

## HADLOW DOWN COMMUNITY CENTRE

Minutes of Committee Meeting on Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> February 2013, 7.30pm in the Village Hall

**PRESENT:** Bob Lake (Chairman), Rachel Lewis (Vice Chair), Janet Tourell (Secretary), John Thompson (Treasurer), Richard Boswell, Fiona Shafer, Vicky Richards, Nigel Harrison, Paul James, Sandra Richards (Parish Council Representative)

1. **APOLOGIES:** Don Smith, Graham Terry (retrospectively)

2. **MINUTES OF MEETING ON 7.1.13:** For the benefit of those who weren't present **BL** briefly revised what was discussed.

3. **MATTERS ARISING:** **JThom** questioned why a petition was needed to back up the planning application. **VR** replied that it was 'belt and braces' and it was generally felt by all that it would give the presentation more impetus. **PJ** wanted clarification about what happens when the plans were submitted, would the planners therefore be missed out entirely and was sending directly to the councillors permitted? **BL** confirmed that it was. **SR** questioned why the end of June was ear-marked for completion of the plans and not earlier. **BL** said that the surveys needed to be completed and this was dependent on fine weather; also we needed sufficient time to gather together photographic evidence of difficulties with the current hall, not least car parking. The chaotic parking on the day of the inaugural TN22 Club was cited as the sort of example that we need.

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record and duly signed.

4. **FEEDBACK FROM THE MEETING WITH ROY GALLEY ON 18<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY:** **BL** reported that he and Sandra Richards, Chair of the Parish Council, had met with Roy Galley, Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning and Housing Delivery for Wealden Council, that morning. **BL** and **SR** said that he seemed generally supportive of the project and had reiterated the advice about the footprint of the main hall and much of the advice the Committee had received from the Planners before Christmas. **BL** said that as far as he was concerned the big issue facing the committee was that seed-corn funding from the sale of the old hall wouldn't be there. **PJ** asked how Councillor Galley had reacted to the question of selling the old hall? **SR** said that it had been explained to him and he knew there was a problem: he is coming to the next Parish Council meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March; perhaps members of the committee should be there to lobby him?

**PJ** suggested that **SR** arrange that the difficulty should be addressed at the Parish Assembly on April 16<sup>th</sup>? **BL** said that we should also keep lobbying nationally. Also, when talking to Councillor Galley, the issue of the three mats required by the Bowls Club was raised and how they were necessary in order for league matches to be completed within a reasonable time. Providing that we can use examples like this to support the need for a slightly larger main hall space and emphasise that the motivation is about a better service for users rather than trying to increase usage, we may have a chance. Councillor Galley asked to be contacted if we felt that we were making no headway.

**BL** said that he felt we should meet with the Buxted Community Hall Trustees to share some information. **PJ** introduced the subject of Permitted Development Rights – **BL**, **SR** and **RB** felt that it was important establish when this should be implemented. **PJ** said that it made sense to talk to Buxted about what they'd done and if they were willing to share information. A discussion about PDR and the correct order to do things followed:

**BL** said that Buxted didn't have a Business Plan. **RB** confirmed that PDR could be implemented without one.

**SR** said she felt that we should get PDR on current site before doing the plans. **BL** agreed that we would need drawings and we would also need to do the same for the Pavilion. **ACTION: PJ and NH to provide drawings for both.**

**RB** cautioned that we would need to get things in the right order. **SR** insisted that a meeting with the Buxted Trustees should be the first step. **RB** queried what the PDR percentage rates were. **ACTION: BL said that he would**

**arrange a meeting with the Buxted Trustees as soon as possible and also contact Doug Moss for clarification about PDR % rates and whether or not, the sports pavilion is currently included in the 30% uplift.**

**5. CONDITION & SURVEY REPORT FOR THE CURRENT HALL:** **RB** introduced the report and said that it was intended as a guide only. They had divided it into 'Short term' i.e. immediate necessary work, 'Medium term' - more expensive work and 'Long term' - if there's no new hall!

**JT** thanked the Design Sub-Committee for producing such a comprehensive report and that clearly, it was a very useful report for the short term future of the current hall and something for the Village Hall Committee to consider.

**BL** observed that medium and long term renovation of the current hall was not a cheap option and that it may well provide the detractors to the new hall with further justification to remain on the existing site. **RL** agreed that the sticking plaster approach shouldn't be considered. **BL** said that should the Committee opt to stay on the current site, more extensive facilities would be required. **SR** pointed out that Hut Lane and Hall Lane would need 'adopting' and that would be very costly, **RB** agreed that it 'didn't add up'! **PJ** asked what would be classed as 'short term', **JT** said a year! **PJ** said that the Village might need an answer for why so much money was being spent? **JT** replied that the current hall needed to continue functioning while a new one was being planned. **NH** pointed out that increased use of the current hall would demonstrate the feasibility of planning a new one for the Village. **BL** thanked the design sub committee for the report. **ACTION: It was proposed by RB that the report should be part of the Community Centre's planning submission: all agreed.**

**6. BUSINESS PLAN:** **BL** suggested that all BP's are similar in structure and coverage:- i) Executive statement ii) Objectives iii) Current usage iv) Demonstration of need, survey, local competitor analysis v) Design and cost vi) Income and Expenditure Plan including Risk Analysis vii) Management. Clearly we are not at the stage where v) and vi) can be completed but we are in a position to complete all the other sections and therefore, the Business Planning Sub-Committee should turn its energies to dealing with these.

**SR** emphasised that we couldn't use increased usage as a factor because of 7km nitrogen problem. **PJ** asked **BL** to clarify that the business plan wasn't a requirement of any PDR or planning application; **BL** confirmed this. **RL** said that we would need funding from a number of external sources. **NH** questioned the need for a business plan at this stage but it was agreed that without a business plan it would be difficult to attract funding. **RL** said that any plan must be viable and use of the current hall should inform plans for the new. **JT** said that she was worried that the current hall was going to lose the Bowls Club so a major user would disappear – not a good example! **PJ** agreed that we must display maximum usage in the current hall.

**BL** asked **SR** about a Public Loans Board grant. **SR** clarified the precept rules and said that according to new government rules a referendum would have to be held in the village if the precept should be raised over 2% and that the PC would be required to pay for the conducting of the referendum. **J Thom** commented that this was less than inflation so the Village was effectively taking a cut in income. **SR** said that yes, we could borrow from the PLB but pointed out that there weren't many houses in the Village.

**PJ** said that it he thought that all this information was feasible for the Business Plan – **J Thom** agreed that it should go into the Plan. **SR** agreed that, without the 'seed corn' of the old village hall, we were economically 'in a hole'. **BL** reiterated that the Business Plan Sub-Committee and the Build & Design Sub-Committee should be working in conjunction.

All agreed that capital costs, revenue and energy rates must be carefully considered and the money to get the work done must be found. **NH** questioned how much competition would be coming from other organisations and emphasised that information within the Village regarding what was going on was important. **PJ** said that he was going to the ECO Fair in London soon and would pick up information. **ACTION: RL, BL, FS and JT to get on with the Business Plan and costings**

## 7. PETITION

**BL** asked if the format that he'd sent out was approved as he had received feedback from only three members. It was agreed that the addresses of the signers should be included and that it should be taken from door to door in the parish similar to the survey. **J Thom** asked how many were needed. **PJ** said that this was additional information for the Business Plan – it was agreed that the petition should show 'resident/user/both' as part of its format.

**ACTION: The petition should be made available at the Bollywood Night on February 23<sup>rd</sup> and the Combined AGMs on the 25<sup>th</sup> (BL)**

## 8. COMBINED AGM's

**BL** asked if the draft of what he was going to say was OK. **PJ** questioned contradictions between the Condition Report and **BL's** suggested costings; **BL** agreed to make changes.

**ACTION: JT and VR said that they would supply display panels for the evening. J Thom to print out and let BL have information for display**

## 9. PLAYING FIELD UPDATE

**FS** reported that the Playing Field Management Committee had held a meeting at which the drainage had been discussed. She confirmed that they weren't going to get the soil from UCTC as expected.

**BL** said that he'd been contacting local junior clubs re. use of the field as a way attracting funding notably Uckfield Grasshoppers FC, Jarvis Brook Junior FC. Also, as a result of the continuing saturated ground conditions, the geo-tech survey still can't be carried out.

**SR** mentioned that at the last Parish Council meeting one of the councillors had again suggested using mole drains. **BL** said that when the playing field was first created so much topsoil was removed from the site, certain parts of the field had insufficient depth between the playing surface and underlying sandstone outcrops. Mole drainage was installed but soil compaction and the blocking up of these drains, meant that the current drainage doesn't work. The type of drainage and other details will be provided by an agronomist's report.

**SR** said that High Hurstwood were about to 'ruin' their football pitch by installing a concrete cricket wicket and there might be a few disgruntled punters whom Hadlow Down could pick up? However, it should be appreciated that the HD football pitch is too small for adult usage. **NH** said that if the field was viable and with the promise of a pavilion 'bolted' on to the community centre this might bring in funding from Sport England for drainage and the Football Foundation for facilities – **BL** agreed.

## OTHER BUSINESS

**J Thom**, Treasurer, reported that £3,530 was in the funds: £3,030 plus a donation of £500 from the Claude Jessett Trust Company.

**PJ** asked with regard to Permitted Development Rights, who does it? **NH** wanted to know if it included multi storage?

**ACTION: PJ, RB, NH and BL will do PDR. PJ also pointed out that quotes for architect's surveys would also be needed.**

## 10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 8.4.13

Meeting closed at 9.35pm