Shutford Village hall Rebuild Project Meeting Minutes

11/11/2014 at 7.30 pm at Shutford Village Hall

Present:
Gordon Freeman (GF)
Helen Nixseaman (HN)
Lynne Parsons (LP)
Roger Bancroft (RB)
Geraldine Bancroft (GB)
Athene Duffield (AD)
Dominic Cadbury (DC)
David Lake (DL)
Jenny Lake (JL)
Andrew McEwan (AM)
Carrie Finch (CF)
Mike Finch (MF)
David Leeson DL)
Kathleen Leeson (KL)
Christine Yarborough (CY)
Debbie Pitt (DP)

Circulation:
To those present, and:-
The Rebuild Project Help Group
The Village Hall Committee
Martin Doe for Village Website
Parish Council Members

1. Minutes of previous meeting on 2nd September 2014

All confirmed receipt of the previous minutes. Those that had attended, confirmed them as a true record.

2. Fundraising

2.1 Current target list for grant applications.

A number of villagers had come forward to suggest potential grant funders and some had approached charities for funding with mixed results. This has enabled the list of grant funding bodies to be reviewed and those that were not able to support our scheme had been removed from the target list. The remaining organisations had been approached by various people in the village with largely positive results. However, the likely level of funds available from them is in the order of £13,000. (See attached summary of current grant funding).

RB had been investigating the Lottery. There is a new initiative with the Daily Mirror called *Power to Change* which opens in 2015 for community enterprises. Each application must be accompanied by a business plan which is being written by RB. To do this, RB needs more information about what kinds of activities people can suggest that will be held in the hall.
It was acknowledged that applications to the Lottery can take a number of years. Research had been undertaken by DL and GF and it had been found that other villages had experienced delays in obtaining major Lottery grants of some 3-4 years. It might be possible for smaller projects to be granted within 6 months.

Action: RB to develop business plan for Lottery Application
Action: Ask villagers (at Exhibition on 15th Nov) for ideas of events

DEFRA funding is to be directed through the Rural Development Programme for England for Agricultural Communities in 2015. DEFRA is not currently funding community projects. Both Sharon White and Sue Roe-French have been looking into DEFRA funding.
Action: Explore RDPE further

2.2 Other fundraising actions

House Builders. HN has received a positive response from a number of housebuilders in Banbury and is continuing to chase up several she has approached. Taylor Wimpy is one such firm currently building in Bodicote and has given money to Cherwell Council for the community so there might be some support to be found there.
Action: HN to continue to chase her contacts.

Easy fundraising is a website which, after registering, will raise money whenever you buy online through various suppliers (supermarkets, Amazon, travel, utility companies, etc). The supplier will pay between 1.5-7% of your spend with an average of 3-4% although Sainsbury pay 50p per delivery. For Utilities some of them will pay a one-off amount (c.£21) when you swap over to them. When the money builds up to a certain amount it is transferred to the project's bank account. It can also be used as a search engine.
Action: Promotion throughout the village (including the businesses) by leaflets, Shutford News, website. CF to help take this forward.

Spacehive.co.uk is another website that enables online donations to be made directly to the Village Hall charity for the project. It functions in the same way that Just Giving does, although tends to be for community projects.
Action: GF to promote, throughout village.

2.3 Fundraising strategy going forward

GF invited DL to speak following his research into the project and the challenge of raising sufficient funding to cover the costs of the project. DL had spoken to other villages who have had recent experience of either rebuilding or extensively refurbishing their village halls, as well as the Oxford Rural Community Council, and some members of the Shutford Village Hall committee. DL has also looked carefully at the effect of time on fund raising and the current build inflation climate. The main points coming out of DL's research are as follows:-

1. Talking to other villages DL reported that they have said that in doing regular village fundraising events, the most that is likely to be raised by a village the size of Shutford would be between £3-4,000 per year. So other means of getting the bulk of money required would therefore have to be found.

2. The ORCC have said that because Shutford is in the north of the county, it does not qualify for funding from the waste and landfill tax credits. Cherwell have stopped giving grants, as have the County Council. ORCC has also confirmed that other villages were using the Public Works Loan route for funding their projects.

3. All new builds covered their running costs from hall rental income within the first year and continue to do so without village fund raising.

4. Two quotes have been received for the new building. The costs were currently expected to be £300k. DL pointed out that, the longer we take to fundraise, the more impact there will be from build cost inflation (at present between 5-7%). The pledges will remain at £100,000, while the total build costs will increase over time. Another factor is that the £25K that the Village hall has accumulated through careful control will, at some point, be needed for maintaining the hall in reasonable repair, thereby removing this element of the current funding provision.

5. DL had spoken to other village hall groups who had successfully deployed a Public Works Loan initiative. This had enabled other villages to raise substantial funds and successfully complete their projects.

6. DL confirmed that his findings were that it would probably not be possible to deliver the new hall without a Public Works Loan. It would need to be accepted that that route would need to be adopted, assuming the village were content to pay more on their precept, in return for a new village hall.

Those Parish Councillors (PC) present were unable to confirm the precise mechanism for consulting the village and agreeing on whether the Public Works Loan application should proceed. However, LP thought that the PC would first need to decide whether they wanted to take on the loan and then if they did, she thought that a referendum would have to be held. Although not confirmed, LP also thought that any consultation and referendum might need to be done independently. LP did not know if there would be a cost in carrying out that exercise.

Both PC members present agreed that the matter of the Public Works Loan could be added to the next Parish Council meeting agenda for the 7th January, by specific request to the clerk.
Action: GF to put a paper together and ask the Clerk of the PC to put the Public Works Loan onto the next agenda for the meeting on 7th January.

3. Feedback and Planning Submission
The feedback from villagers have been favourable with some good suggestions put forward including:-
 - WCs to be unisex,
 - the link to the Church to be made disabled friendly,
 - look carefully at storage provision,

- community shop, post office etc
- general support for the hall in its current location and with the current design.

It was agreed by the committee that a planning application should now be submitted. The cost will be £326, payable by the Village Hall. The PC has agreed that they would act as the planning applicant, thereby reducing the fee by half.
Action: GF to proceed with the application

4. Any Other business
A question as to how Balscote raised their funds was answered by saying it was primarily through one large donation and fundraising was over 12 years.

It was suggested that maybe it would be better if instead of a new village hall, the Church could be used for village activities. GF confirmed that this had been considered but the expense and red tape is prohibitive.

5. Date of Next Meeting.

January 2015 (date to be advised).