

HAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Ham Parish Council took place on Monday 22nd November at 7pm in Ham Village Hall.

Present: Mr C Dean (Chairman), Lady Walker (Vice-chairman), Mr J Marriage, Mr M Humphreys, and 17 members of public.

1. Apologies: Mr. Alistair Taylor

2. Matters Arising: none

3. Nexus Communications Filming Proposal

The Chairman began the discussion by highlighting the key requests and aims of the filming proposal being made by Nexus Communications.

- One day of filming on the Village Green, starting around 6:30am and finishing around 4pm.
- This will produce a 60 to 90 second film for their client the Meatless Farm under the heading "If Ham can, anyone can ..."
- Entirely separate process of engaging with individuals which is outside the remit of this meeting. Currently they have enough interest to full fill this.
- Rights to the footage for the campaign likely to be January and a further 3 months.
 - Initial media plan is to show on social media – Instagram and YouTube.
 - Top end plan is as ads before on demand TV.
 - No plans to show on Live TV.
- If the Parish Council were to agree in principle / with caveats Nexus would then engage to hammer out an agreement.
- The current financial offer has increased from £5,000 to £8,500.
- Nexus agree to pay all reasonable legal fees in production of the contract which will include all terms of filming / usage rights / duration of rights and extension clauses.
- Nexus have agreed to undertake to repair any damage caused to the Village Green.
- Nexus have agreed that if anyone would rather their property was not shown prominently that this would not be a problem. That does not preclude being included in background shots.
- There is a script available but note names are all placeholders, nothing is confirmed.
- There is a "set" plan available. They are not proposing any road closures.

The Chairman then continued with a statement from Harvey Choat, the Managing Director of Nexus Communications.

“This campaign is not about meat bashing; organic and responsible farming is critical to biodiversity and local economies and for good nutrition. However, there is a huge amount of low-grade meat that is intensively farmed and damaging for both the health of the planet and people. There is a time to make a change and that time is now. To instigate real change, we need action and most importantly we need to be different. As a communications agency and along with our client we feel a great sense of duty in driving positive change. We have chosen Ham because you and it represent real life – it’s about balance, community, and unity - wouldn’t it be great if together we can say we did something to take action on the ever-growing threat of climate change. We can’t save the world, but we can sure as hell have a good try by helping people up and down the UK make a very small change to what they eat a couple of times a week.”

The Chairman then continued by reading out a number of statements from villagers and the Crown and Anchor. In all cases serious concerns were raised with regards to the filming itself and the effect it might have on the village and the wider community. Notably the Crown and Anchor public house did not want any involvement with the project.

The Chairman asked Lin Holford for comments from the PCC. She explained that there was a majority feeling that the Church should not be featured at all and that no funds would be accepted that were raised from this endeavour. Further concerns were raised about the compressed timescale and lack of opportunity to ask Nexus question directly.

The Chairman then asked for an open discussion.

Many members of the village raised a variety of issues which were discussed in depth. There were serious concerns as to the aims of the filming project and the use of the name of Ham village coupled with the lack of control the village would have over a national advertising campaign and the legal complications involved. Further concerns were raised over being associated with a vegan project of this nature given the farming nature of the village, and the danger of wider association with the vegan movement. There were also concerns raised that many members of the village, particularly those on the Green, would be forcibly involved despite their wish not to be.

The Chairman explained that the script that was being circulated had only recently been received and the villagers named within had not been asked in advance.

Questions were raised as to whether the Parish Council was in a position to make a decision on a project of this nature, but the Chairman explained that he felt it was important that the council took a vote on the issue regardless of the legal position.

The council voted unanimously against the proposal.

4. Any Other Business: none

The meeting closed at 7:40pm