

**Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Community Hall Board of Trustees  
held in the Community Hall on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2008**

Present: Mr. N. Poulton (Chairman) Mr. J. Meischke  
Mr. I. Knight Mr. D. Stock  
The Clerk (Mrs. J. Allsop)

## **1 Apologies for absence**

None.

## **2 Minutes of Meeting held Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> July**

The minutes were accepted and signed as a true record during the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2008.

## **3 Matters Arising**

None.

## **4 Acoustics for Main Hall**

The acoustic panels are due to be installed in the Community Hall on Friday.

## **5 New Tennis Courts update**

Mr. Knight said he is exploring the possibility of grant funding from COMMA.

DEFRA have commissioned ACRE to deliver three years of funding with finances drawn from the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund. The grants programme, known as COMMA, will have funding to distribute in 3 stages: 2008-2009, 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 and focuses on supporting community projects in settlements affected by quarrying. Watton-at-Stone is situated within 4.5 miles of a quarry and therefore can apply for this funding.

The application process for the 2008-2009 COMMA fund is open for applications until 7th November 2008. It is a limited fund which offers funding of between £3,000 and £20,000.

Mr. Knight is seeking quotations from Halcyon Courts, Cambridge Courts and Doe Sport

## **6 Pavilion Exit Doors**

Brian Bunyan will be installing the new hardwood emergency exit doors in pavilion at the end of October.

## **7 Blinds in the Pavilion**

Sunstopper Blinds and Awnings repaired the pavilion blinds on 26<sup>th</sup> September and they are now all in perfect working order.

## **8 Boiler and Electric Safety Check**

The annual boiler check was done this morning and took 2.5 hours to complete. The annual electrical safety check was carried out in early September.

## **9 Window Closure in Main Hall**

RKA Services (UK) Limited, who did the previous repair work to the window closure system in the Main Hall, are due to inspect the current fault within the next week.

## **10 Vandalised windows plus insurance claim**

Zurich Municipal has approved the Community Hall Board of Trustees claim for the three broken High Level windows. An excess of £100 applies.

## 11 Reason behind the charges for the Community Hall

It has come to the Trustees attention that there has been some debate among hirers who ask why, when they are rate payers, the Parish Council and Community Hall Board of Trustees charge them for the use of the sportsfield and Community Hall facilities. Particularly as the sportsfield was donated to the village.

Mr. Stock said that because these comments are being made, we, the Parish Council and Community Hall Board of Trustees, should have a definitive statement on the subject

After some discussion on the subject the following statement was agreed.

‘The Capital asset of the sportsfield, the Community Hall building and the MPPA were mainly funded from capital grant monies. The maintenance of these facilities has to be met from revenue and therefore the Parish Council and the Community Hall Board of Trustees levy a charge to cover part of these costs.’

## 12 Cost for the Floodlighting together with grants

The exiting floodlights are obsolete and the only option is to replace them. Mr. Knight has obtained two quotations for the replacement floodlighting units, which will be the same style as those recommended for the new tennis court.

The new floodlights are asymmetric and have no stray illumination. The quotations are to supply and fit 8 no Deltalux asymmetric floodlights, each complete with 2kW metal halide lamp, mounted on existing cross-arms, as follows.

- CU Phosco £9,069 plus VAT
- Floodlighting Limited £4,300 plus VAT

CU Phosco require a cherry-picker to install the new floodlights, where as Floodlighting Limited do not.

Mr. Knight said that he has spoken to Kate Belinis, of Community Development Agency for Hertfordshire, and is hopeful that we will obtain 100% funding from the Grassroots fund (to a maximum of £5,000) based on Floodlighting Limited’s quotation.

## 13 Management of the keys

The Clerk has encountered problems with the collection of keys from some hirers, namely Beane Valley Children’s Centre, Watton Dots and Tots and Dave Boddy. Because they do not collect the keys at times requested by the Clerk, they could find that they are unable to access the building.

The Trustees discussed the issuing of the Community Hall keys and agreed that the following organisations would be able to have a permanent set of keys.

- The Beane Valley Children’s centre
- Watton Youth Drop Inn

In addition, if Watton Dots and Tots agree to pay quarterly in advance, they can collect a set of keys direct from the Beane Valleys Children’s Centre’s each week.

## 14 Letter to hirers re the need to lock all doors for security reasons

Prior to the meeting, the Trustees have been in discussion about the recent incident of vandalism at the Community Hall which occurred when the external door to the car park was left unlocked after use. Vandals removed and extinguished the two fire-extinguishes, which although found needed to be refilled.

Mr. Stock read out the following letter he had drafted to be sent to all regular hirers.

‘There have been a number of occasions where one or more of the external and/or internal doors of the Community Hall has/have been left unlocked after use.

On one such very recent occasion, the external door on the car-park side of the Community Hall was left unlocked and persons unknown entered the building and discharged 2 fire extinguishers before discarding them. Obviously these now have to be replaced.

As you may be aware, there is a history of acts of vandalism against the Community Hall and this has resulted in a significant amount of unplanned expenditure; which is an unnecessary burden on our finances. That said, there is little we can do to protect ourselves from acts of vandalism etc, against a secured building.

However, I am sure that you can appreciate that it is unfair to expect the Parish Council to spend public money because of thefts and acts of vandalism etc. resulting from the Community Hall being left in an unsecured state by a hirer/designated key-holder.

I am therefore writing to remind you that hirers, designated key-holders or their delegates are responsible for ensuring that all internal and external doors in the Community Hall are securely locked when vacating the building. (Please refer to clause 4 in the Agreement for the Community Hall hirings and or clauses 4 & 7 of Key-Holder Agreement.)

I look forward to your assistance in ensuring that the Community Hall is kept in a secure state at all times so that we can all keep avoidable expenditure to an absolute minimum.

Thank you.'

**Recommendation:** The Parish Council approves that the above letter be sent to all regular hirers.

## **15 Fire-extinguishers in changing room corridor**

The Sports and Social Club have accepted responsibly (on behalf of the Football Club) for not closing the external door to the car park after use. This led to vandals removing and extinguishing two fires-extinguishes. The Sports and Social Club have agreed to refund the Community Hall Trustees the full cost of refilling the fire-extinguishes, net of VAT.

## **16 Change of date for the January 2009 meeting**

Mr. Poulton said he is unable to attend the Community Hall Trustees meeting scheduled for Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2009. It was agreed that the Mr. Poulton and the Clerk should liaise re an alternative date.

**Action: N. Poulton/J. Allsop**

## **17 Any other Business**

- **The meeting closed at 2030.**