATIONS, WE HAVE TO DO THIS FOR OUR OWN SAFE GUARDING.

FOLLOWING FALSE BRIEFINGS FROM COUNCILLOR MALTBY, WHICH HE ADMITTED TO, SHE SUBJECTED US TO A 3 MONTH CAMPAIGN OF VILIFICATION ON THE NORTHAM AND NEARBY FACEBOOK PAGE.

SHE SAID THAT WE WERE PLANNING TO TAKE OVER THE STABLES AND RUN THE BUSINESS OURSELVES. THIS IS COMPLETELY UNTRUE – FIRST, WE HAVE NO INTEREST IN DOING THIS AND SECOND WE ARE NOT ALLOWED BY REGULATIONS TO DO THIS – NO COUNCILLOR CAN HAVE ANY BUSINESS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COUNCIL WHILE IN OFFICE, OR FOR A YEAR AFTERWARDS.

I HAVEN'T BEEN TO ST FRANCIS FIELD SINCE LAST SEPTEMBER AND COUNCILLOR FARMER HASN'T BEEN THERE FOR AT LEAST 18 MONTHS, YET Ms SAPSTED WROTE THE FOLLOWING IN A WRITTEN COMPLAINT TO ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL –

John Streatfield and Penny Farmer are continuously harassing and bullying me to try and gain access to the stable yard I rent at st Francis field from the parish council - They both are desperate to run a business from the stabling and are breaking my contract with the council by constantly interrupting my days at the site.

8).

WE NEVER GO NEAR THE SITE. HER COMPLAINT WAS DISMISSED AS SHE PROVIDED NO EVIDENCE. THERE COULDN'T BE ANY EVIDENCE AS IT WASN'T TRUE. THIS IS HOW SHE BEHAVES – JONATHAN STRONG IS RECORDED IN THE PARISH MINUTES AS SAYING SAID THAT IN THE RECENT RENEGOTIATION OF HER CONTRACT – “NO BLACKMAIL WAS INVOLVED.” THAT’S WHAT IT SAYS IN THE PARISH MINUTES.

CHAIR SCHLESENGER AND VICE CHAIR BIGGS KNOW THESE ALLEGATIONS ABOUT US ARE NOT TRUE, YET HAVE DONE NOTHING TO EITHER PUBLICLY OR PRIVATELY DEFEND US. THEY HAVE HAD ALL OF THE INFORMATION IN THIS PRESENTATION, PLUS A LOT MORE SINCE FEBRUARY 4TH AND HAVE DONE NOTHING ABOUT IT -

THIS IS WHAT IT’S LIKE TO BE A COUNCILLOR IN NORTHIAM – FALSE ALLEGATIONS ARE LEFT UNCORRECTED, OTHER COUNCILLORS SUCH AS COUNCILLOR MALTBY DELIBERATELY SPREAD FALSE INFORMATION ABOUT YOU AND THESE ALLEGATIONS ARE THEN REPEATED ON A FACEBOOK PAGE, WHERE THE ADJUDCATOR IS NONE OTHER THAN THE CIC’S JUDITH O’CONNOR.

WHEN YOU GO TO ORGANSIATIONS LIKE ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR HELP, OR TREVOR LEGGO FROM THE EAST SUSSEX COUNCIL ASSOCIATION, THEY ACTIVELY WORK AGAINST YOU AND TRY AND DISCREDIT YOU? WHY? ARE THEY AFRAID OF THE TRUTH? IS THE PROPOSED HOUSING DEVELOPEMNT WHAT THE VILLAGE THOUGHT IT WAS PAYING FOR WHEN IT AGREED TO THE PURCHASE OF ST FRANCIS FIELD? IN VIEW OF WHAT HAS HAPPENED – AND WHAT HASN'T HAPPENED – MAYBE WE SHOULD ASK THEM AGAIN?

9).

I'D LIKE TO FINISH BY READING AN EMAIL FROM A PARISH COUNCILLOR, ADDRESSED TO THE WHOLE COUNCIL AND TO THE CIC. THIS COUNCILLOR HAS TRIED TO REMAIN NEUTRAL AND TO FIND THE BEST WAY FORWARD THROUGHOUT THIS WHOLE AFFAIR, YET THIS IS WHAT HE WROTE ON FEBRUARY 5TH AFTER HE READ ALL THE WRITTEN EVIDENCE I HAD PROVIDED. I READ THIS OUT WITH PERMISSION –

I have read all the written evidence you have provided Jon and I must say that you at the Parish meeting had to sit there and receive the verbal abuse from the Directors of the CIC and others when in fact you were telling the truth.

During the meeting many from the audience shouted for your resignation when in fact the ones that should be resigning are the Directors of the CIC and should not have any further involvement in the running of the SFF.

I am absolutely disgusted in the way they all attacked you at the meeting when as said, you were telling the truth and they knew that fact.

I suppose the best form of defence is attack particularly when you have a hell of a lot to defend, but one very sad thing is when Jonathan Strong stood up and said that he is of the old school where Decency, Honesty and being Honourable are key to how he conducts his life and then stands there and didn't follow any one of them really beggars belief and is a total travesty.