

HADLOW DOWN COMMUNITY CENTRE

Minutes of meeting held in the New Inn on Wednesday, 4th April 2012

PRESENT: Bob Lake (Chair), Janet Tourell (Secretary), Rachel Lewis (Vice Chair), John Thompson (Treasurer) , Vicky Richards, Fiona Shafer, Richard Boswell, Graham Terry (Parish Council), Sandra Richards (Parish Council), Eddie Westfield (Observer)

PUBLIC QUESTIONS: None

1. **APOLOGIES:** Claire Rivers, Nigel Hellewell, Nigel Harrison
2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** Agreed as a true and accurate record and duly signed by Chair.
3. **MATTERS ARISING:**

i) Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 6th March 2012 at which member of public stated that the funding of £20k would be required for a Feasibility Study and a further £30k for architect's fees. Chairman challenged this as misleading and inaccurate – PJ explained that these figures were mentioned in a previous meeting but this contention was refuted by those present. JT said that members of the village might be alarmed by the huge financial cost being talked about and also that it should have been made clear that funding for the Feasibility Study would be raised independently of any local funding support. RL suggested that there should always be a 'spokesperson' from the Committee at PC meetings. EW suggested that possibly this could be a role for one of the publicity and marketing sub group. It was agreed by everyone that someone should attend future PC meetings to avoid this happening again.

ACTION: The Chairman offered to attend the next Parish Council meeting to be held in May

ii) PC representation on the Committee - JT advised the group that it was unworkable because of the low number of parish councillors and SR explained that if they were to vote on New Community Centre matters at one of this Committee's meetings, they could find themselves compromised and have to declare 'prejudicial interest' in relation to Community Centre business at PC meetings resulting in the situation where a quorum couldn't be achieved. Therefore, it had been decided that the PC should have 'observers' only at future HDCC meetings but it was agreed that their role would be fully participatory except for the matter of voting on any issue. (VR left the meeting at 7.45pm)

4. **REPORTS FROM THE SUB COMMITTEES:**

BL asked the heads of all the sub committees to report on their TOR's and consider any revisions in light of feedback and discussion.

Business Planning Sub Committee: FS reported that she and N.Hell had tried to take a logical/practical approach. The plan was to ensure that a good start to the project was made and the people of Hadlow Down fairly represented. It was important to work out now what people wanted from the project. SR asked about the 'mechanics' of the business plan and the feasibility studies – she cited badminton as probable cost against need as an example. RB and PJ said that the design team would obviously need to work closely with the Business Plan group. SR is concerned about income.

Marketing & Publicity: JThom emphasised that this was just a 'draft' document as he was unsure exactly what was needed. GT commented that he thought it was outside the remit and he liked this.

EW observed that much to his surprise he was named on this sub committee in his absence and that he doesn't like committees but he was happy to help out as long as he wasn't a committee member! [JT apologised on behalf of the

committee to EW for volunteering him in his absence!!] JThom said that he doesn't feel he's good with publicity but he was happy to do the mechanics of it, e.g. computer work etc.

BL felt that Publicity and Marketing should be the first thing we should get right. It was so important to present the Community Centre project to the members of the parish in a positive way. JThom commented that he felt the web and Parish Mag didn't reach a significant number of the local community but EW pointed that the number of 'hits' i.e. visits to the website exceeded said that the web site was busy. FS suggested that we should consider getting some of the younger people in the village interested and SR suggested setting up a Twitter account as a way of getting the youngsters interested.

BL said it was important that we got something on the web soon.

ACTION:

i) BL , JThom and FS to meet to discuss information and articles to be posted on the web page: details of survey, names of committee, its structure and roles, priorities for the next nine months.

ii) JT has undertaken to write an account of the Community Centre Committee beginnings. EW will reinstate the web page and help; EW said that it was important to keep information fresh each month. GT agreed that this was the way forward and RL confirmed that everything could be put on the web.

BL said that he'd tried to contact Stuart and Maria Paviour for their help on this sub committee but had received no response. It was agreed that he should try once more.

Design & Planning: RB said that this committee felt that there wasn't a clear enough design brief for them to move forward with a TOR. Is the group designing the building to a pre-determined budget or to meet the identified needs of the local community? **BL suggested that the group should consider some of the following issues that could form a number of its objectives: i) the carrying out of specialist surveys and reports ii) an examination of costs associated with a conventional build or one based on greater ecological factors and consideration of capital and revenue costs iii) an options approach i.e. 3 designs that bring together consideration of usage and budget come up with some options iv) modular build v) phased construction.** SR said that a business plan was needed first and FS suggested that, as part of this exercise FS, we need to look at other newly built hall projects that have had to wrestle with the same issues. [This was addressed later in the meeting]

PJ said that the pavilion was a problem as it seemed 'bolted' on to the proposed building and dictated a lot of the design and asked if a pavilion was necessary? RB said that there was never a design brief for the pavilion. BL pointed out that one of the reasons for the re-location of the village hall to the playing field site was the incorporation of a newly built pavilion into the new hall and that the raising of funds for this element of the project should be relatively straightforward, i.e. through the Football Foundation. **BL felt that the next step should be for the four groups i.e. Business , Funding, Publicity and Design to get together to discuss the findings of the survey and also to identify any areas/issues that the survey overlooked or that didn't emerge from the survey. This should help to clarify our over-arching objectives to which those of each sub-group should be linked directly.**

PJ also said that the Design & Build sub-group had discussed renovations to the Old Village Hall and asked that the OVH should let the Committee know of any requirements- the example of the need for a new roof was cited. BL felt that for the foreseeable future, only improvements associated with Health & Safety matters should be considered.

GT said he thought that when designing and planning a new community centre consideration should be given to whether a building should be either (a) an eco-friendly although expensive build but one which would work out cheaper to run in the long term or (b) an easier and cheaper project to build but one which might turn out to be more costly to run in the future.

Fund-raising: RL emphasised that liaison with the other groups was vital. BL and RL are in the process of applying for 50% of the Feasibility costs to Community Builders Fund (Social Investment Business) – deadline 13th April and RL has applied to a charitable organisation – now she awaits the outcome. PJ asked that if we were to receive funding from one charity might that prevent us from applying to another. RL replied ‘no’.

Summary:

- FS said it was necessary now to meet with other groups and decide the ‘critical path’: Information and transparency were essential.
- JThom said that reinstating the web site and presenting the village survey would be important with regard to this. JT asked that, because the main committee was having a stall at the Village Fayre, please could the Publicity and Marketing Group help organise this?
- RB said that the objective now for the design group was to sort the design brief and then get the hall designed.
- RL said the priority for the funding group was to submit applications to orgs in order to raise funds to meet the costs of the feasibility study.
- BL suggested that when they next meet, they should study all the other TOR’s and identify areas of commonality (overlap) and we need to agree which sub-group will take the lead on a particular issue and which sub-groups will be required to support – in this way, we will avoid duplication
- GT agreed to get the PC more actively involved.
- It was agreed that events such as the Village Fayre would provide us with the ideal opportunity to raise the profile of the project and of us a Committee.
- It was agreed that future meetings of the Committee would provide an opportunity for members of the local community to ask questions (at the beginning of each meeting) and that the following should attend: - BL Chair, RL - Vice- Chair (also Funding Sub-Group convenor), JT - Secretary, John T - Treasurer (also Marketing and PR Sub-Group convenor), RB (Design & Build Sub-Group convenor), VR (Community Fund Raising and Volunteers’ Sub-Group convenor)
- Also it was agreed that there should be PC representation at meetings if possible and also Claire Rivers as head teacher of St Mark’s School.

5. CHARITABLE TRUST STATUS and MEETINGS with PC and AiRS (27th March) and RIX & KAY (29th March):

BL asked SR to summarise the PC meeting with Louise Beaton and Ian Davison from Hedley’s Solicitors at which BL and JT were present. SR said that the main gist of the meeting was to discuss the absence of a lease for the OVH. The PC has got to establish title. During the course of the meeting it was established that the VH Committee also needs to demonstrate lease title and it was therefore necessary that the PC and OVH gather as much information as possible to inform their search. It was suggested that the HDCC, the Village Hall Committee and the Playing field Committee should combine forces eventually into one charitable trust to build the new centre.

The Leases to the Playing field and St Marks School House Trust land were also discussed as well as future funding for the Community Centre project. [See attached notes of the meeting]. EW commented that the school currently has all the archival information that Peter Gillies gathered when ‘Hadlow Down: an Autobiography’ was written to celebrate the Millennium; some of this would no doubt prove useful

ACTION: It was agreed that Peter Gillies should be contacted by JT

BL said that he and RL had met with Alan Zeal, a senior solicitor with Rix & Kay to discuss charitable status and the advice they were given ran counter to that of Ian Davison. It was felt that because the objectives of the three charities were at the moment different it would be difficult to combine. GT felt that this would need to be clarified before any new leases were agreed.

ACTION: BL to contact the Charity Commission for clarification and share information with all Committee members in advance of next meeting

BL had understood that the School House Trustees were considering an annual rent of £500 as part of the arrangements of the new lease and asked when this would payment would start. GT stated that this would only happen once the new build was ready and that such an understanding would be specified within a 'heads of agreement' drawn up between the PC and the School House Trustees.

6. FORMULATION OF 'CRITICAL PATH':

It was agreed that each sub-group should create a list all the main research and logistics activities that it needs to undertake and provide a start and finish date, an estimate how long each will take and identify any factors that will could have a bearing on achieving these outcomes. It is important for us to identify which activities are dependent on other activities before they can start or for them to be completed - these need to be mapped. It is usual for each sub-group to map its own activities itself and for the main Committee to combine all the activities into a consolidated project plan with all the dependencies highlighted.

In order to speed up the process, BL, FS, JThom, and N Hell to meet before the next meeting to undertake this task and share with the convenors of each sub-group – the consolidated plan will be discussed and agreed at our next meeting.

7. ANALYSIS OF PARISH SURVEY:

PJ felt he would like more time to go into depth with the survey but judging by what he'd seen, this village must have the fittest population in Sussex because of the enthusiasm for dancing and fitness classes! He had produced a breakdown of numbers in the tick boxes but would like more time to study the 'comments'.

[VR re-joined meeting at 9.15 and SR left at 9.20]

PJ said that the need for a community meeting area came up a lot, also a youth club. He felt that the tick-box method wasn't entirely reliable but he would like to go through the survey again to establish how the hall is used now and how it would be used in the future.

ACTION: PJ to email the information to JThom to put on the web.

BL felt that a critical part of the business plan future will be to cross-reference possible activities with needs identified in the survey; also to examine what other local halls provide for. EW suggested looking at other things in the village i.e. there was really no need for the adult computer education in a hall because that was being covered by the School in their IT suite. PJ and BL mentioned the potential conflict of interest with other organisations in the Village e.g. other fund raising activities such as the school's aims for a pre-school to be built.

8. OTHER BUSINESS:

i) Visits to other halls which was mentioned earlier – JT had investigated a possible visit to Barcombe New Village Hall. The best date for everyone was 5th May

ACTION: JT will confirm this.

Other halls mentioned were Pett Village Hall, Herstmonceux, Dial X and High Hurstwood.

ACTION: JT to organise

PJ suggested keeping an eye on what was happening with Buxted's new build. EW mentioned the desire of some people at St Mark's Church to use the current building as a village hall. Jo Dummer is already using it for some of her tap-dancing classes.

ii) The volunteer time sheet was signed by everyone present.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 10th May 7. 30pm Committee Room, Village Hall

Meeting closed at 9.45pm