

## **Notes from The Barlow Public/Volunteer/Trustee meeting held on 22 January 2020 at The Barlow**

**Trustees in attendance:** Mike Fay MF(Chair with overall responsibility and specifically also for the Reading Room; Steve Danks SD (Cricket Club), Paul Allen PA (Woodlands and Business Plan strategy), Yvonne Flemming YF (Funding), Phil McDermott PMcD (Buildings), Kerry Holt KH (Bowling Club).

MF asked if anyone was willing to do the general book-keeping to replace Christine Waring who had carried on in the absence of Lyn Jefferies who had been poorly.

No questions had been provided in advance of the meeting, possibly because the Secretary was away on holiday.

Note that The Minutes of each Board of Trustees meeting will be published each month.

**Vision** - MF gave a run through of his vision for the future, namely many more events and commercial activities (weekly hopefully) including weddings, drama, concerts etc for 2020/21 the profits from which, will be used to subsidise the community activities, eg the Luncheon Club, Memory Cafe, Toddler group etc...

**Refurbishment** - No real progress on crumbling building but lots of current activity - see 'Roof' and 'Funding' sections below.

**Funding** - Plans for a Public Works Loan and new funding schemes (YF) are being explored and the positioning of a barometer to record local donations. Trustees pleased to report on a grant for new windows from Veolia with Barlow match-funding of £75k and a completion time of 12 months, plus a new Heritage Lottery grant is to be applied for. Crowdfunding is also being considered. Other ideas from the floor included:

- A scheme similar to the Co-op funding of the Darwen Tower refurbishment project
- Cash-back scheme for on-line shopping
- Sponsorship

A question from the floor – “Why isn’t The Barlow family bequest being used?” It was informed that £225K is left of their recent £250k donation, which is intended in part to be used to cover match-funding for grants that are being applied for.

**Marketing:** Linda Spencer will be working with a new member on marketing.

**Roof** – PMcD consulting with 3 experts in the village in connection with the roof and the costs around £200/250K (significantly lower than previously quoted) – hoping to be able to engage with a local roofer, but a new specification is needed.

**Constitution** – A volunteer asked how the Trustees were going to minimise the risk to themselves when administering the cost of future projects. At this point the volunteer Chairman of the Steering Group (set up to report on their recommendations for the Constitution), gave a full resume of the Report promised, following the AGM in 2018, which subsequently had never been acted upon. MF said legal advice had been sought since and a further Report had been received which had been put on the website. It was noted that this appeared to agree with the first. The Trustees were hoping to proceed with a company limited by guarantee and MF stated he was about to engage with the Charity Commission for their advice on the Constitution issue.

**Cricket Club** – MF reported that a financial agreement was close after many years of turmoil in respect of the history between The Barlow estate and the Cricket Club. The proposal was for the cricket club to pay a rent backdated by one year, paying £3,800 per year. The Charity Commission would advise and hopefully the VAT issues would be resolved between the Cricket Club and The Barlow Charitable Estate. It was stated by the Chair that legal advice had been received which indicated that it was in nobody's best interests to pursue lease payments backdated further than 2019.

Other associated issues included:

A Volunteer Meeting – Nigel Truswell would be organising a further meeting with Volunteers in the near future.

MF reported there was no timetable for Action Plans at the moment in response to a question from the floor.

An extension would be sought to the alcohol licence to harmonise with the Cricket Club and other public places.

It was intended to have an electronic card entering system to eliminate the problem of key duplication and to identify individual usage.

A Tree Preservation Order had been established covering the estate's trees, despite the Trustees' opposition to such an order. This had been done through Cllr Jean Rigby in conjunction with Blackburn with Darwen BC and without consulting the Trustees.

Lara Lowe, (Engagement & Integration Office BwD and funded by central Government) gave a presentation on the support she was able to provide to residents applying for grants etc. She also reported on her endeavours to secure transport links for the village.