



## Public Meeting : 22nd March 2016

A public meeting was held on the 22nd March to establish if there was support within the village to safeguard the future of our Post Office. Forty people attended.

Neil Barbrook, Chairman of the Community Council, welcomed those attending and explained the involvement of the Community Council in the campaign. Roy Chapman had approached him to advise of the risk to the P.O. and suggested that as the Community Council represented many of the societies in Nayland they might be prepared to front the campaign. Neil established that the Executive Committee of the C.C. were unanimous in wishing to support. However, the C.C. Constitution precluded any financial involvement as the P.O. was a business and not a charitable concern.

Roy advised that his understanding of the current status was that our Postmistress wished to continue in that role until her retirement in October 2019. She would then be moving out of the village. However personal circumstances prevented her from being as "hands on" as she had been in the past and she would have to continue to employ someone full time to run the counter. She would continue to run all other aspects of the business including the non P.O. retail side.

A number of questions were asked regarding ownership of the Post Office franchise and the premises for the Post Office and Royal Mail sorting office floor space. Then further questions relating to further detail and breakdown of the accounts for both enterprises.

It could be confirmed that the ownership was vested with our Postmistress. No figures were currently available regarding details from the accounts. We have been promised sight of the accounts once they have been completed, expected early April. Details will then be circulated.

A question was asked "Could we get the Post Office designated as a Community Post Office on the lines of that in Polstead" The Chairperson of the Parish Council explained that strenuous efforts were made in previous years to negotiate with the P.O. to establish this but it had been refused. An appeal was also declined. The main reason given was that we had other retail outlets in our village and, although these businesses had been approached, no interest was received in taking over the P.O. with the extended trading hours being demanded.

It was determined to send out a "flyer" giving some background to the campaign.

Other suggestions were:-

- A slot during the Parish Council Assembly to bring people up to date on any progress made.
  - The Postmistress should be invited to a meeting to answer any questions.
  - The formation of a working committee
- Volunteers came forward and the committee will be Roy Chapman, Neil Barbrook, Bryan Smith, Adrienne Strover, Michael Cullen, John Partridge and Maggie Ryan (who also agreed to take on the task of Treasurer). The first committee meeting will take place on Friday 8th April at 10.00hrs at 7 High Street, (Roy's).

Neil suggested the way forward as follows:-

1. Circulate by email notes from tonight's meeting, although we only have email addresses for certain residents.
2. Hold committee meetings and publish minutes.
3. Consider sending out a Flyer to every household in Nayland and Wissington and put on notice boards including Leavenheath, with updated information.
4. Publicise information in future editions of Community Times.

Roy and Neil wound up the meeting by thanking those who attended and expressing considerable satisfaction that the proposed campaign had been so well received and supported