

GARVALD AND MORHAM COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting, 6th February 2012
@ 7pm, Morham Village Hall.

1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence

Attendance

Rufus Bellamy (Secretary), Hazel Clark (GVH Rep), Ian Middlemass (Treasurer), David Murray (MVH Rep), Penny Short (Member), Ian Smith (Broadband), Hannah Stenhouse (Morham Village Hall Rep). Jimmy Thomson (Vice-chair), David Walls, Julia White (Chair), Philip White (Member) and Cllr Broun Lindsay.

Apologies

Cllr Sheena Richardson,

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes were checked.

Progress on the repairs to the bridge in Morham were discussed. JT said that it was still dangerous and asked who was responsible. Cllr B-L said he would check and report back.

Action: Cllr B-L as above.

JT proposed minutes – the following alterations were suggested:

HC said that the lines mentioned went to Barro not Barrow.

DM said that the fire extinguishers in the village hall needed replacing (corroded) and that various other items (eg. lighting for patio) had been asked for.

3. Grants and Funding

JW explained the background to the Crystal Rigg funding and how the CC asks community groups and individuals to apply for funding for their projects. She explained that Crystal Rigg is not too specific about the projects they will fund – the main criteria are: no anti-windfarm activity; nothing that the Council should do; projects have to be of benefit to this area. She outlined the timeline for the process: 1) projects are asked to

get applications in by the end of May; 2) then the CC has a couple of meetings to look at the applications (allows time for any questions to be answered); 3) applications sent off to Crystal Rigg by beginning of September.

She explained that the last lot of cheques had gone out and that it was now time to start canvassing for new ideas. She passed round a number of thank you letters (from Gifford Cub Scouts and Knox DoE group).

She noted that the application form needed to be redrafted so that it could get information on: 1) the person to whom cheques should be made payable to, and 2) their addresses. The application form was passed round for people to look at to see if there was anything else to add or change.

JW reported that there had already been a couple of early applications (deferred from last year) – the Lothian Broadband upgrade and the request for repairs to GVH (West door etc). DM asked if Garvald Village Hall could put in another application for improvements – it was agreed that this was OK.

Action: RB to send minutes to Philip covering past decisions.

HC said that the newsletter was looking for content and it was agreed that the Crystal Rigg fund would be highlighted. She noted that Crystal Rigg had booked Garvald Village Hall to do a display of proposed future developments. DW suggested that a list of previous awards should be put in the newsletter along with details of where the application form could be obtained.

Action: HC said that it would be good to produce a list of dates of meetings and a flyer for applications. RB to do.

Local Priorities fund

JW said that the CC has £950 available in the LPF. She reported that £300 had been earmarked for the repair of a broken beam in Garvald, £145 for insulation in GVH and £350 for MVH work. She concluded that the balance of the money is therefore available.

DM highlighted the need for the replacement of fire extinguisher in MVH which would cost £120. It was agreed that this should be funded.

HC said that GVH was installing a baby-changing facility for £125. It was agreed that a contribution of £30 should be given to this project.

Other funds

The Civic Pride Fund was discussed. JT said that various project ideas had been proposed – a solar powered speeding sign, a walking map, a Village Welcome sign etc – he suggested that we should give some thought to these ideas.

JW said that we should ask the Highways Department for a speed indicator. This was agreed.

Action: JT said he would do this.

4. Broadband Report

IS reminded the meeting that at last meeting he had reported that the Lothian Broadband grant had been suspended. He said that the grant was still suspended and that the status of the project was unchanged.

DW said that they had taken legal advice and that this showed that the fault was with the Council. He said that they had been advised to comply with what the Council wants them to do (provide information) and that they had been assured at a meeting of the Scottish Government that the matter would be resolved positively. He concluded by saying that they are now waiting for the bureaucracy to grind on.

IS reported that the great storm of 2012 had done some damage at Garvald Mains and that it had caused the tower at Cockielaw to crash to the ground (cutting off Standingstones). He was pleased to report that all equipment had since been repaired and that those who had been affected were now back on line.

5. Woodland Report

JT outlined the background to the project and the barriers (particularly demands made by the Monks' Land Agent Mr Robertson) that have stood in the way. Hazel Clark, Lorraine Hay and Tim Flynn and Jim Thompson make up the Woodland Sub Committee.

He explained that the Monks are still having difficulty getting a final price on the work, but that they have a deadline of the end of June to do this (grant money available until then – if not settled by then, then the money lost). The Crystal Rigg money has not be paid over yet to protect the community council in case Mr Robertson puts in some new barriers.

JW said that the CC should get an assurance that we would not be liable for any outstanding costs if the costs of the project are larger than the amount available (£17,000).

6. Councillors' Report

Cllr B-L said that there was not much to report, although the budget was looming and there were elections in May. He said that nobody can be immune from the current economic climate.

He was asked about the move towards shared services and said that discussions were continuing.

The changes in household development legislation were discussed. Cllr B-L said that there are a lot more things that are 'permitted developments' than before and that an imaginary bubble now extends for a metre around the original structure of a home in which changes can be made. Conservation strictures remain. It was suggested the CC ask for a briefing or presentation from the Council on this issue.

Action: HC said that the road at Papple is badly in need of repair. DW said that the road past West Mains is also extremely bad and very narrow. Cllr noted both issues and said he would mention them to the relevant officers.

7. Local Planning Applications

None – JT asked whether anyone would take over the job of monitoring these from Wilma. JW explained that the planning department sends each CC a list of all planning applications and that the job would be to e-mail this around the group.

Action: Philip White said he would do it. DW said that the Council website had all details. JW said that she would notify the Council.

8. Treasurer's Report

IM passed around a profit and loss account (which took out the Fred Olsen grant money), this showed a deficit of £1,508.54.

He reported that the bank balance currently stood at £21,939.59 (bulk – Woodland money).

Action: He asked Hannah to send him receipts for Morham Village Hall expenditure etc.

IS asked for £4,000 of the Broadband money to be transferred to Lothian Broadband. This was agreed. After discussion, this was reduced to £3,000.

9. Garvald Update

HC reported that GVH has applied through the Environment Fund to finance the construction of a hard path b/w the Hall's front door and west door, along the top of Orchard. The VAT element is being avoided because GVH is contracting the work to the ELC.

The bench had been removed from the play park – the Council officer responsible (Ms Hegarty) has said they will remove the plaque and put on a new bench that will then be placed in the park.

The public toilet has been closed to avoid frost damage. Ms Hegarty has said that they are on the list to be refurbished before they are re-opened in mid-March – HC said that we would really like to have them open during the winter and only turned off when there is a serious frost.

Upcoming dates: Plant Sale: last Sunday in April; Jumble Sale: last Sunday in June.

JT reported that there were still a few financial issues to be finalised with the Garvald play park project. £4,436 is the total for the new equipment, landscaping and refurbishment of toilets in the Hall.

Action: JT said he would follow this up with the Council.

10. Morham Update

DH reported that it has been a significant three months for MVH:

The Hall has featured in a Council video.

The application to the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations has been accepted – this means that the Hall has become part of a network that will allow access to preferred contractors, make grant applications easier, etc.

This means that the Hall Committee is going to get a mentor from ELC who is going to see them through the gateway application. DH said that this should be useful for eg. applications for CIVIC Pride awards and to help secure funding for new patio. He suggested that Garvald VH should join the SCVO.

Upcoming dates: 29th Feb – VH AGM.

The proposed move of the Morham phone box was discussed – it was agreed that it should stay where it is.

11. A.O.C.B.

It was reported that there had been a meeting in Garvald about a website – cost of approx. £35 a year. Heidi Ingram has said that she would be willing to set up a WordPress system and that she was looking for help from community groups and CC.

Action: RB to get in touch with Heidi to ensure minutes are posted.

DW talked about the old community website – one problem was that there was little dynamic content and that it was hacked. DM suggested that we should look into having a Facebook page.

DW suggested people look at the Gullane and Dunpender websites. He said that a well-supported website could play a really important part in community life.

JT said that it would be great to have a Garvald and Morham website.

The Diamond Jubilee was discussed – and people were asked to see if there was any interest in doing anything on the 3rd June – eg. www.thebiglunch.com

12. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 2nd April at Garvald Stables