

Windmill Meeting With Ashford Borough Council 16th October 2024

Present. Woodchurch: Ian Philo, Wade Nash, Rob Woods, Mel Bailey.

ABC: Simon Betty, David Kemp, Victoria Cooper-Samways, David Ledger, Aline Hicks.

ABC opened the meeting with the declaration that they must show they have achieved the best value and therefore the recommendation to dispose will be put before the cabinet. The preferred method is by auction, and an auction house has already been contacted. It is thought that this will take place in the first quarter of next year.

Before this an information pack will need to be put together.

The information pack, may not disclose all the work that is necessary to bring the windmill back to it's Grade II* condition, and it would be advised that any purchaser sends in their own surveyor.

ABC had looked into why an insurance claim had not been made following the storm damage. Apparently a claim had been submitted five years ago, but the loss adjuster had advised that there was no claim as the meteorological records showed only average wind speeds of between 30 and 37 mph.

It was strongly recommended that Woodchurch Parish Council register the windmill as an Asset of Community Value. This would allow the community to match any successful bid at auction and have priority over that bid.

When asked what price would they offer the mill to the community, ABC stated that they would not meet Section 123 requirements if they didn't test the market and the auction process was the only way to achieve this.

When pressed on what would happen if the windmill fails to secure a bid at auction, ABC stated that a report would be issued outlining the process in this eventuality.

It was pointed out that in this instance any community or community organisation have no allocated funds to take on the ownership and would need to offer a lump sum which would allow for match funding to be sourced.

The meeting closed with no action points. Woodchurch Parish Council will apply to have the Windmill registered as an Asset of Community Value.