

LONGHOUGHTON COMMUNITY AND SPORTS CENTRE TRUST

(Longhoughton Village Development Trust)

(Registered Charity Number 1133597. Registered Company Number 07031153)

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD TUESDAY 9th JANUARY 2024 AT THE COMMUNITY AND SPORTS CENTRE

1 Trustees Participating:

Jeremy Pickard, Adrian Hinchcliffe, Vicki Kelly, Vanessa Chapman, Stewart Barrett.

Apologies for Absence

David Arscott, Mike Pritchard, Martin Mawer (LRFC Liaison non-Trustee), Kris Cochrane.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting held 6th December 2023 were approved as a correct record. Jeremy advised that he had created signed, secure PDFs of the agreed minutes for inclusion on the website, but that Guy had advised he was no longer available to assist (unpaid) with website updates. Jeremy has contacted Colin Graham to ask for their input. **Action 80 - Jeremy**

3 LRFC Liaison

LRFC actions were still outstanding from the meeting of 23.08.23. Additional discussion items had also been added since then, but the absence of LRFC attendees at Trustees' meetings has hampered progress.

4 Matters Arising from the Minutes

A separate listing of actions is being maintained by the Acting Chair and will be circulated to Trustees with the minutes. Apart from those actions covered by the Secretary's report and those relating to Safeguarding (which were reviewed later in the meeting) all actions were reviewed, discussed and updated as appropriate.

Under Action 89, the Armed Forces Covenant was discussed. Jeremy had read what Adrain had forwarded and concluded that the Trust ought to consider signing up. There was a short debate generally in support of such. Adrian agreed to inform the RAF Station Commander of the Trustees' intentions and to request her view. **Action 89 - Adrian**

Whilst discussing the equality of opportunity to Service personnel, it was agreed to add a statement reflecting the Trust's equality and inclusivity to the website.

Action 90 - Jeremy

5 Secretary's Report

5.1 Annual Inspections.

Corrective work was necessary on the Emergency lighting system. This has now been done. The request from PRS/PPL has been received for the annual return which will determine the music licence payment.

5.2 Christmas Gifts for the needy. £500 has been raised in total. 55 people in the Parish have been identified to receive a gift. Thanks have been expressed to the contributors. MGL also gave £300 to cover the cost of the Community Lunch held 20.12.23 plus an excellent bag of small gifts for each of the 30 participants.

5.3 Probation Service – land management in 2024. This enquiry is still outstanding.

5.4 Clothes Bank. The decision was taken not to pursue a Clothes Bank at the moment, lest we spread our Trustee volunteers' efforts too thinly.

5.5 XIn Contract. XIn have stated that they will not waive the penalty charges for early withdrawal from the existing contract. It means that we have to continue paying the monthly invoice until the contract ends on 02.05.24. Stewart is making enquiries about an alternative system for receiving incoming calls.

Action 83 - Stewart

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5.6 Free Trees. Arrangement will be made for planting the trees during a mild spell (hopefully in January). The Longhoughton Gardening(?) Group has said they will help.

5.7 Cleaning Contract. A contract has been offered, and has been accepted, for a two-year contract up to 31.12.25 on the terms that were discussed at the last meeting.

5.8 Defibrillator

The defibrillator at the Centre is not working because the pads are out of date. The Parish Council will cover the cost of the repairs. It was agreed that our Centre should have an operational defibrillator and it should be brought back into use as quickly as possible.

Action 91 - Kris

5.9 Broadband and digital inclusion.

CAN is to hire the Community Centre on 29.02.24 for the promotion of broadband and digital inclusion. There will be an invite to other village halls and community centres in the area. Two similar sessions have already been held at Great Whittington and Ellingham. The Secretary has been asked to make a short presentation on behalf of the Centre on how we are using broadband and social media to promote the Centre and what opportunities there are to develop a programme of digital inclusion. Other speakers will be from Northumberland CVA who will be talking about IT skills and funding and there may be someone from the libraries service talking about digital inclusion and NCC. The Secretary is confident that there are people in the Parish who could do with this sort of training so this could be the start of another campaign to get people involved. CAN has obtained funding to take this forward within rural Northumberland and a part-time person is to be appointed from April.

5.10 Energy Audit

CAN is offering an Energy Audit free of charge. They are being done by the same experienced person who did our last one in 2018. A particular issue for us is to identify the options for any potential conversion of the gas heating system to electricity. Compared to electricity, gas is very cheap and one of the conclusions is that we may have to hang on with gas until the price rises. However, obtaining an Energy Audit will be a first step in considering the option. It was agreed to ask CAN to undertake the Energy Audit.

Action 92 - Adrian

5.11 Development Strategy for 2023-28.

Still to be updated for progress –and this will need to be done for Hallmark.

It is expected that the Parish Council will withdraw the promised finding of £5,000 for each of two years towards the cost of the appointment of a Development Officer employed by the Trust. This is because there is not currently a sustainable financial case for the employment of the Officer. If we get into such a position a case can be made to the Parish Council.

5.12 Conversion of the Changing Rooms

The End of Grant report has been completed and sent to the National Lottery via CAN.

The purchase and fitting of the acoustic panels to minimise the echo is on the maintenance schedule. A cost estimate to cover the ceiling with the same type of tile as used in the Function Room (considered effective) was in the order of £3500 for materials alone. This was considered disproportionate to the problem's effects and a half-way house may need to be established. When they visited, Clockwork Audio Visual Ltd had taken measurements and said they'd quote. Stewart agreed to follow this up.

Action 93 - Stewart

The recent inspection of the Fire Alarm system identified that there is a need for a fire detector and alarm trigger point within MR3. A quotation for this work is being obtained and is expected to be in the region of £500.

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5.13 Northumberland Community Energy Scheme.

Following a Finance Group meeting we have written to Sintons Solicitors on 02.01.24 making the following points:

- a) Giving details of the Trust and Trustees which they had requested to set up a customer record.
- b) Setting out our understanding of the parties and legal obligations and asking for clarification.
- c) Setting out the legal advice that the Trust is looking to receive and clarification on who is to pay the legal fees.
- d) Issues of extending the existing lease put forward by Northumberland Estates.
- e) The Power Purchase agreement and lease with LCEL

Thanks were expressed to Jeremy in starting to clear the Plant Room.

5.14 Development of the Community Hub.

- a) Series of Health and Wellbeing Talks and Clinics. The remaining programme is as follows:

18.01.23 (Thursday) 11.30am Physical Activity and the five ways to wellbeing.

15.02.24 (Thursday) 11.30am Internal and external triggers to food choices.

21.03.24 (Thursday) 11.30am Eating out and alcohol.

All talks are free and the accommodation is funded by a grant from Northumberland Communities Together. **The Secretary encouraged the trustees to attend these sessions if possible.**

b) Alnwick Medical Group

An email has been sent to the New Practice Manager (Paula Breen) suggesting that we hold a meeting in Longhoughton and for Paula to see the facilities and the Centre and the Beacon. No response had been received. A hard copy letter has been sent to follow up. Ms Breen had responded to say she was not in a position to meet until after April 2024.

c) Beacon Families Centre. Jeremy and Adrian met Laura Rowberry at the Beacon in 2023. We discussed our separate programmes and how we can co-operate. We viewed the facilities they have for children under 5 which are exemplary. There is a willingness to work together for mutual benefit.

d) Thursday Together. Thursday Together is being held every Thursday at 11.30am to 1.30pm throughout January, February and March.

5.15 Hallmark Update.

The Secretary outlined the progress he was making in compiling the evidence necessary for Hallmark 1.

A reminder on the review of policies.

Conditions of Hire	Jeremy	Recently revised to Issue 3
Guidance Notes for Hirers	Jeremy	Recently revised to Issue 2
Hire Charges	Jeremy	Up to date as of 1st January 2024

Data Protection & GDPR	Stewart
Public Interest Disclosure	Stewart
Complaints Procedure	Vanessa – updated policy attached for consideration.
Fire Risk Assessment	Adrian & Jeremy lead } February meeting.
HSE Health & Safety Checklist	Guidance only
Health and Safety Policy	Adrian & Jeremy Lead } February Meeting.
Safeguarding	Done – thank you Stewart – completed.
Equal Opportunities	Vicki
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Vicki

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Financial Policies

Stewart – almost ready to circulate

Investment Policy

Stewart -almost ready to circulate

Procurement

Stewart

Draft Complaints Policy

Vanessa had reviewed the Complaints Policy which had been circulated for comment. The discussion at the meeting drew out the following points:

Response time to acknowledge receipt of a complaint – Ten working days was considered excessive and that, if the Secretary were to be away, alternative arrangements would be made to acknowledge a complaint.

Maximum Response time for complaints – Should it be less than one month? It was agreed that we should endeavour to respond as quickly as possible but the back stop of one month should remain.

All complaints to be reviewed by the Board of Trustees. This does not mean that the Trustees will in detail consider every complaint. It means that they will be made aware of them.

Availability of the Complaint Form – Agreed to add the web site.

Action 94 - Jeremy

It was concluded that the wording on the policy would be changed to convey the enhanced message.

Action 95 - Adrian

6 Treasurer's Report

6.1 Cash Position at 31.12.23

Lloyds Bank	£
Treasurers Account:	8,956
Warm Hub	1,750 (includes £1,207)
Sport England Grant	1 (to keep account open)

Aldermore Bank

(1 Year fixed rate)	(4.12%)	25,330	
(Easy access)	(3.25%)	<u>10,000</u>	35,330

C & C Bank

(120 day notice account) (4.41%)	<u>85,000</u>
TOTAL	131,037

Restricted/designated funds included above

£26,755 restricted - Play area (£15,965), Ballinger Trust (£340) & 3G renewal (£10,000), Film Club (£450)

£75,023 designated - 3G (£69,023) and Centre sinking funds (£6,000)

£1,207 lunch club monies held in Warm Hub

Total restricted/Designated Funds **£101,985**

General funds balance

£29,052 (including Warm Hub)

Notable outgoings since Dec meeting:

£15,300 transferred to C&C Bank (now at £85,000)

£10,000 transferred to new Aldermore Easy Access account

Notable income:

£460 raised at Xmas Quiz event

Outstanding debts

Current debts: £2,362 - all 2023/24 current month/quarter.

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6.2 Projected Estimates for the Trading Activities to 30.09.24

The projections are shown below include the following guidelines:

- Only known grants are shown – but funders may not be as supportive as the current year.
- The full impact of gas and electricity prices is shown evaluated at present usage levels.
- A projection of 5% on general prices is included.
- £5,000 is included for Building/3G pitch maintenance.
- No benefit is shown from the potential of the Northumberland Community Energy scheme.
- Fund raising is assumed to generate a surplus of £2,500 (£1,000 at 31 Dec)
- The Astro Turf accounts should enable a full £11,000 to be transferred to the Sinking Fund (would bring fund up to £80,000)
- It may be possible to transfer £1,000 to the building sinking fund.

The following estimates include the items listed above:	Content/Notes	Community Centre £	Content	Astro-turf Pitch £	Total £
INCOME					
Hire Fees	Based on qtr to 31 Dec + price increase	10,000		24,000	34,000
Grants	Parish Council + Ballinger	1,812			1,812
Fund Raising	£1,000 to date	2,500			2,500
Interest	Split 50:50. Increased interest rate & investments	2,100		2,100	4,200
Total Income		16,412		26,100	42,512
Expenditure					
General Price increase at 5%	Except, Electricity, Gas and Building Maintenance	9,150		2,750	11,900
Electricity		5,406		2,544	7,950
Gas		3,739		1,123	4,862
Building Maintenance		3,950		1,050	5,000
Total Expenditure		22,495		7,467	29,712
Surplus/Deficit		(-) 5,833		18,633	12,800
Suggested Transfer to Sinking Fund				8,500	8,500
Surplus/ Deficit after Transfer		(-) 5,833		10,133	4,820

There was some debate about risks to budgeted annual turnover:

- first-quarter (Q1) Astro turf cancellations amounting to 24% of budgeted Q1 income (£5397 versus Q1 budget £7095).
- better-than-anticipated Centre income (Q1 Centre income was slightly ahead of budget (£2958 versus Q1 budget £2876)

Clearly, at such a level of lost income the Astro turf was considered worth keeping a very close eye on.

Centre prospects are looking more positive than the budget, however:

- 2-off polling station sessions possible in the financial year
- A positive start, with gaining momentum, re: Trust fundraising

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7 Safeguarding

Stewart confirmed that all Trustees had completed their forms, but that identity checks had yet to be completed.

8 Site Maintenance

The maintenance list was noted.

Floodlight Control Boxes. We are aware that the boxes need maintenance due to corrosion. Two methods of dealing with this issue have been considered, noting that the electrical system itself is not giving any issues:

- a) Completely replacing the steel cabinets and restoring the electrics in each cabinet like-for-like (circa £10k). This has previously been agreed to be completely beyond the Trust's affordability.
- b) Covering each cabinet like a hood-like fabrication. A quotation for this has never materialised and the original £750 estimate (£125each) is now viewed as rather optimistic.

Jeremy proposed a third, "sticking-plaster", option which is much cheaper. All cabinets exhibit unsightly rusting on many surfaces but **only one** has completely corroded through such that a hand could be put through (already determined no electrical safety risk due to second box within cabinet). The proposal is to cut out the corroded-through section and repair with a galvanised steel sheet metal 'patch'. Other rusting areas (on all cabinets) would be ground back to clean metal and re-painted with a suitable anti-corrosive paint. A cordless angle grinder would be needed (circa £140), along with suitable grinding consumables, galvanised sheet and paint (circa £100). Jeremy would be prepared to do this work. Once the job is complete Jeremy would be prepared to purchase the Angle Grinder (at a second-hand price).

The Trustees considered this option to be a good way forward and thanked Jeremy for the proposal. The re-purchase of the Angle Grinder was acceptable if Jeremy wished to purchase it. **On this basis the proposal was accepted.**

It was noted, however, that the proposed work is not a long-term solution and does not fix broken cabinet hinges (although a fix for these is also being considered). It should, however, create several years' leeway.

Alarm and Emergency Lighting Checks. Mike Pritchard had volunteered to carry out the monthly checks.

9 Children's Play Area

The meeting considered the Safety Inspection report and noted the contents. Jeremy was thanked for carrying out this work and producing the report. It was understood that Mike Pritchard is to take over this task.

10 Events and Communications

The proposed 'Events Group' is to meet on 16.01.24. The Group will be looking for new members and will be contacting existing volunteers to see if any wish to be involved. Gradually, people are beginning to offer to get involved the more they understand what the Trust is trying to achieve. The December quiz night and the opening up on New Year's Eve went very well and the attendance had been superb.

Jeremy said he'd share the number of the volunteer that came forward during the New Year's Eve event.

Action 96 - Jeremy

11 AOB

In relation to the requirement of the Landlord to check the site boundary to ensure that it is as shown on the original plans and is in good order, Jeremy suggested that it should be an annual task for the Trustees to walk the boundary and record what they find by photographs. The meeting considered this to be a good suggestion.

Action 97 - Jeremy

Meeting ended 9.31pm.

13/02/2024