

**Report to Parish Council on proposal for PWLB Loan
Feedback from Community Consultation 23 May to 22 June 2020**

9 March: PC sets up Working Party for PWLB loan and to determine how residents will be kept informed and how they can contribute to the decision-making process, or obtain further information about the process. Residents will be kept informed of all PC decisions through Hill & Valley meeting summaries, and Minutes of meetings published on the website, and will be signposted to this information through the LCA Facebook page.

5 May PC receive formal request from LCPL to take out a PWLB loan £300k for interest in Plough.

11 May PC agrees to proceed in principle. Working Party recognises need to be open and undertake appropriate consultation.

Households

Working Party decides that since there is a potential impact (albeit minimal) on the precept, the consultation should reflect the views of households rather than individuals, since that is the basis on which the precept is calculated (where households are split the views can be shared). This also avoids larger households having a bigger influence. There are 294 households in Longparish, data taken from the Longparish Profile published by Test Valley Borough Council¹.

Survey

The question of a survey was discussed but it was decided that the direct approach of hand-delivered information for every household, together with the opportunity to attend a meeting and engage in conversation or email correspondence, for example, to raise any further questions would allow for much more open discussion and allow the PC to obtain a much clearer understanding of people's views on the loan. An online survey only reaches that proportion of the village who are online or engage with online surveys, whilst paper surveys would not allow for proper discussion of the issues, and the community had already answered a survey from Plough Ahead, the results of which showed strong support for reopening of the pub.

PWLB and HALC guidance do not require a Yes/No poll, but permit the PC to decide for themselves the format in which it will consult residents (this is confirmed by email from HALC 19 June).

Immediate Action:

Rather than wait for publication in Hill & Valley, a double-sided A4 flyer was delivered by hand to every household in the village in the week commencing 18 May, setting out clear information, and inviting everyone to let the PC know their views by 8 June (the date of the next PC Meeting) by attending that PC meeting by Zoom, or through a variety of other methods. The flyer was also circulated by LCA by email and on social media, and a dedicated page² of the village website was set up with a more detailed version of the flyer information. Articles in Hill & Valley ensured that every

¹ <https://www.testvalley.gov.uk/assets/attach/4080/Longparish.pdf>

² <http://www.longparish.org.uk/parish-council/the-plough-inn.html>

household in the village was subsequently reminded of the request to give the PC their views on the loan. Villagers were invited to remain anonymous should they so wish.

Extension of consultation period

LCPL had planned to release their Business Plan at the beginning of the consultation period, but this was delayed by third parties (due to coronavirus). Aware that that Plan contained detailed research on the business structure, prospects, finances, background, opportunities, threats etc. that would be helpful to villagers in understanding the project and therefore the need for, and risks of, the loan, the PC extended the consultation period to Sunday 21 June, and called an Extraordinary Meeting of the PC for Monday 22 to consider the results of the consultation alongside the loan. The Business Plan was released and widely circulated on 6 June, giving villagers over 2 weeks to see it and raise any questions with either LCPL or the PC before making their views known.

A steady stream of emails and communications then continued to be passed to the PC throughout the consultation period. The PC shared villagers' questions and our responses with the community through FAQs³ added to the website, which allowed us to address issues that might not have been clearly understood had we simply set up a survey.

PC Meeting 8 June

The PC meeting on 8 June was very well attended, the PC explained the background and progress on the proposal, and gave everyone the opportunity to speak and tell us their views. The Working Party was authorised to work with LCPL to find a suitable legal structure to buy The Plough and govern the relationship between the parties. More questions were raised at this meeting, so in addition to offering villagers the opportunity to listen to a recording of the Zoom audio, we added another set of FAQs⁴ to the village website.

Subsequently the PC have continued to seek the views of villagers, repeating invitations to let us have their views, including advising them that they can remain confidential if they wish, and repeatedly confirming the extension of the consultation period to just before the date of an Extraordinary Meeting of the PC on 22 June.

Community Views Received

Summary of the number of responses received:

Responses	Number	% of the Total 294 Households
Total responses received (excluding household multiples)	87	29.6%
Total number of responses received (including those from the same household)	121	

³ <http://www.longparish.org.uk/parish-council/the-plough-inn/1597-fags-on-the-plough-loan.html>

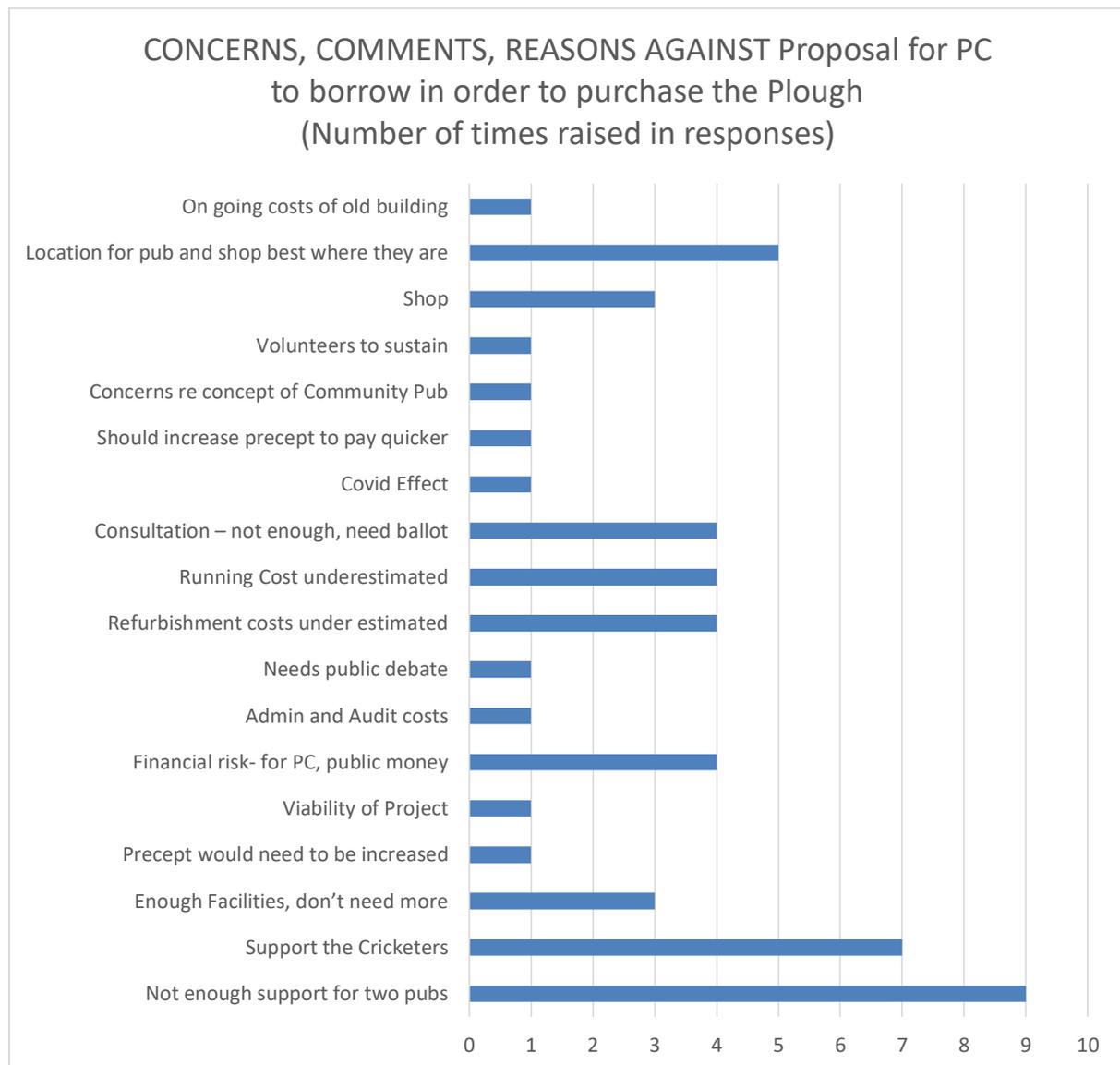
⁴ <http://www.longparish.org.uk/parish-council/the-plough-inn/1607-further-fags-on-plough-loan.html>

Summary of responses in favour and against the proposal:

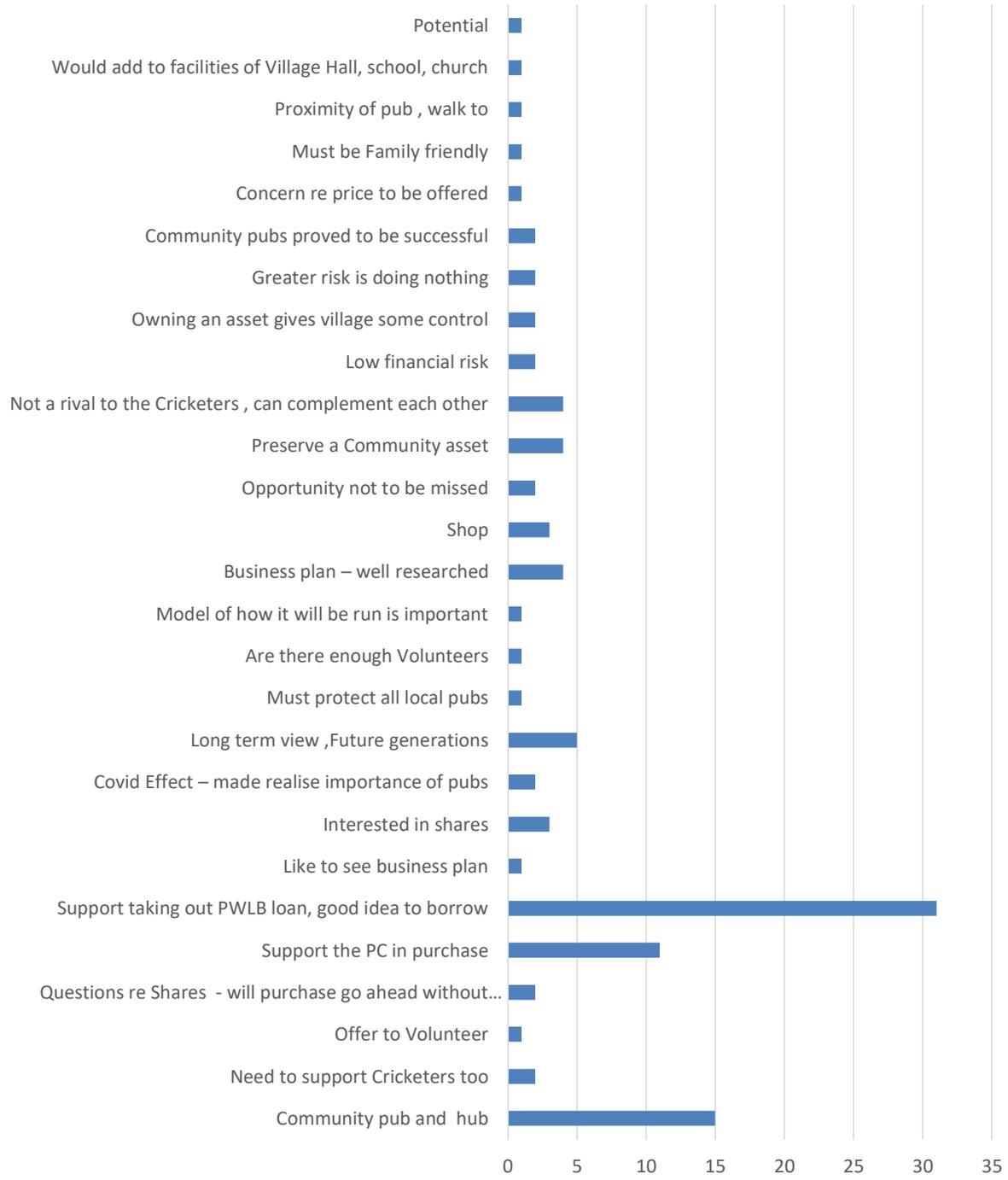
Responses summary per household	Number	% of Responses	% of Total Households
Responses in favour of the proposal	60	69%	20%
Responses against the proposal	21	24%	7%
Undecided	6	7%	2%

Individual Responses summary	Number	% of Responses
Responses in favour of the proposal	91	75%
Responses against the proposal	24	19.8%
Undecided	6	5%

The key issues, comments and concerns raised by the respondents are presented below.



**COMMENTS ,REASONS, CONCERNS TO SUPPORT PC
PROPOSAL TO BORROW TO PURCHASE THE PLOUGH
(Number of times raised in responses)**



Conclusion

It has not been possible to hold a Public Meeting in the Village Hall due to COVID-19 restrictions, however the response numbers indicate nearly 30% of households, 121 individual responses have taken the trouble to respond with their views to the information provided by the Parish Council and

LCPL, through the leaflet drop, the Longparish website, the FAQs and the Plough Ahead website. The responses have come from across the village, not just from one area.

69% of households that responded, support the Parish Council taking out a loan from the PWLB for the purpose of purchasing the Plough for the benefit of the community.

24% of households that responded are against the proposal.

6% of households that responded were undecided.