

# **COPYTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

**TUESDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2021**

## **ITEM NO: 15 – Chairman’s Statement**

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### **1. PARISH HALL COMMITTEE**

The January 11<sup>th</sup> 2021 meeting of the Parish hall Committee was again held via Zoom conferencing.

The agenda number covered a range of items, several of which were centred on the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions and the impact on the Hall finances, which are, at present, just about ‘holding their own’ despite the reductions in income, as a result of grants received. The Hall has received two grants via NFDC in respect of ongoing community support via rate reductions and direct aid which has assisted in keeping the Hall viable. The lack of income may impact on reserves to a point that impacts refurbishment, etc.

Items of note discussed were:

1. Parish Hall Development Programme – the appointment of a consultant for ‘specialist’ community funding potential was discussed. Three potential consultants have been interviewed. A further contact with the shortlisted consultant is to be undertaken to hone a brief which deals with the funding potential and possible sources, circulated to members of the committee and approval sought to proceed;
2. Bicycle shelter – the shelter is due for delivery in early March and would need to be erected straight away due to its size and lack of available storage. This date will be conformed nearer to the delivery date, subject to any constraints which would make erection problematic ;
3. Football / Sports Wall – the Parish Hall representative of the joint project with the Parish Council gave some initial feedback by way of a ‘work in progress’ update. Work on the feasibility is ongoing.

The Hall is now (as of the start of January 2021), closed again in the light of National Lockdown requirements.

### **2. CONTACT FROM ENGLISH RURAL HOUSING ASSOCIATION**

The Chairman received a contact from NFDC Councillor Michael Harris who is now a member of English Rural Housing Association (ERHA) following the merger of New Forest Housing Association into the ERHA, where he was Chairman. He was enquiring about Copythorne Parish Council and Affordable Housing (AH) as the ERHA were putting together their forward plans. I set out the history of engagement on AH since 2013 and advised him that our most recent decision as a Parish Council (September 2019) was to defer our position until such time as NFDC and TVBC had adopted their updated Local Plans.

I also advised that as we were planning to facilitate the development of a Parish Design Statement to be published at a future date, within which the matter of AH was bound to be included, there was no point in having an approach by ERHA until such time a position was agreed and thus became Parish Council policy and that this would not be for some time due to the current restrictions which limited our ability to convene a Group. He accepted that position.

Cllr. S. Lucas

February 1<sup>st</sup> 2021