

MINUTES OF MEETING OF COMMUNITY CENTRE WORKING PARTY

Wednesday 1st March 2023 at 6 pm

Day Centre, Commercial Road

1. Present: Meryl Flashman, Fred Lemont, Andy Mackie, Mike Ridger, David Sargison, Sam Smithson, Rex Wakeling, Carol Williams(Chair)

Apologies for Absence: Tracy Brechtlesbaur, Ray Moon, Jeremy Thompson, Jon White.

2. Meeting on 19th January 2023

This focussed on discussing the funds available for fitting out the Community Centre and a visit to Southborough Hub two days earlier.

It was decided to fit out the Elizabeth Thomas meeting room and the office. Half of the tables and chairs required would also be bought as well as a portable TV and stand. It has been identified that the AV equipment required could cost in the region of £25000. Getting sponsorship for certain items was also discussed.

3. Community Centre Update

- The handover of the building to the Town Council will take place on Friday 3rd March 2023
- Currently there are no plans for a gate at the car park entrance only the bollards which have already been installed. The Town Council will be monitoring this very closely due to the potential abuse of the parking spaces.
- Tennis courts – there are concerns about a slight slope and uneven surface. This is being discussed with Baxalls and the project manager. Lighting is not currently planned for the site.
- Centre Management job has had to be readvertised. But it is still hoped that the centre will open by the time of the Coronation.

4. Fit Out List

The updated list has already been circulated to members of the group

- CK Office Furniture on Eldon Way have been approached about the furniture required for the Community Centre Building and it is hoped that following a conversation they will offer us some favourable prices. It has also been established that they provide both new and refurbished equipment. Meryl and Carol have purchased furniture for Office and Elizabeth Thomas Meeting Room.
- Meryl, Carol and their husbands will be sponsoring the fit out of the Elizabeth Thomas room and have already started to purchase the required furniture from CK Office Furniture as well as some of the

furniture for the Office. This is a mixture of refurbished and new equipment.

- Mike Ridger has approached Brookside about the possibility of purchasing some exterior furniture and they are willing to consider this.
- CK furniture have recommended fabric furniture rather than vinyl. Carpet cleaner can easily be used on them. There was also a discussion about the size of chairs required to meet the capacity of the hall and the potential requirements for a central aisle. Original fit out based on 50cm chairs but these are very narrow and 54cm chairs have been recommended.
- Blinds appear to have been value engineered out of the project although how this was allowed to happen is not clear. They need to be added to priority list for the fit out instead of the stage.
- Southborough hub are selling some lockers which may be suitable for our Centre. David Sargison provided details of a company called manutan.co.uk whose lockers are worth investigating.

Some concerns have been expressed that the building may not be DDA compliant if there is no hearing loop. This is being investigated (It was later confirmed by Baxall that the building will be DDA compliant without the loops).

- Apart from approaching Brookside there were no other suggestions for sponsorship that had not already been considered.
- Screen also needs to be considered for the foyer. Monitor in office already included as part of CCTV package. Mobile TV screen required for use in halls.
- There was discussion about facilities being provided for the visually disabled
- For clarity there is a lot of disability guidance for public buildings but DDA compliance is law.
- The plaque has arrived in the UK and is currently being inscribed (confirmed after the meeting)

5. **Future of the Working Party**

- The role of the working party is almost complete but members agreed that they wish to continue to support the centre. It was agreed that the group should be renamed "Associates of Paddock Wood Community Centre" and that they would like the group to be part of the structure of the new company.
- Disbanding of working party to be discussed at next Town Council meeting

6. **Opening & closing the centre**

Training will be provided on 3rd March for those members of the working party who are interested. If anyone cannot attend then alternative dates will be organised. Mike R, Fred L, Rex W, Andy M, Jeremy T, Sam S and Ray M have all expressed an interest.

7. **Coronation Picnic**

- There has been very little enthusiasm from PWTC, U3A or B.A. in organising this. A large screen on the Memorial field was suggested but it was agreed that this would still involve a lot of organisation. It was also suggested that volunteers to organise the picnic could also be recruited via Facebook.
- PWTC will be between elections on this date & any event would have to be a community led event. Volunteers to arrange & run the event on the day would also be required.

8. **Any other business**

9 **DATES OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will take place on the 29th March. Location to be advised.
Rex submitted his apologies in advance.