

Bruisyard Village Hall Committee**Minutes of the meeting held at 7.45pm on 24 May in Bruisyard Village Hall**

Present: Thelma Barham (TB), Miranda Campbell (MC), Kevin Chattell (KC), Paul Church (PC), David Goode (DG), Albert Lain (AL), Anne Smith (AS), David Smith (DS), Margaret Sinclair (MS)

Apologies: None

DS opened the meeting by thanking the members for volunteering to join the Village Hall committee. The meeting noted that the Village Hall was an asset owned by the Parish Council with the management delegated to the Village Hall committee which had its own constitution. The Village Hall had been accepted as a charity for tax purposes by HMRC and was eligible for gift aid payments. The Village Hall had to be managed separately to the Parish Council as Parish/Local Councils are not eligible for charitable status. The funds held by the Village Hall are managed in a separate bank account and are restricted to Village Hall expenditure only and cannot be used to pay for or subsidise Parish Council or other activities. The Village Hall accounts are consolidated into the Parish Council as part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

DS reported that the Constitution required a minor update since it was agreed in 2008. Namely to allow payments to be made by online banking using dual authorisation and to allow a committee member to take on a paid role as caretaker at an agreed hourly rate. All agreed to these changes. DS agreed to update the constitution and upload to the Village Hall page on the village website.

ACTION: DS

1. Appointments

PC agreed to continue in the paid role as Caretaker and also agreed to take on the responsibility for the bar. AS agreed to be Chairman and KC agreed to continue as Treasurer. DS agreed to take on the role as Secretary but noted his wish that this would be on an interim basis as he felt that participation in village committees should involve as many households in the village as possible and would step down from the committee when additional members volunteered. All agreed to these appointments.

2. Committee Membership and Roles

It was agreed that PC as Caretaker would be responsible for general maintenance, procurement of consumables (soap, toilet rolls, dishwasher liquid etc) and bar stocks. KC agreed to liaise with PC to arrange a debit card.

ACTION: KC,PC

MC noted that a general maintenance checklist would be good practice. DG agreed and mentioned the need to regularly check the hot water supply to prevent legionnaires disease. All agreed and MC offered to draft the checklist and distribute to members for amendment.

ACTION: MC

It was agreed that responsibility for special projects (e.g. Fire door, patio/terrace, etc) would be assigned by committee agreement to either a committee member or sub-group of committee members as appropriate.

DS mentioned that all members would have access to the Village Hall google calendar for bookings. If approached regarding booking the hall, members can reserve the requested date/time in the online calendar and direct the request to either DS or ask the person to fill in the online Village Hall Booking Enquiry form on the village website.

ACTION: All

KC recommended that an Event promotion/Publicity role be assigned to a committee member. All agreed and were asked to consider if they would like to take on this role at the next meeting.

ACTION: All

3. Finance Report

KC reported that the Village Hall currently had £33722 in the bank account. This had increased significantly over the past year due to the Government grants for community buildings amounting to £28708. These grants were administered by East Suffolk Council. Expenditure had been incurred on Covid prevention measures such as signage and sanitisers. The final grant received (£8k) was to help restart activities and KC noted that it could take some considerable time for bookings to get back to 2019 levels.

AS noted that the use of credit/debit cards had increased significantly over the pandemic period and recommended that a card reader is bought as many are now preferring to pay by card rather than cash. Zettle and Sumup both offer a card reader service with no monthly fees and a low transaction fee (1.7% Zettle, 1.65% Sumup). The Zettle system has a better stock control system which could be of help in managing bar stocks and re-ordering. All agreed that a card reader should be purchased. KC, AS and PC agreed to investigate the options and proceed with ordering a card reader from the selected supplier.

ACTION: AS,PC,KC

4. Drainage and Septic Tank

AS reported on recent problems with the cesspool requiring excessive emptying which may be due to ingress of groundwater, possibly from a fault in the cesspool flask or connecting pipes. AS commented that the normal water consumption for the hall was 2-3 cubic metres/month. KC added that under normal conditions the cesspool required emptying 2.5 times/year at a cost of ~£1k. Over the past year however, the cesspool had filled with no water being used in the hall indicating a problem had developed. AS suggested that a septic tank would be a better option and a quotation was expected from GoTankers who had already done sample tests to check on the drainage field being acceptable for a septic tank installation. All agreed that the next steps should be to get the cesspool inspected for damage and MC suggested Binders as a good company and offered to contact them to do the inspection.

ACTION: MC

Dependent on the outcome of the inspection the decision would then be taken by the committee to either repair the cesspool or replace it with a new septic tank. All noted that a digester would not be a viable alternative due to the usage pattern of the hall. MC thought the amount charged by Go Tankers for the drainage field checks was excessive and competitive tenders should be sought from other registered septic tank installers if the decision was taken to install a new septic tank. DS noted that before quotations were requested from potential installers, an online submission would need to be made to the East Suffolk Planning Advice service to confirm whether planning permission was required.

5. Fire Exit and Hirer briefing notes

KC reported on his concerns with the existing fire exit which had to be unlocked before any use of the hall. As the fire exit is currently a double door, both need to be unlocked to give sufficient width to allow wheelchair access. All agreed that the current fire exit needs to be upgraded. AS reported that a quotation initiated by Robert Smith who was the architect for the hall had been received from a potential supplier. This was for a hardwood fire door and frame. The door being 1m wide and the overall design being to match the other frames/doors on the south side of the hall. PC offered to request a quotation based on the same design from AllGlass and KC offered to get a quotation from a Norfolk fire door supplier. AS would send the design requirements to PC and KC so competitive tenders could be obtained. DG offered to review the quotations when received and give his recommendation on the preferred supplier to the committee.

ACTION: AS,PC,KC,DG

6. Village Hall Lighting

AS reported on the upgrade of the lighting to LEDs in the entrance hall and toilets that had been completed last year. The emergency lighting had also been replaced. AS recommended that the committee now approve the upgrade of the lighting to dimmable LED panels in the main hall to complete the project. DG recommended that an additional 3 or 4 LED panels were also procured at the same time as spares. All agreed and asked AS to obtain a quotation from the electrical contractor and email to members for their agreement to proceed.

ACTION: AS

7. Electricity Meter

KC reported that agreement had been given to the electricity supplier to change the electricity meter to a smartmeter. The advantage being that this should avoid the need for estimated readings and lead to more accurate billing.

8. Terrace

The meeting discussed the proposal from PC and AS for a terrace to be built on the south side of the hall with a connecting path to the existing concrete area by the kitchen door. The aim of the terrace would be to provide an attractive outdoor extension of the main hall, a stable and mud-free area for the picnic tables and minimise the ingress of mud and stones into the hall. DS summarised the planning permission that was granted for the village hall and the requirements placed on any hard surfaces such as the car park and path being of a porous/ water permeable construction. The proposed design for the terrace should be submitted online to the East Suffolk Planning Advice service to see if planning permission would be needed and guidance on any design requirements and/or building regulations. All agreed that the terrace would be a very worthwhile improvement to the village hall and a useful facility for the Park. Various design options were discussed. The preferred design to be submitted for Planning Advice is attached with the following outline requirements;

- Permeable resin bound paving construction having a slip-resistant surface.
- A total area of 87sqm including the path to the existing concrete by the bin area.
- Neutral colour to blend with the visual appearance of the village hall.
- The terrace level to slope away from the building onto the grass with a fall of 1:80.

AS agreed to submit the online planning enquiry and report back to the committee.

ACTION: AS

9. Future Events

KC updated the members on current bookings. The hall had now re-opened for pilates for 2 sessions per week. Two weddings had been booked for 2022 and 2023. A few booking enquiries had been received but fairly slow so far. A booking enquiry had been made to restart the drumming sessions after 21 June and advice was given regarding minimising potential noise problems. The sessions would be on Saturday mornings, once a month.

10. Village Hall 10 year Celebration/Re-opening

PC mentioned that this was planned as an event for July 2020 but had to be cancelled due to the Covid lockdown. The overall view of the meeting was that as the anniversary had now passed it was now less relevant and efforts should be directed to organising new events.

11. AOB

AL requested that a list of all committee members and contact details be sent to the members.

ACTION: DS

12. Date of next meeting

The next meeting was confirmed for Monday 19 July 2021 in the Village Hall after the BSAC meeting.

David Smith
25 May 2021

