

PRISTON VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE

PUBLIC MEETING

held Sunday 27th March 11.30 in the Village Hall

As Chairman of the Village Hall Committee Gail Pattison informed the meeting that it had been called not only to report on the result of the Survey distributed in January but also because there were two important new options to be considered. Therefore there would be four suggestions put forward and the discussions today would help the Village Hall Committee to decide what to do. This might be to do nothing if no proposal could be funded. Each of the four presentations would be followed by an opportunity to ask questions and discuss. She stressed that it is the job of the Village Hall Committee to make the final decision.

Q: if any people had been against either of the proposals in the survey? A: 85 copies of the survey were distributed to households and 48 returned. There were a couple which said "no".

Q=Question; C=Comment; A=Answer

1. Sara Grimshaw spoke on the option of the Entertainment Centre:

The equipment which is suitable for use in a village hall and in almost new condition had been given. It can be structurally fitted in the hall and in use immediately. The large projector would hang in a security cage from the front beam and the retractable screen hung behind the pelmet. It was proposed that the hardware would sit in a cabinet either at the front of the hall or the back and could also work stage lights if they were installed in future.

DVDs/films/power point presentations could all run off it and a cd player or an iPod system. There would need to be 4 speakers, one for each corner of the room [these would have to be purchased] and this would provide total surround sound and the wiring for them would also include a hearing loop system.

C: £5500 seemed a lot for the wiring installation.

Q: Would the required new security be extra? A: Yes, the hall has little in it to attract problems at present but the equipment would need enhanced window & door security.

Q: How user friendly is the system? A: Very easy to use.

Q: Could Sara give a breakdown of costs. A: Not to hand but she could forward a copy.

Q: Would the cost be reduced by omitting the loop? A: Not by much but you could make the loop a priority.

C: Is it really necessary? She did not think so.

Q: What about raising the hiring charges? A: Not a cost effective way to do it.

C: Installing speakers is a good idea as the lack of plugs in the hall limits the present usage.

Q: The loop idea is brilliant but is there a cost benefit? A: Doubtful.

Q: Is there a costing available for the loop? A: Quotes were procured and the great expense is the general rewiring. The Festival almost overloads the system as there is only 1 power point at back and 2 on stage.

Q: Could the revenue increase with the installation of the system?

A: It would make the hall more attractive to potential hirers.

2. Tim Hughes spoke on the option for Extending the Hall:

He showed the sketch that he had placed in the hall some weeks ago and said the extension had been in the minds of the original committee forty years ago. It would be achieved by taking out the whole section of the wall that runs from the end of the kitchen across to the boundary and moving it back to line up with the kitchen outer wall. The roofline would be pitched to match the extension. He detailed how the hall would be greatly improved with the extra space and felt it was a project well worth pursuing.

He gave the cost at around £20,000.00 and said that he felt grants would be available.

Q: i. What might be available in grants? ii. What were the planning issues? A: No detailed knowledge on grants. Planning should not be a problem.

Q: Being a listed building means detailed design would require architects and engineers, did the cost quoted include this? A: No.

Q: The new roofline would create another leaf “valley” how could this be accessed? A: Probably over the wall from the pub.

Q: Do we assume the £20,000.00 is a “building cost” only? A: Yes

Q: Could we consider opening a shop in the extension? A: Probably not but it could be investigated.

Q: How long would the hall itself be incapacitated during building works? A: a very short period because the opening could be boarded up – 2 weeks perhaps.

Q: Would the materials be the same? A: Yes

C: I think it is a very good idea.

C: All the proposals have merit and they need to be given a priority ranking order.

C: Obtaining grants can take a very long time, going on the history of the hall, so we are possibly looking at years before having the money.

C: I will undertake to do the CAD drawing for the extension because nothing can be achieved until we have a measured drawing which will enable us to get costings and to approach planning issues. A: Thank you very much.

3. Gail Pattison spoke on an alternative option for Extending the Hall

Knowing the proposal for an extension, the committee had looked into a simpler alternative, which would not involve taking away the wall but would turn the two windows into door access for a conservatory space. She asked for quotes from two firms in the yellow pages. The first did not seem keen, thought it would be difficult and might not get planning permission. He has not come back with a price.

The second was far more positive, thought planning permission could be granted as they have built orangery type conservatories onto listed buildings before. The costs would substantially come from the building works involved: changes of level, moving the drains, tying in the roof, as well as the structure itself. Estimated cost between £32,000- £35,000.00.

Q: i. Is this one of the bigger companies or a local one?

ii. What were the materials? A: Bath company; proposed materials glass and wood.

C: A conservatory type area there would be a positive gain.

C: Wood framing requires more maintenance than pvc.

C: An addition to Tim’s proposal could be to increase light by using skylights.

Q: Can you say what the hall usage pattern is with regard to day or evening use? A: More evening use but daytime use is for painting, children’s parties and Saturday Café.

Q: Isn’t the glass too vulnerable to breakage? A: Specially toughened glass is used.

Q: Could you confirm that the proposed extension would enlarge the total open space of the hall but the proposed conservatory would provide additional but separate space accessed from the hall by doors where the windows are now?

A: Yes

Q: Welcomed the idea of the extension even though a view of the stage would not be good. How would it extend the seating capacity? A: Might make it 150.

C: Fire access would still be required for whichever extension.

Q: Do we understand why the costs are so different? A: No

C: We have no benchmark here for costing. We need to get concrete figures based on concrete plans.

Q: Is it inconsistent with developing the carpark? A: No

C: Again, I will undertake to do the CAD drawings as with the other proposal. A: Thank you very much.

4. Briony Seymour spoke about the Outdoor Community Space:

She briefly mentioned the historical background of her perceiving a need for such a space. The advent of the Saturday Café had brought the agenda forward so she began looking at the car park to see how it could be made more attractive as the shape was not an easy one for maximising parking. So while accommodating parking for the village she felt it could also supply a “gated space” for mums and small children, and a sitting place for the Saturday Café, that would create a positive and socially useful area.

The costs estimate is £6,994.58 and this includes footings for the possible future extension to the hall as well as a new concrete footing for the repositioned wall, plus the possible need for drainage improvements. The other costings are “worst case” scenario but do not include VAT.

C: Funding is quite limited.

C: It is intended to request donors to “gift aid” which would increase the amount.

C: Gift aid will slightly decrease from April 6th.

Q: While the £7,000.00 includes the footings does it include labour apart from groundworks?

A: No, but a lot of voluntary labour has been offered.

C: I think the Saturday Café by the Green enhances the village.

C: It is far too dangerous for children to be playing out there.

C: The development of the car park does not preclude both spaces being used.

C: Moving the parking requires consultation with Highways with respect to their requirements.

C: It would require a “Change of Use” as when the hall took over the school playground it had to be earmarked as a car park.

C: I think there would be a way round this.

C: Insurance would need to change for children’s use. A: Public indemnity is already in the policy.

C: It is often hard to drive into the car park so even if nothing else is done, the entrance needs to be widened.

C: The change to the car park could open new revenue streams because it would become more attractive to weddings and to external use at parties.

C: The Village Hall Committee has a responsibility to the village:

i. Parking is limited in this area and the hall car park can mop up some of the extra.

ii. 2 years or so ago the committee banned children using the car park space so who will supervise the children in the garden?

iii. How many hours realistically would it be used? I made it 10 hours a week maximum in high summer.

C: With the proposed boules pitch I am sure that figure would be much higher, as there are several people in the village with their own playing equipment.

C: If our community is to survive and flourish we have to accommodate and encourage every age group and that includes the children.

C: Timsbury playground is very under used because of the supervision problem.

C: [Briony Seymour] Installing play equipment changes both the safety requirements and brings indemnity issues.

C: [Gail Pattison] The mothers here have said “no” to the sandpit and also to the swing so there will not be any equipment.

Q: The plan allows for 9 parking spaces. How many paying users are there? A: Currently 4 permanent users.

C: Current parking is not easy so not many more than 9 can park easily as it stands.

Q: How would you stop anyone parking outside the wall – it becomes a sort of lay-by. A: There are ways of doing this but needs looking into.

C: Surely monitoring parking applies now too.

C: If 30 people wanted the car park enhancement £3,994.00 is not a great response. A: Some people offered labour as it is a difficult financial time.

Q: The existence of a garden where a small marquee could be erected for weddings might enable the cost of hiring to be increased? A: Not sure.

C: People who feel they cannot contribute much might still be happy to pay for one or more paving stones, or some pergola posts for example.

C: In my experience regarding funding is it usually involves “matching funding” from the community. It might be better to combine all the projects and the money promised so far to represent what the community can raise when making applications.

There followed a discussion of whether the meeting should vote on the proposals presented, and whether it should be for one or for several. In the end it was felt that the responses to the survey should go on Priston Website and voting would not be undertaken. Abridged notes of the meeting will be in the Link and in full on Priston Website.

Q: Would the Entertainment Centre still be a viable option in a few years time? A:

Realistically, possibly not as other systems, that did not require re-wiring, were on the market and costs were coming down.

C: I will donate £1000 to the Extension if somebody will match me in funding.