

Framsden Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC)

Minutes of meeting, 12th December 2022

Held in the Meeting Room, Framsden Village Hall

Members present: Neil Mellor (Chair), Charlotte Bell, Ian Seager, Debra Pearce

1. Review of previous actions

- 1.1. Fire alarm testing – carried forward.

Action 1 – All to carry out testing at each VHMC meeting.

- 1.2. Lean-to clearance – completed in collaboration with the FF team who kindly supplied a trailer and removed surplus items from site.
- 1.3. Window & gutter cleaning – completed. 2 bids were received and an initial 12 month contract for quarterly window cleaning and 6-monthly gutter clearance placed with Elite Aqua (a Framsden based business).
- 1.4. Tree branch cutting over VH – completed. IS and NM cut back the damson tree, with tenders invited to remove branches from the large pine tree (see below).
- 1.5. Fence & tree stakes – completed, purchased by IS.
- 1.6. Annual inspection & maintenance list schedule – completed. This has been scheduled for February 2023 and annually thereafter.
- 1.7. Key code changes – key safe instruction have been supplied and the code change is carried forward.

Action 2 – NM to produce a schedule of quarterly changes and implement.

2. Open public forum

No members of the public were in attendance

3. VH suggestions submission

A list of suggested improvements to the VH submitted by a member of the public was discussed. In summary these were:

- Storage of village assets (i.e. projectors, PA, TT tables, chairs, etc.) in the small meeting room
- Additional outdoor space (i.e. a garden/meeting room)

Regarding storage it was agreed that the investments made and to be made in loft access/storage/lighting plus lean-to improvements including lighting and potentially re-flooring and storage racking should be made use of for portable items such as the projector, PA and gazebo. It was agreed that the meeting room should be retained for use (free of charge to Framsden residents/groups), being useful as i.e. additional food service, cloakroom or meeting space and much more economical to heat for small meetings.

Moving the TT tables several times each week was felt to be impracticable and likely to cause damage. It was agreed, however, that an additional double power socket would be fitted at the N end of the hall to supplement that currently inaccessible behind the tables. Racking for chairs could have advantages but experience at other halls like Otley is that they occupy additional space and also take up valuable floor space when the chairs are in use.

Additional space extending into the garden (where a previous kitchen extension structure used to stand) could be very valuable and there is demand for renewed extension to the kitchen space. It would of course require PCC permission and significant funding. Rather than approach this as an isolated project it was felt that the VHMC/PC should develop a more comprehensive plan to incorporate an extension with re-configuration to the S end of the hall to incorporate disabled access/toilets, storage improvements, sole plate repairs and heating/insulation upgrades. This would allow for one large funding bid submission rather than a series of piecemeal projects.

Action 3 – NM to respond to the member of the public submitting the suggestions.

4. Grounds update, to include tree works

IS provided a review of the past 2 months' work – details are in Appendix 1 below.

2 tenders were received to carry out work on the large pine tree to remove the large dead branch directly above the smaller entrance gate, remove all other dead branches and previously cut snags and thin the branch overhanging the village hall building. It was agreed that the contract would be placed with lowest bidder, Matthew Allen Forestry.

Action 4 – IS to inform bidders of the tender outcome and arrange work

5. H&S update

IS purchased and installed an 'uneven surface' sign on the main garden entrance gate at a cost of £5.95.

It was noted that the sloped path to the main entrance to the hall was extremely slippery and potentially dangerous in the freezing conditions and should be treated asap to prevent accidents.

Action 5 – DP to salt/de-ice the path, NM to add sharp sand for additional grip asap.

6. Hire update, to include actions from PC re VH hire periods & signage

It was noted that bookings accepted are regularly cross-checked with PC bank records of the income arising from them. Also, the updated hire agreement has been signed by new hirers and copies will be extended to all regular hirers. This will include any no-cost users as the responsibilities and liabilities in the agreement still apply. It was agreed that assets available to hire would be made available at a flat rate of £10.

7. VHMC web pages development

New VH web pages have been developed by NM as part of PC website, including submission to Google to ensure prime search ranking. The VH pages should now be enhanced to include e.g. lists of activities/groups, room details/capacities and more description/images of features/benefits for hirers.

Action 5 – NM to draft additional content for comment, edit and enhance the website

8. Maintenance update and works required

- 8.1. Lean-to concrete floor and racking system proposal. Agreed that costing should be obtained from suitable contactors to lay approx. 4.2m² of concrete flooring in the lean-to in preparation for racking storage to be fitted.
- 8.2. Electrical contract update. 2 tenders were received to install 2 additional double sockets and the main hall, plus lighting in the loft and lean-to storage spaces. The contract was placed with the lower bidder, Richardson Electrical.

- 8.3. Ordering, quotation and payment protocols. The late payment of contractors legally necessitated by PC sign off of all expenditure presents a problem for small local businesses and it a deterrent to tendering. Agreed that we should explore with the PC any means of expediting payment.

The kitchen fire exit steps have now been rebuilt and made safe.

Work to install the short-throw projector is underway with FF looking into the most appropriate method of mounting above the screen.

A member of the public had reported a drain leak under the kitchen sink and offered to make a repair. It was agreed that the offer would be very gratefully accepted and VHMC thanks conveyed!

Action 6 – All to suggest potential contractors to lay concrete lean-to floor

Action 7 – NM to inform electrical bidders of the tender outcome and arrange work

Action 8 – NM to raise prompt payment for small contractors with PC

Action 9 – IS to arrange sink drain repair with the volunteer

9. Review of 5 year plan and projects, including heating system update, energy audit and solar power survey

Some details of a possible free energy audit for the VH were received from Suffolk CC as a potential qualification prior to any solar energy or heating improvements. The VHMC lack the resource to pursue this further but it was agreed that referral could be made to the new Sustainable Framsdens CIC to determine any next steps.

It was agreed that the major extension repair and reconfiguration works mentioned in 3. above would require professional advice before any firm recommendations and funding submission could be progressed. IS had already made contact with [Suffolk ProHelp](#) in this regard and a submission to them for assistance would be completed with PC assistance.

No further changes to the plan at present.

Action 10 – IS to refer energy audit to Sustainable Framsdens CIC

Action 11 – IS and NM to agree financials and complete the ProHelp application

10. Minor expenditures

Minor purchases of grounds maintenance consumables approved - £40 for hazel sticks, £10 for bark chippings.

11. Resourcing and sustainability of VHMC

Strong concerns were expressed over the workload and sustainability of the VHMC, given the few members and volume of activities, including specification, tendering, ordering and works management as well as practical administration and maintenance. It was agreed that a 2 year tenure for VHMC members should be adopted and the PC approached again to assist.

Action 12 – NM to raise redefinition of VHMC scope unless further resource becomes available

12. Discussion points arising.

No additional points were raised.

NEXT MEETING: 13th FEBRUARY 2023 at 19:30 IN THE VILLAGE HALL MEETING ROOM

Appendix 1 - Grounds update

The details listed in this appendix are included as a reference and work specification for future maintenance.

Routine work in the garden area (11th October - 12th December) includes:

- Floral tubs - Prepare the yellow stemmed Cornus for replanting in the floral tubs; strip the floral tubs of summer bedding and replant with spring bedding plants and bulbs (three for two packs of red primroses & three for two packs of Narcissus purchased at a total cost of £22.00 cost to be reclaimed from FF).
- Rake up and remove a dense layer of Walnut tree leaves that are toxic to grass (x 2).
- Leaf-sweep the road and village hall frontage (2hrs).
- Hand weeding, minor pruning, tying in, dead-heading.

Non-routine garden/grounds work

- Prune carpark trees before planting the carpark bank with 20kg (approx. 500) Narcissus 'Carlton' bulbs.
- Major wild plumb tree pruning with NM as plum tree branches were overhanging and touching the roof of the village hall building.
- Purchased and installed three 2.4 fence posts at a cost of £26.97 with the intent of extending the trellis between the car park and the garden area.
- Planted one previously purchased Clematis 'Etoile Violette' (£6.50) and made up one wire plant guard.