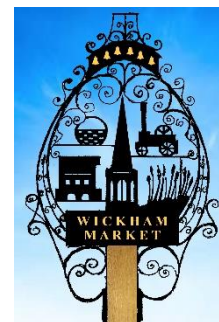


WICKHAM MARKET PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIR: IVOR FRENCH



MINUTES of the extra meeting of Wickham Market Parish Council held on
Wednesday 1 February 2023 at 19:00

- 1 **Present from the Council:** Cllr French (Chair)
Cllr Chenery (Vice Chair)
Cllr Horsnell
Cllr Jenkinson
Cllr Gray
Cllr Cooke
Cllr Dempsey-Gray
Cllr Stansfield
A. Besly (Clerk)
- Present from the Village Hall Trustees** Philip Tallent, Steve Flavell, Rob Rose, Clive Edmonds, Sue French, Kay Brundell
- 2 **Present from the Public:** 1
- 3 **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Westover
- 4 **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr Horsnell: Member of the Village Hall Modernisation Steering Group

5 **Cllr French introduced the meeting** and asked all attendees to introduce themselves. He reiterated this is an open discussion to find a way forward for us all to work together. With the Expectation of the availability of CIL funding and with the prospect of population growth in the parish, this is an open discussion on the most effective way to manage the Village Hall as a community asset

6 **Philip Tallent.** Gave a handout providing a strategic brief overview of the village Hall Management committee. He highlighted that the village hall was run by a charity. Grants available for modernization from the government require a 21 year lease. But there is only seven years left to run on the current lease.

- The Village Hall Charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) owns the archives Portacabin, which is the one nearest to the village hall.
- As tenants, the Village Hall CIO should not be responsible for structural repairs. But the PC should be responsible for these.
- This raises a question of how the new build or modernisation would work between the two organisations.

Councillor Dempsey-Gray noted that with commercial leases the tenant is responsible for structural repairs.

Councillor Jenkinson. Gave an overview of what has happened over the last few years.

- Some parts of the lease arrangement had been taken back from the Village Hall Management Committee. For example:
 - The play area inspections.
 - Responsibility for the car park and the grounds now falls with the Parish council.
- The football club and the Bowls Club are on licences but need leases in order to get grants.

Regarding the modernization. He asked whether it should be the parish council or the Village Hall CIO making the decision on the way forward.

On the subject of what is changed over the years.

- Grants for new builds became more difficult to obtain.
- Specifications and thermal standards have increased and therefore become more difficult to resolve.
- It's likely to be expensive to meet these standards with a modernization.
- Potential funding changes include.
 - Wickham Gate CIL
 - Parish Council precept has increased since the decision to modernise was made.
 - Parish Council has access to more funds.
- Previously a new build seemed unattainable due to lack of funding, therefore modernisation was the chosen route.

He noted that the design for the new build included the Archive Centre and therefore it was required to be two story. This may now not need to be done as the Archive Centre is moving to the library premises. However, the parish council needs a clerk's office and storage for equipment and records. **Rob Rose** noted that the modernisation needs to be carbon neutral. He also noted that the Village Hall CIO had £98,000 available.

Councillor French reiterated the need to work together. But asked what is best for Wickham Market now, rebuild or modernisation? Steve Flavell. Noted that probably everyone would like a new build if funding was available.

Councillor Gray noted that new modular buildings. Could be erected very quickly. Also that drainage needs to be resolved.

The lease situation was discussed. There is still differing views as to whether a tailored lease is required or whether a standard lease should be used. Currently, the lease that is being suggested is a standard modern lease where some clauses may not apply. Rather than deleting these clauses, it should be noted they don't apply.

It was noted that Robertson's did a structural survey in February 2022 showing everything that needed to be done. This was passed to the Parish Council. It was suggested that the group should speak to the architects regarding schemes for the next 30 years.

Steve Flavell reiterated that it is a parish council building and therefore, if the Parish council wants a new build, is the parish council decision.

Councillor Cooke highlighted that Great Barton did a modernization about 10 years ago and it would be interesting to see how it holds up now.

There was a general discussion regarding construction.

- There are different options regarding heating, such as ground source or solar.
- A modular building could be constructed in five to six months.
- The Parish council will need to engage with parishioners to see what is needed.
- New homes that are being constructed are increasing the population.
- It would be ideal to build a new Community Centre in a different location so that the parish is not without a village hall during construction. However, there was no obvious site for this to happen.

Summary of actions.

The Village Hall CIO. Will get rough order of magnitude costs for both modernisation and a rebuild.

The Parish council will look into possible avenues of funding.

Once the decision has been made on construction work. An appropriate lease will be considered.

Philip Tallent will provide consultation information that the village Hall Management Committee obtained in 2021.

Councillor French said that the wide-ranging discussion had covered most of the points on the agenda. But we should agree to meet again once we have more information. He closed the meeting at 21:10.

11 Date of next meeting: Monday 20 March 2023

Signed.

Cllr Ivor French, Chair.

Date.

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