

## WEST NORTHUMBERLAND COMMUNITY BUILDINGS CONSORTIUM

### MINUTES OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD 7<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2014 AT RIDING MILL PARISH HALL.

- 1 Present  
Mike Wood (Chair), Adrian Hinchcliffe, Pat Johnston, Michael Elphick Keith Robson, Liz Stewart.  
David Easby, Pam Pryor, Roly Taylor, Margaret Weatherly.
- 2 Apologies for Absence  
Georgia Shorrocks
- 3 Approval of the Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held 23.01.14  
The minutes were approved.
- 4 Matters Arising from the Minutes  
(a) PRS/PPL Licensing  
The outcome of the PRS/PPL review had not yet been announced.
- 5 Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)  
David Wright of Slaley had passed the test and was now testing. Alan Thompson was still to qualify but had been involved with testing at Shepherd's Dene the last week. Shepherd's Dene was now complete and members led by Denis Peel were to do Minsteracres later in the month. A question was raised about the certificates for those who had passed the test recently. Mike Wood was to investigate.  
The certification for the original volunteer testers would expire in July 2014. There was a need to re-certify six of the volunteers except Liz Stewart and Melvyn Whatmough. It was agreed to contact the North Northumberland Village Halls Consortium to see if a joint workshop can be arranged.  
For 2014/15 it is anticipated that the Consortium will have eight qualified volunteer testers plus Mike Wood as a reserve. It was suggested that we need an additional volunteer in the west of the area to replace Liz and Melvyn.  
It was agreed that the annual review of the PAT testing scheme should take place in July and we would try to meet at Shepherd's Dene.
- 6 Northumberland Energy Club  
A payment had been notified from LSI of £93.50 for the quarter ending 31 March 2014.  
The Secretary had been talking to LSI who had offered their services for a publicity campaign for the Club. A draft publicity letter was circulated at the meeting. This is to be sent to all members who are not members of the Club. A similar letter is being approved by the North Northumberland Village Halls Consortium. It was considered worthwhile mounting this campaign for only 15 out of 62 members of this consortium are members of the club and an even lesser number in NNVHC. The question of publicising to non-members was considered and it was suggested that we circulate a poster to all members for display on their notice boards.  
Guy Opperman MP will be made aware of the Club at the same time as the publicity going out.
- 7 Web Site  
Michael Elphick reported that the number of accesses to the web site was still increasing. Michael suggested that someone be appointed to work with him on the web site so that we have a second person who is trained. This to be considered at the AGM. See also paragraph 17 below.
- 8 Membership Update  
Liz Stewart produced a schedule to suggest that 46 member had paid their annual subscription leaving 16 still to renew. It was agreed that the Secretary would follow up on the non-payers.

The point was raised that there are a number of new community buildings that may benefit from membership of the Consortium, for example Haydon Bridge Library. These may not be pure 'village or community halls' but our constitution does provide for them to be members. Concern was expressed that recruiting too many of these type of members may lead the Consortium away from its original purpose. It was agreed that this issue would be discussed at the AGM in the Autumn.

**9 Treasurers Report**

Liz reported that the bank balance was £3,989.01 at 31 March 2014. Income for the six months was £1,315 with expenditure of £314.

**10 New Initiatives**

Progress with the New Initiatives was reported as follows:

**(a) Northumberland Energy Club**

Reported above under minute 6.

**(b) Insurance**

To be undertaken by the next meeting.

**(c) Valuation of Community Buildings for Insurance Purposes**

To be taken up with the Insurance Companies.

**(d) Quotations for Electrical Work**

To move forward later in the Summer

**(e) Thermal Imaging Camera Scheme**

It was known that Northumbrian University has a camera and have used it in the Tyne Valley. Pat Johnston agreed to approach a contact he knows at the University to see if they would be interested in taking part in the proposed scheme.

**(f) Safeguarding**

To move forward later in the year.

**(g) Licensing for Village Halls.**

Members thought that it would be useful for the Consortium to have a guide to licensing. Members were often seeking guidance on the various aspects of licensing including licences for gaming. This would be investigated.

**(h) Building Services**

To move forward later in the year.

**11 BOSS Project Final Meeting**

Mike Wood and Adrian Hinchcliffe had attended the final meeting of the BOSS Project at Sadberge near Darlington. At the meeting a 'Factfile' was presented. The Factfile has been prepared as part of a strategy to ease the burden of administration on small voluntary organisations. It contains a comprehensive statement of rules and practices of the voluntary organisation. It is ideal for members of the Consortium and will enable improved access to quality guidance. A copy of the file had been brought back and it was planned to put it on the web site and inform members of it.

**12 Members Training requirements**

Following the trawl of members several had indicated their training needs. These are:

- First Aid - 4 Halls
- Food Hygiene – 6 Halls
- Insurance and Risk Assessment – 2 Halls
- Web Site Development – 3 Halls
- Social Media – 1 Hall

It was agreed to organise appropriate 'certified' training courses. Provided there is space available we should offer spaces to non members. It was agreed to charge the following prices per head:

- Members £10.00
- Non Members £20.00

- 13 Community Action Northumberland (CAN)**  
 CAN had applied for two commissions with the County Council but had not been successful with either. This meant that in this year (2014/15) it would incur a huge deficit unless ways are found of increasing income or reducing costs. It was not known how this would affect the service given to the two Consortia. CANs Spring meeting will take place in May and it is hoped that things will be clearer by then.
- 14 Employment or Contract**  
 The issue of employing people or treating them as contractors was raised. Employment is very onerous on members in the records they have to keep, the taxation, pension and social security requirements and the exposure to possible future redundancy costs. Using the 'contractor' status avoids most of these issues. Some members used employment route whilst others used contractors. Some members thought that Customs and Excise were wishing to see greater use of the employment status. It was agreed to seek advice on this issue from David Francis /Louise Curry.
- 15 Licensing for the Sale of Alcohol**  
 Several members had responded to the recent survey by the Home Office. There was a suggestion that the cost of a TEN licence would rise considerably. Members were concerned that if this happened Halls would not be able to afford the licence and as a direct result many profitable functions that take place at Halls (ie weddings receptions, fund raising events, social functions and private parties) would not be held. It was agreed to continue lobbying on this issue and to make our County Councillors and MP aware.
- 16 Northumberland Uplands LEADER**  
 The Northumberland Uplands LEADER is coming up for renewal. A series of meeting are to take place to encourage residents and community organisations to identify the priorities for the coming programme. It was agreed to circulate these to members.
- 17 Succession Planning**  
 It is known that Liz Stewart will not be standing as Treasurer at the AGM. Pat Johnston said that he may be in a position to take on this role. Adrian Hinchcliffe also said that later in the year he and his wife were moving to the Northumberland Coast. Adrian said that he was willing to continue as Secretary until the AGM of 2015 if need be. This would give a longer period to identify a new Secretary. Mike Wood confirmed that the Constitution does support an official who does not live in the area. The suggestion was made that the Consortium could consider appointing an Assistant Secretary at the next AGM.
- 18 Date, time and Location of the next Management Committee Meeting.**  
 Monday 2nd June 2014 commencing at 9.30am at Newbrough Town Hall.

Members sincerely thanked Pam Pryor for the hospitality received this morning and for holding the meeting there.

Agreed as a correct record

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Date.....