

**Meppershall Village Hall AGM**  
**A Summary of the meeting held on Sunday 8th June 2014**

Chairman's Report

Steve Ansell, Chairman, reported that the Village Hall continues to be used extensively and almost to capacity during school term time, to the extent that bookings have to be turned away, as there is simply not the capacity to take on any more regular users. He particularly thanked not only the trustees of the Village Hall for the time spent on the running of the Village Hall, but in particular the Village Summer Fair committee for their fundraising over many months in putting together and organising an excellent event in June 2013, and another scheduled for 2014.

Treasurer's Report

David Birch, Treasurer, presented the accounts for the year to 31st March 2014, which showed a surplus of income over expenditure of £974 and cash reserves of £14,554. Highlights were that a net sum of just under £2.5k was raised by the 2013 Summer Fair, maintenance costs had been kept to a minimum in the expectation of a new Hall being built (within the next couple of years), and the cost of electricity increased by c£1,100, reflecting the ending a fixed price deal, though partly offset by a reduction of c£500 in gas used for heating, due to the relatively mild winter. The circulated accounts were approved.

The new company which is to take over from the existing Charitable Trust has now been formed and the principle of the new Village Hall construction and land transfers approved by the Charity Commission. Formal documentation and registration of the Company as a charity are being dealt with by lawyers.

New Village Hall

The latest draft layout plans for the proposed new Village Hall, sports facilities and cemetery were circulated. These have been revised and amended three times in recent weeks to take into account practical design considerations, and to ensure construction can be achieved within the cash budget available, also allowing for a sensible contingency sum. In particular the cost to re-site or replace the current Multi-Use Games Area was estimated at approximately £85,000 (money it was decided could be better spent elsewhere), and therefore the plans were changed to incorporate the existing facility within the overall design, thus avoiding that cost. Several other changes had been made to reduce the costs of construction with specific features restricted or no longer feasible.

The Trustees reaffirmed that they would not proceed with a new Village Hall construction if they did not consider that it to be financially viable, and further that the Village Hall charity would retain ownership of the current Village Hall and land until the new Hall was ready for use and occupation.

Concern was expressed about the new vehicle and pedestrian access road to be constructed on the existing Village Hall site and the effect of the newly constructed Village Hall on users, i.e. on the current playing fields. It was explained that there would be a period of approximately eight weeks when normal access would not be available or had to be restricted to meet safety standards but an alternative using the Crackle Hill footpath to the playing fields (suitably upgraded with hard surfaces) and alternative parking, is in hand. If construction of the access road can be timed to fall within the summer holiday period then the disruption should be minimised.

It is expected that a formal Land Owners Agreement will be signed within the next few weeks, after which a planning application for the entire development will be submitted to Central Beds Council. Any interested parties will have the opportunity to submit their views to Central Beds Council as part of that process.

Trustees

The current Trustees were re-elected to serve another term.