

Agenda item no.	To be added by the Clerk
Report to	Burwash Parish Council
Subject	Parish Hut A. Refurbishment of Parish Room & Parish Office B. Internet Café liaison meeting
Meeting date	12 <sup>th</sup> November 2019
Author	CLlr Betty McBride

## Introduction

This paper updates councillors on the planned refurbishment of the Parish Room and Parish Office and includes the minutes of the recent liaison meeting with Internet Café volunteers.

### A. REFURBISHMENT

At the time of writing, we await quotes from local contractors who have now visited the site.

Work required:

- Electrical checks and the resolving of any issues
- Replacing the fluorescent lighting
- Inspecting and, if necessary, updating the alarm system
- Installing roof insulation
- New internal door, connecting the Parish Room with the Parish Office (Door to open into Parish Room)
- Updating the plumbing and facilities in the kitchenette
- Interior painting
- Repairs to existing external doors\*
- New external signage
- External decoration and making good, including replacement windows. (Spring 2020)

### Parish Room

We will need to buy tables, chairs and storage suitable for a multi-user space in the Parish Room, in line with our commitment to create an open and welcoming community hub for residents.

Council is asked to expedite repairs on the two external doors\* in the Parish Room, which are ill-fitting and increasingly unfit for purpose.

There have been indications in the past that grants may be available for this Community Hub refurbishment project, which will benefit residents by providing an improved space for Council meetings, local groups sessions, ad hoc events and public meetings and the regular Internet Café mornings.

### **COUNCIL TO RESOLVE:**

1. Councillor Franklin to liaise with the Handyperson (or another contractor) to fix both Parish Room doors as soon as possible
2. The Finance and Administration workstream to nominate a Councillor to work with Rachel Guernier on sourcing potential grants for the refurbishment.

3. One councillor is asked to volunteer to work with the Chair and Administrator on the optimum layout of the Parish Room, sourcing tables, stacking chairs and storage units suitable for different user needs. We already have input from Internet Café volunteers on their area.

## **PARISH OFFICE**

The Administrator is now working in the Parish Office on five mornings a week. It is a less than ideal environment, so work on refurbishing, decorating and equipping the office will start as soon as possible. In addition to serving as the administrator's workplace, the Parish Office is open to parishioners and it is hoped that residents will increasingly feel that the Parish Council is approachable and available to them.

There is an agreed budget of £2,900 for this work.

Rachel will be liaising with the Handy Person to get a small storage shed at the back of the Hut to house the lawn mower and the large signs currently stacked in the office.

She has been tasked with designing a cost-effective and efficient working environment, with two desks for herself and the Clerk, a printing and laminating station, tall lockable metal storage cabinets for ring binders, display and event items, and a meeting area for six that incorporates use of the existing long storage bench.

Rachel's itemised list - sourced from Viking and Ikea - is attached as Appendix A.

## **COUNCIL TO RESOLVE**

Council is asked to confirm with the Clerk the best way to make the required purchases.

### **B. Internet Café Liaison Meeting**

The latest liaison meeting took place at the end of October, with minutes attached as Appendix B.

Discussion of the refurbishment and volunteers' thoughts on potential layout ideas formed a large part of the meeting. Whilst a date for the refurbishment of the Parish Room, which hosts the Internet Café, has not yet been set, the group was delighted to receive an offer from Keith Lloyd for the Internet Café to be housed temporarily in the Scout Hut, which is just next door and an ideal alternative venue. Contractors have advised that the Parish Room will be out of commission for between one and three weeks. Clearly, the Scout Hut will need WiFi in order to provide the back-up service.

## **Council to Resolve**

- To thank Keith Lloyd and the Scouts for offering a temporary home to the Internet Café
- That the Scouts be given continuing access to the Parish Room Wifi network for this purpose, and for future Scout meetings.

## **Appendix B.**

### **Internet Café Liaison meeting**

**30/10/19**

#### **Minutes**

**Attendees:** Lesley Elmslie, Keith Lloyd, Betty McBride. Peter Skipwith attended as a guest.

**Apologies:** Ian Rees, Jason Caulkin.

Betty McBride chaired the meeting and agreed to take a note of actions.

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1. Volunteers restated their concerns about the quality of the printer.
2. Peter reported that he had taken a look at the old PC and laptop from the Parish Office.

#### **Actions**

- The old PC is not fit for purpose and Peter agreed to dispose of it.
  - As it now stands, the laptop is good enough to be used as back-up when the Server PC in the Internet Café is updated at year end. Peter estimated that £50 would be required to bring the laptop up to a useful spec thereafter. BMcB will recommend this expenditure to Council.
3. A note of the monies received by the Internet Café since October 2011 was tabled. A total of £3,258.69 was recorded, representing an average of £34 per month. Concern was expressed re the security of donations left for collection, and the inconvenience involved in stapling envelopes from scrap paper.

#### **Action**

- Envelopes will be provided
4. Volunteers reported that both external doors were ill-fitting and needed urgent attention.

#### **Action**

- The Parish Council will arrange to have the doors repaired
5. Volunteers gave an update on PC software needs in light of the scheduled end of support for Windows 7 (January 2020). The two laptops are already using 8.1, and volunteers are proposing to apply for a grant to update the server and the three *slave* PCs.

#### **Action**

- The volunteers were commended for finding a funding option to cover this work. They were asked to copy the Parish Council in on any grant application involving its equipment.

6. There was a full discussion on the planned refurbishment of the Parish Room and subsequent new layout. The intention is that the Parish Room will be a multi-user space, housing Council meetings, local events and public meetings. It will be available for community group use in addition to the Internet Café sessions on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings.
- The volunteers were thanked for their offer to spend a weekend painting the Parish Room
  - The volunteers queried the necessity of a door between the Parish Office and Parish Room. They were advised that it was felt it would bring benefits in sharing storage, equipment and facilities. People in the Parish Office will be able to use the kitchen and the new doorway will provide added security when the BPC Administrator is working alone on public access mornings. (Mondays and Fridays.)
  - The volunteers tabled two illustrations with proposed designs for the room. The volunteers were thanked for their input.
  - Contractors have advised that the Parish Hut would need to be closed for between one and three weeks for the refurbishment. Alternative short-term premises were being sought by BPC, however representatives of the most obvious venues - the Village Hall and Christ the King parish room had reported their premises do not have WiFi.

### **Actions**

- Keith Lloyd told the meeting that the Internet Café could hold sessions in the Scout Hut (next door) during the refurbishment. Betty thanked him on behalf of Burwash Parish Council. The Scout Hut will need access to BPC's WiFi service and Betty said she would recommend to Council that the Scouts be given continued access to WIFI for future meetings.
- Quotes are being sought for the refurbishment of the Parish Room to include:
  - Electrical checks and the resolving of any issues
  - Replacing the fluorescent lighting
  - Inspecting and, if necessary, updating the alarm system
  - Installing roof insulation
  - New internal door, connecting the Parish Room with the office
  - Updating the plumbing and facilities in the kitchenette
  - Interior painting
  - Repairs to existing external doors (See above)
  - Tables, chairs and storage for a multi-user space
  - New external signage
  - External decoration and making good, including looking at replacement windows. (Spring 2020)
- The Parish Council will see if grants are available to cover this work, which will provide an improved community asset for the residents of our three villages.

