

WEST NORTHUMBERLAND COMMUNITY BUILDINGS CONSORTIUM

MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 17 JULY 2008 AT THE STOCKSFIELD INSTITUTE AND COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION.

- 1 Present. – Mike Wood (Chairman), Malcolm Caisley, Norman Hooks (Part), Adrian Hinchcliffe, Elizabeth Stewart.
Representing Community Action-Northumberland – Jane Hart.**
- 2 Apologies – Michael Elphick, Bill Grigg, Pam Niven, Pam Prior, Keith Robson.**
- 3 Minutes of the Meeting held 12 June 2008.**

These were accepted as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
It was agreed that the minutes would be given page numbers and all actions to be highlighted.
- 4 Matters Arising**
 - (a) Discretionary Council Tax reductions for Charities.**

The Secretary reported that he had written to the Leader of the County Council and to Jill Dixon on this issue. There had been no response. It was agreed that the Secretary would contact the North Northumberland Village Halls Consortium to determine what stance they are taking on this issue with view to joint action. It was also agreed that it will be necessary to take further action no later than September, to ensure that this issue is understood by the County Council prior to the preparation of the budget and Council Tax proposals for 2009/10.

Actions
Adrian Hinchcliffe to contact the North Northumberland Village Halls Consortium.
- 5 Progress with the Constitution**

The Chairman reported that the constitution had still to be signed by three Committee members – Bill Grigg, Pam Niven and Keith Robson. It was agreed that the Secretary would contact these members and ask they to sign the Constitution and a time convenient to the.

Actions
Adrian Hinchcliffe to contact the three members listed above.
- 6 Progress with the insurance Companies**

The Secretary produced a schedule giving the up to date position on what has been offered by the companies to members of the Consortium. The schedule is attached to the minutes. The Secretary said that he was still negotiating with one company but expected to conclude this within the next few days. Members were delighted by the offers of discount that were being made by the companies on a non-exclusive basis. It was agreed that details of the offer of discount would be sent out to members once they had paid their membership fee. This would be done by the Secretary. It was also agreed that a listing of members would be held in an appropriate location to enable the Insurance Companies to check that applicants were members of the Consortium. This could be a listing on a web site or a listing which is periodically circulated to the Companies. A further option was for the listing to be held by Louise Currie of Community Action Northumberland. These options would be considered and a decision made at the next meeting. It was also thought worthwhile that a small number of case studies are compiled for members and prospective members of the experience, by some members, of obtaining insurance quotations.

Actions

1 The Secretary to complete the negotiations with the Insurance Companies and establish the administrative arrangements.

2 The Secretary to prepare a guide on the obtaining of the insurance quotations and to send this out to members once they have paid their membership fee.

3 The Secretary to prepare a proposal for the next meeting suggesting the most effective method of holding a list of members which would be available to the Insurance Companies.

4 The Secretary to prepare some case studies on the obtaining of insurance quotations.

7 Progress with the Bank Accounts

The Treasurer confirmed that the application forms to open the accounts were now complete and now that she had received the first membership cheque she would be able to set up the accounts at the Bank.

8 Invitation to be sent by the Consortium to Community Buildings to join the Consortium.

It was agreed that a letter would be sent out to all the Halls and Community Buildings in West Northumberland inviting them to join the Consortium. A draft letter had been put together by the Chairman and Secretary and it was agreed that this should be used with some modifications. Along with the letter would be sent an application form to be completed by the applicant. The form would request the applicant to forward their cheque and the completed application form to the Treasurer.

Jane Hart offered the help of Community Action-Northumberland in printing and despatching the letters and using the data base of addresses held at the Hexham Office. It was agreed that we would aim to do this on Monday 21 July 2008. The Chairman offered his help to get the letters issued. It was noted that the letter would be sent by email where an email address was held for the potential member.

Action

1 Adrian Hinchcliffe to complete the letter and application form and get it to Sue Hacking by the weekend.

2 Sue Hacking to produce the letters and to despatch by post or email.

3 Mike Wood to assist Sue Hacking with the preparation and despatch of the letters.

9 Membership Records

Members were informed that the Chairman and Secretary were encountering technical difficulties in getting a copy of the names and addresses of Community Building groups throughout the area, held by Community Action-Northumberland. This problem needed to be solved. It would also be essential for the Consortium to establish a data base of members and potential members. Who would hold this and ensure that it is updated correctly will need to be determined. It was agreed that the Treasurer would notify the Secretary of each applicant who pays the membership fee so that a membership pack could be sent out to them.

Actions

1 The Chairman/Secretary and Sue Hacking to resolve the issue of getting the data base of members to an official of the Consortium.

2 The Chair, Secretary and Treasurer to resolve where and who is to hold the principal data base of members and potential members.

3 The Treasurer to inform the Secretary of each applicant who pays their membership fee.

10 The boundary of West Northumberland

An enquiry about membership has been received from Elsdon Village Hall. It was queried whether Elsdon lies in North Northumberland or West Northumberland. It was also noted that we need to be clear on the boundary. It was suggested that we talk to the North Northumberland Village Halls Consortium about this issue.

Action

1 Adrian Hinchcliffe to contact the North Northumberland Village Halls Consortium.

11 Consortium Web Site

Members discussed to possibility of developing a web site for the Consortium. It was thought that a web-site would be an essential tool for communicating. Reference was made to the highly professional web-site of the Teesdale Village Halls Consortium. The Secretary said that Simon Bland of Rural Click had been in touch with him and offered a facility to self-build a web site which would be free of charge. Details of this facility were handed to the Chairman who offered to look at the proposal. It was agreed that until the Consortium is much clearer on our needs for a web-site we should select the cheapest way of establishing a web-site especially when we have no funds.

There was some discussion about applying to O2 for a grant to produce a web-site. However, this will not be pursued until we are clearer on what the Consortiums needs are.

Actions

1 Mike Wood to review the free self-build web site facility put forward by Simon Bland.

12 Finance

One member raised the issues of funding and running costs. The £10 membership fee from each member will be all the income that the Consortium will receive. This should be sufficient to cover the operating costs which will be mainly postage. No estimates have been put together yet although this will need to be done soon when it is clearer how many members the Consortium is likely to get.

If additional funds are needed, either for routine operation or specific projects, grant applications can be considered.

Action

1 The Secretary and Treasurer to compile a budget statement for the next meeting.

13 The Next General Meeting

This will be considered at the next meeting when we are clearer on the number of members.

14 Next Meeting of the Management Committee

Will be held at Greenhead Village Hall on Tuesday 16 September 2008 commencing at 7.30pm.