

Village Hall

The Trustees of the village hall met on the 23rd July. It has been established that the hall is a charity and cannot be sold, leaving two options:

- 1) Demolish and abandon
- 2) Renovate/rebuild.

Option 1 is difficult because the presence of asbestos means that the cost of demolition is beyond our means.

Option 2 is possible because Andrew Page has very generously offered to donate towards the cost of rebuilding. Therefore it was decided to investigate this option.

Cllr Herring was to liaise with East Suffolk about the asbestos.

Cllr Hutson was to ask a builder approximate costings.

Cllr Gillespie was to start market research to gather evidence of need.

Also discussed were possible options for rebuilding; what style and size, both of which relate to cost and need.

Cllr Herring pointed out that an asbestos assessment had been carried out in 2016 and is still current but this was Stage 1. Another assessment will be required and this clearly would point us in the direction of the next steps. The Parish Council at the time of the first asbestos report had been advised that removal of the asbestos wouldn't necessarily require a specialist and the cost of this would be in the region of £25,000. This could be removed before a planning application is submitted.

Cllr Hutson had obtained initial building estimates of approximately £100,000 to refurbish the existing village hall (excluding asbestos removal) and about £180,000 to £200,000 to build a new one of the same size, less for a smaller one.

Cllr Gillespie was looking at ways to generate income to run the village hall and whether it was worth it. The villagers to be asked to give their opinions and any suggestions as to how it might be used.

Cllr Chamberlain asked from where we had received the guidance notes regarding sale of the village hall and Cllr Herring gave an overview of the expert company, Groundwork East, who specialise in village halls. They had also consulted with colleagues at a national level. It was pointed out that even if it had been possible to sell the village hall grounds there would be constraints on how the money could be spent.

Cllr Herring stated that the Community Grant application for £1000 completed by the clerk can now proceed and can go towards preliminary costs.