

Minutes of Bratton Clovelly Parish Hall Committee held on 9th March 2009

Present: G England (Chairman), H Down (Booking Secretary), L Eydon (Treasurer), G Cooke (Secretary), A Barrow, G Barrett, S Hendy, R Hopkins, R Moyse, E Perkins, R Woodward and P Worth.

- 1. Apologies:** J Codling, J Dowell, P Down, R Jordan and K Hunkin.
- 2. Minutes** of the meeting held on 16th February 2009 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters Arising:

Action

Car Park: Mr Penfold had completed the requested rectification work shortly after receiving the Secretary's letter, but Mr Worth drew attention to a further area requiring attention.

G.E

Payback Sign: The additional sign had yet to be put up in the Hall.

P.W/J.C

Hot Water System: The Chairman reported that the tanks had been replaced and the necessary plumbing work completed. Sarah Hendy indicated that the electrician had been to the Hall earlier in the day to progress the work and would be completing the work soon.

Fund Raising Lunch: Rosie Moyse reported that a profit of £802 had been made and a further £90 had been raised from the bar. She thanked all those who had helped and Committee members expressed their appreciation of all the efforts that she and her colleagues had put in to make the event so successful.

Chris Batters: Hester Down distributed tickets for sale.

All

4. Renewable Energy Funding: The Chairman indicated that some of the information previously provided, upon which decisions had been based at the last meeting, had proved to be incorrect: the Low Carbon Buildings Programme would not fund radiators. Advice had also been received that if a grant was received for all three energy options, as agreed at the last meeting, but planning problems were subsequently experienced, it would not be possible to transfer funds between different technologies. In the light of this, following consultation with Committee members, it was decided to abandon seeking funds for a wind turbine and to concentrate instead on the PV panels and the wood pellet boiler-based system.

The application to the LCBP for 50% of the cost of the PV panel installation had been completed and submitted on February 24th. The total cost of this installation amounts to £75,550, plus VAT at 5% of £3,777.50. The VAT element is not eligible for grant aid.

A decision was now awaited, although it was feared that funds may have already run out.

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman had attended the March meeting of the Parish Council, where agreement had been reached that planning applications would be made by the Parish Council. The PC agreed to fund this at a cost of £85. The Chairman reported that the planning application was now ready and requested the cheque. At the Parish Council meeting, the issue of VAT liability had also been raised. It had been suggested that the Parish Hall Management Committee might be able to claim VAT exemption, but the Chairman had investigated this possibility and this was not the case. He stated that he had mailed the PC Chairman and Clerk to this effect. He had been advised that the normal procedure, where the PC has an interest in the hall, is for the invoice to be made out to the Parish Council and the PC receive the grant money either direct or via the Hall Management Committee. The Parish Council then pay the invoice and claim back the VAT. The consequence, unless invoices for work done can be presented to the Council, would be that about £4,500 for the PV installation, plus around £6,000 for boiler and plumbing, would need to be provided from village funds to cover VAT, which could not be incorporated into grant funding.

It had been hoped that the Council would have been willing to allow invoices to be channelled in this way, since the Management Committee would ensure that it did not face any cost liability or cash flow problems, it owned the Hall and the proposed work would enhance the value of the Parish Council's asset. However, Philip Worth indicated that, upon reflection, the PC did not feel able to have the invoices channelled via the Council's account, fearing that there might be legal constraints. Committee members struggled to understand how there could be any question of such an action being either ultra vires or subject to any other legal constraint. It was therefore agreed to enter into further discussions with the PC, but that if these proved to be unsuccessful and the projects were faced with unclaimable VAT charges, then funding via a loan would be explored, albeit with very grave disappointment. Possible cash flow problems were identified and it was felt that they could be addressed by means of a bank bridging loan.

G.E

G.E/L.E

5. PV Panels: Plug into the Sun had been most helpful and had confirmed that 58 panels could be fitted to aluminium sub-frames, which would be attached directly to the building's A frame. There would not, therefore, be a weight problem with the roof. Plug into the Sun had assisted in the preparation of grant applications to cover half of the £75,550 cost.

6. DARE: At the last meeting, it had been agreed to seek Andrew Knox's assistance in preparing grant applications. However, his fees of £240 per day and the fact that 3 days would be required just to complete the Community Sustainable Energy Programme application,

had meant that this was a non-starter. The Chairman stated that it was not practical to expect an outsider to act alone: knowledge of the Hall was essential. In consultation with the Treasurer, it was agreed to employ Jacob Catrall to assist with computer work. Considerable help had been obtained in this way and it was agreed to send him £50 as thanks for his assistance.

L.E

7. TRECO and Plumber's Quote: Disappointment was expressed at the lack of response received from TRECO. A quote received from their nominated plumber, of £29,000 plus VAT, was thought to be over-specified. Blake Hendy had agreed to review it and Sarah Hendy also agreed to provide details of another approved plumber, since two competitive quotes are required RE4D and some other grant providers.

S.H

8. CSEP: The application deadline is 1st May, which would be followed by a meeting in June and feedback as to outcome within a couple of weeks of that meeting. It is budgeted that the other 50% of the PV Panel installation would be available from CSEP. The maximum grant from this source would be £50,000.

9. Bio-energy: The application had been partly completed and passed to TRECO, who would be seeking £24,000 from this source.

10. RE4D: This application had been passed to TRECO for completion of the technical details.

11. Insurance: Following meetings with representatives of the Parish Council, it had been thought that agreement had been reached on the best means of minimising both duplication of insurance cover and cost. However, Philip Worth reported that the Council would, upon reflection, prefer an alternative division of responsibility, so that in future the Parish Hall policy should be confined to the Hall buildings, the terrace, access ramps and steps. Philip Worth was asked to arrange for the Council to write formally setting out this solution.

P.W

Philip Worth also reported that DARE may be prepared to contribute to the costs of insurance cover for Parish Halls.

G.E/L.E

12. Treasurer's Report and Cash Flow: Linn Eydon reported that the bank balance currently stood at £8,900, following receipt of monies from the Fund Raising Lunch (see Item 3. above). Cash flow would only become a significant problem if VAT liability could not be mitigated by the involvement of the Parish Council, in which case bank facilities might have to be sought (see Item 4. above).

13. Roof: In view of the very high projected costs of internal insulation of the existing roof, the possibility of replacing the main roof with panels incorporating high standard insulation was suggested. The Committee agreed that this was the best way forward. It was understood

that the Community Council would be open to an application to provide grant aid to fund this. It would also be possible to approach West Devon and, if the grass roots funding was not needed for three phase connection, their funds could also be switched to roof replacement. It was agreed to explore this option and therefore to put on hold any repainting of the existing roof.

G.E

14. Keys: Concern was expressed about ongoing difficulties with loss of keys for the store room and PA system. It was agreed to provide sets for each of the main users, such as the bowls and youth clubs and, at Ros Woodward's suggestion, outside hirers of the Hall would be asked for a refundable deposit before receiving keys for their events.

H.D

15. School Room: Geoff Barrett reported that it was hoped to re-submit the HLF grant application in the next two weeks.

16. Any Other Business: Sarah Hendy reported that a light bulb had been broken by the Youth Club. It was agreed, at her suggestion, that the Club should replace the bulb and fit guards for the court lights.

S.H

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.10pm.

17. Next Meeting: The next meeting will be held in the Parish Hall on a date to be confirmed.

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