

WEST NORTHUMBERLAND COMMUNITY BUILDINGS CONSORTIUM

MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 3 JUNE 2009 AT GREENHEAD VILLAGE HALL.

- 1 **Present** **Mike Wood (Chairman), Malcolm Caisley, Adrian Hinchcliffe, Norman Hooks, Keith Robson and Louise Currie (CAN).**
- 2 **Apologies for Absence** **Mike Elphick, Elizabeth Stewart, Jane Hart.**
- 3 **Minutes of the Meeting held 5 May 2009.**
The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.
- 4 **Matters Arising from the minutes.**
(a) Water Charges
It was understood that Northumbrian Water has not yet implemented the new policy. There is an online petition to complete. Louise Currie to investigate and let the Secretary have details.
Action – Louise Currie
- (b) Discretionary Rates Relief**
It is understood that scoring of the application forms will commence on 10 June 2009 and notifications will commence on 17 June 2009. Where a Hall/community building has not been known to the rating authority in the past, this is likely to trigger a request for a Rates Assessment. Once this has been done and a rateable value is established it could result in water charges becoming due. In such circumstances there could be an issue with charges going back for up to six years.
- 5 **Membership**
Membership stands at 44 but it is believed that Horsley WI have sent in an application. There was a discussion on the further recruitment of up to 15 Halls that are known not to be members. Louise Currie offered the services of CAN for the distribution of a mail shot to those Halls/Community Buildings that are not members.
Action – Louise Currie and Adrian Hinchcliffe.
- 6 **Review of the Special Meeting**
Members considered the meeting to be very successful. Eighteen Halls were represented. A great deal of information and ideas had been imparted to members and it was agreed that it should also go in a Newsletter. Some thought was given to future topics for Special Meetings and Louise said that a talk by the Land Registry had been well received by the North Northumberland Village Halls Consortium.
- 7 **Members Benefits Initiatives**
(a) Electrical Installation Testing, Testing of Emergency Lighting Systems, Testing of Fire Alarm Systems.
The Secretary had written to a number of companies who are known to carry out the above work in member Halls. He had received responses from three companies so far. One company had expressed the view that benefits could be generated for members if we could arrange for a number of Halls to be done at the same time to lessen travel. This is likely to be a recurring theme from other contractors. It was agreed that the Secretary should not get involved in trying to ‘programme’ calls to member Halls but this is something that individual members may consider worthwhile doing. It was considered that the Consortium’s Panel should work in the same manner as it does for Insurance. Members noted the companies that had not responded and some were to be reminded of the need to reply. Norman Hooks also mentioned that Jack Hignett of Stocksfield may be interested in going on the Panel and he would make an enquiry about that.
- (b) PAT Testing**
The Secretary is awaiting details of the proposed joint scheme with North Northumberland Village Halls Consortium.
- (c) Energy Control Systems**
A Trustee of the Newton and Bywell Community Hall is evaluating a sophisticated control system that had been brought to the Consortium’s attention. Details of the evaluation will be give at the next meeting.
- (d) Energy Purchasing**
The Secretary had been negotiating with an energy broker that has set up in Newcastle. An outline agreement was considered by the meeting. It was noted that members would not be forced to accept any contract offered by the broker. It was also recognised that there are significant administrative procedures required to get the agreement working. It was agreed that we would take up references for the Broker and the Secretary would arrange to meet the Company.

Action The Secretary to take up reference and meet the broker.

8 Web-Site Development

Mike Wood pleaded with members of the Management Committee to let him have the summary information about their Halls that he requires for the web-site. Until this is received the project is held up. Mike confirmed that he is able to insert hyper links onto the web-site.

9 Charity Incorporated Organisation

Norman Hooks stated that the information he had given at the last meeting on the Stocksfield Institute pursuing the status of Charity Incorporated Organisation had proved to be a premature. He has now been advised that this status may not be available until April 2010.

10 Annual General Meeting

Will be held on Thursday 12 November 2009 at the Newbrough Town Hall.

11 Strategic Planning

It was agreed that at the next meeting the Committee should spend some time defining the likely direction of the Consortium over the next five to ten years. The Secretary offered to produce a short paper to assist with the discussions.

Action – Secretary to produce a ‘strategic paper’.

12 Group Purchasing possibilities

It was suggested that a further area for group purchasing may be the purchase of chairs, tables and other similar items. Members thought that whilst there may be some merit in this the frequency at which these sort of items are purchased may mitigate against any benefits being derived. Nevertheless it would be held over for consideration at a later time.

13 Emergency Lighting

Norman Hooks reported that the emergency lighting at his Hall had to be on 24 hours each day and he wondered whether this was correct. The Secretary agreed to investigate this issue.

14 Refuse Collection

Louise Currie enquired whether halls are being required to make payments for refuse collection. Of those members present none were aware of any payment for this service. The Newton and Bywell Community Hall does not receive a service. Adrian Hinchcliffe said he would ask the Northumberland County Council if the Hall could have a collection to see what the response is.

15 Date of the Next Meeting

Thursday 13 August 2009 at the Newton and Bywell Community Hall commencing at 9.30am.

Mike Wood was thanked for the use of Greenhead Village Hall for the meeting and for the fine hospitality that members had received.

Minutes approved as correct

Signed

Position

Date