

## WEST NORTHUMBERLAND COMMUNITY BUILDINGS CONSORTIUM

### MINUTES OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD 23 JANUARY 2014 AT RIDING MILL PARISH HALL.

- 1 **Present**  
Mike Wood (Chair), Adrian Hinchcliffe, Pat Johnston, Georgia Shorrocks, Keith Robson, Liz Stewart, David Easby, Pam Pryor, Roly Taylor, Margaret Weatherly.
- 2 **Apologies for Absence**  
Michael Elphick.
- 3 **Trustees Declaration and Acceptance 2013/14**  
Those present signed the annual declaration and acceptance form.
- 4 **To Note the Minutes of the AGM held 06.11.13.**  
The minutes were noted and no alterations suggested. To go to the 2014 AGM for approval.
- 4 **Approval of the Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held 06.11.13.**  
The minutes were approved.
- 5 **Matters Arising from the Minutes**
  - (a) **PRS/PPL Licensing**  
The Secretary outlined a situation that had occurred at Hexham Community Centre. The Centre has a number of offices that are rented out to other organisations and are therefore private. The rent for these areas has been included in the income submitted to PRS for determination of the annual music licence charge. CAN/ACRE had taken this up with PRS and it had been agreed that the income from this rental could be excluded from the figure sent to PRS for determination of the tariff. One member queried whether this would apply to income received for having a post office in the Hall. The Secretary thought it would apply but would check this out with CAN/ACRE.
  - (b) **Raising Funds On-Line**  
This information is still to be circulated to members.
- 6 **Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)**  
There has been some confusion over the progress with testing especially with Hexham Community Centre. This has now been resolved and testing is to take place soon. There is hope that the programme will be back on schedule by the end of February 2014. Roly Taylor reported that he had passed the PAT Testing course and had achieved certification. The meeting congratulated Roly. There are still two new volunteer testers to take the course and the Consortium will have to purchase two additional certification courses for them. The Secretary said that Minsteracres had joined the members asking for the service.
- 7 **Northumberland Energy Club**  
A payment had been notified from LSI of £71.35 for the quarter ending 31 December 2013. Of this £8.34 was due to North Northumberland Community Buildings Consortium. It was agreed to launch a new publicity campaign to promote the Club. Members were reminded that it was fully open to businesses and other charities. All they had to do is to log into the web site click on 'Northumberland Energy Club' and follow the set out procedure to obtain a no-obligation quotation. LSE Utility Brokers Ltd would be approached to share the publicity campaign. It was suggested that we should make Guy Opperman MP aware of the Club.
- 8 **Web Site**  
Michael Elphick sent a report through the Secretary saying that the usage of the web site was very much as previously reported.

**9 Membership Update**

The Secretary apologised for sending out the membership demand one quarter late. Liz Stewart reported that she had received a good number of payments.

**10 Treasurers Report**

Liz reported that the bank balance was £3,352 at 31 December 2013. All outstanding PAT payments had been received for the 2012/13 testing cycle. She reported that the bank had closed its local branch and that it would be necessary to find a new bank which is represented locally. She was considering the Unity Trust Bank which allowed paying in through post offices.

**11 New Initiatives**

The Committee discussed the following projects which are suggested for the current year.

**(a) Insurance**

To refresh the panel of companies by contacting them and ensuring that they still want to be part of our panel and offer discounts to members.

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

This initiative is to set up arrangements for the periodic valuation of community buildings to establish a value for insurance purposes. This process had been started about two years ago but was not finalised. Community Action Northumberland (CAN) at one time had a volunteer surveyor who was prepared to do valuations but it is unlikely that we will be able to find anyone willing to do this due to professional indemnity and the need for continuing professional development. It was suggested that some insurance companies may be prepared to pay for this work and it is worth checking with them. We will ask this of the companies on the panel.

**(c) Quotations for Electrical Work**

Most Halls need their fire alarm system (where fitted), emergency lighting and fire fighting appliances maintained once per annum. Northfire of Acomb offer a good deal on fire appliances and are training their staff to do fire alarm maintenance. The Secretary had also become aware that they offer portable appliance testing at very competitive rates for a small number of appliances which are done at the same time. The Secretary would like to have further discussions with Northfire to determine their best prices and any discounts for members. There was the question of whether the Consortium should offer an exclusive deal to Northfire but members thought that this was contrary to the principles of competition that the Consortium had established and it would be better to establish a panel of competing companies.

**(d) Thermal Imaging Camera Scheme**

Some thought had been given to whether the Consortium would be better encouraging CAN to take on this project for the whole of Northumberland. Potentially it was a big project requiring many different skills for it to be successful. Also the camera would be expensive to purchase although Louise Currie had made the Secretary aware that there may be a camera owned by the County Council. The project would be investigated further including a discussion with CAN. Members agreed that a scheme of the sort envisaged would be useful at their halls and for other community buildings in their communities.

It was also suggested that the Universities may be interested in this project and we should check with the Electricity companies to see if they would also contribute in some way. The suggestion was also made that grants may be available from windfarm sources for those Halls that are within their grant giving zones.

**(e) Safeguarding**

Now that the new legislation has settled down it is essential to update the Consortium's guidance on safeguarding. Adrian and Mike had both attended a course and would work together to produce a new statement.

It was also suggested that we should give guidance on password control for the use of computers in village halls. Caroline Friend of Voices was mentioned as an expert.

**(f) 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.

**(g) Building Services**

Members thought it would be helpful to have guidance for Halls where significant building work is required. It was mentioned that it is essential to get professional help in scoping what is needed. Architects and Structural Engineers should be used as appropriate before a specification is compiled for building work. CAN may be able to help with specifying the phases and in pointing in the right direction for funding. It was mentioned that Brian Bell of B P Bell Associates Ltd of Burn Lane, Hexham may be able to help Village Halls that need help. Windfarm grants were also mentioned in this context.

**12 ACRE Survey on Village Halls**

Louise Currie had made the Secretary aware of a survey of village Halls that is being conducted by ACRE. This will gather information about the Halls and how they are managing after the recession. Members should be encouraged to complete the survey. The Secretary would be sending it out in the next few days.

**13 Durham County Council – Pack and CD – Toolkit for Village Hall Management.**

This pack had been received by Slaley Commemoration Hall. It was thought to be very good. Louise Currie had been made aware of it.

**14 BOSS Project**

The BOSS project was coming to an end and there was to be a celebratory event in February. The Chair and Secretary were to attend. Members were asked to inform Mike or Adrian of any other projects that could be taken on by the BOSS team if any new finance is forthcoming.

**15 Community Action Northumberland (CAN)**

The Secretary said that he had been elected as a Trustee of CAN to represent the Consortium. The voluntary Sector was coming to the end of the current three year grant programme. Overall the funds made available by the County Council for the sector from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 was to be reduced by 25 percent. It was not known yet whether CAN would receive any funding. If it does not, it may impact upon the service that the Consortium receives from CAN.

**16 Training**

In the Newsletter sent out by the Secretary in December he had asked for members to let him have their training requirements. So far only two had responded although it was pointed out that many Halls had not met since December. Of those responding the following were the requirements – First Aid, Food Hygiene, Manual Handling, Insurance/Risk Assessment, website. It was agreed that we should remind members of this request.

**17 Date, time and Location of the next Management Committee Meeting.**

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2014 commencing at 9.30am at Riding Mill Parish 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.....