

<p>Village Hall Working Party Committee meeting – VHWC</p> <p>10th January 2022 – 7.00pm – ‘Teams’, Ousden</p> <p>Attendees from the working party:</p> <p>Celia Holt (Chair)– CH</p> <p>Christine Ingham – CI</p> <p>Julie Pryke – JP</p> <p>Mike Hole - MH</p> <p>Sophie Mason - SM</p> <p>Richard Hurrell – RH</p> <p>John Gale – JG</p> <p>Attendees from the management committee:</p> <p>Jessamy Saltmarsh – JS</p>		
<p>Meeting to focus on pre-app planning meeting and the way forward;</p> <p>Planning</p> <p>MH met with the Principal planning officer regarding the application for the village hall. They are very positive and genuinely want it to happen and they will do whatever they can to help us, but with a number of caveats.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -There is enough information to lodge the application. -The money from the sale of the land is not a planning issue (not under their jurisdiction) -They have agreed that we are not required to provide a new hall before we have knocked down the old hall. -They are concerned that by granting permission for the new dwelling outside the development limits and contrary to planning policy, they have to be happy that we will provide a new village hall. Therefore they are quite adamant that they need some kind of formal mechanism that guarantees that if we sell the plot that we must provide a village hall within a reasonable amount of time (to be confirmed) <p>MH has concerns as actually how do we provide the hall guaranteed and how do we get around this ‘chicken and egg’ scenario where we need money in the bank before we can raise the equivalent funds through fundraising.</p> <p>MH raised the idea of applying for section 106 money to raise the</p>	<p>To Action</p>	<p>Time Frame</p>

equivalent value of the plot – (latest valuation received from Jonathan Pringle 10.01.22 through David Burr was £325k to £350K) . Then we could raise the funding equivalents from fundraiser and then sell the plot.

Alternatively offering it to a developer to get the hall built to a certain stage before handing over the plot to develop. We would need a financial agreement set up which would enable us to raise money against that agreement, but with a plot worth £350K and a build of £1 million and we have £40K in the bank, not sure this stacks up ultimately.

Other option was a condition attached, that we can sell the plot and build the hall, but we can't knock down the old hall until we have a contract signed to build the new one. The developer would buy the plot and the money would go in to a bond, but with a strict timescale set-up (maybe 3 years) however the developer may pull out if too long fundraising and we would then need to pay back the money with interest. It would make the plot less attractive. Not sure, therefore, this idea is viable.

MH commented on the availability of section 106 funds being limited, usually available to villages that have had a demand put on their infrastructure due to building of new homes (Barrow and Kennet as examples). Hargrave have had a small £4K funding in comparison – the reason for our need is that the hall is not sustainable and in a poor state, energy inefficient. 350K may be a tall order, but the only way to know is to apply.

SM asked if MH felt that the 'fund raising mechanism' was not enough of a guarantee? MH said that the planners do not want to be culpable should we not raise enough funds to complete the hall. SM asked if we could apply so that the mechanism gets defined by the planners, but MH said this would have to be via formal pre-app which in MHs opinion are a waste of money, if a formal application is made then the clock is ticking and that is roughly a 6 month time limit and we could ask to extend the time limit before we would be asked to withdraw the application or they would likely refuse it. Whilst this does not help our situation MH said that this is planning law and they have to work within the planning system guidelines.

JP pointed out that our small committee are not going to sign a contract with these types of conditions attached, this would be the responsibility of the Parish Council as they hold the deeds. JG suggested that the Parish Council would unlikely agree to this. JP asked if we could sell a larger plot size to gain larger funds (i.e. the car park also) but MH had already covered this potential and due to tree and size of the plot, and where people would park didn't think this would be viable.

MH apply for section 106 fund and would approach David Burkiss on how we would apply

CH suggested an approach to the Will's Estate approaching for putting some money up front, or to assist with professional advice. In terms of funding are we approaching them for 50% of the budget? SM pointed out that funders such as the National Lottery said that we could

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approach them after we have sold the land and when we are mid-way through, which might leave us only with well positioned individuals or statutory grant funders and ask them to put up a chunk of funding as a loan, for example.

CH is happy to approach the Will's estate to bring them up to speed and discuss the situation and ask for support and advice

CI suggested a loan for a short period of time, MH felt that we are looking at 3-5years which could mean significant interest rate charges.

CH suggested a sectional style approach, i.e opening meeting room first, then toilets, then hall. MH felt that whilst it is a good idea, as the hall is generally one large space this approach would not work with a village hall.

JS brought up the fact that does a small village need a £1 million hall, but as MH pointed out what is the point of a 'small' hall if you cannot accommodate the bowls club etc. CH mentioned the playing fields and play area, that many of the surrounding villages don't have, and trying to think creatively do we just need toilet facilities, and small amenities kitchen with the rest of the hall later perhaps, but makes the most of the green space and playing to the strengths that we do have?

RH asked if anyone had any land to donate and get sold for development that could then be donated to the village hall. CH wondered if the Will's estate may have such a piece of land. SM wondered if there could be tax breaks for such a donation of land or a commitment of building.

JG asked if a developer may be interested in this hybrid application, but MH feels that a developer would want to develop quickly and so he feels they would walk away from such a proposal.

CH requested that MH update a summary of where we are so far in simple terms

JP suggested that could a clause be added that if no hall is built then any money raised is kept in trust to the village. MH agreed that could be something the planners add, but they will still want a guarantee mechanism, the planners did suggest that they may extend the time to build i.e. 5 years rather than the normal 3 years. MH confirmed that we would be happy to enter in to a 106 agreement – the detail of which we do not need to submit to planning.

CH suggested to hold off planning application, explore any other pockets of land other sources of income and speak with the Will's estate first.

Other 'out of the box' scenarios of land sales, different building plots for the village hall or Will's estate buying back the playing fields were discussed.

If we didn't have the support to warrant a 'hall' do we have something to support the outdoor space, kitchen, toilets, kiosk and then have a marquee/pavilion to hire in the summer.

JS spoke about the villagers who agreed to a new village hall as at that time we did not have any other way to raise the 40K to demolish the

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hall, but now that we have the 40K that potentially changes the situation. Perhaps a re-think could take place. If we cannot raise the funds and the only option is to demolish then maybe someone will come out of the woodwork to support us, and individual or local authority in some way.

Next meeting 7th Feb - 7.00pm

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