

1) APOLOGIES

Members present were:

Jane Paxman, David Wiper, Debbie Robinson, George Metcalfe, Michael Hampson and Moyra Jacques.

Apologies received from:

Alice Helyar

2) NOTES OF LAST MEETING

It was agreed that no amendments were needed to the notes of the last meeting.

3) FOLLOW UP TO ANALYSIS OF LEGAL DOCUMENTS FOR OSR

It was established that via the non-professional analysis of the legal documents that the trustees of the OSR are the vicar and church wardens ex officio and four named individuals, two of which are no longer living. They cannot be replaced unless a new order is implemented. Currently the two surviving individuals are Nigel Cottam and Sally Nimmo, the latter is no longer a village resident. The Management Committee operates under a draft constitution but has no legal standing.

The matter of whether to write to the Management Committee or the Trustees for money to pay towards the legal fees for a professional analysis of the documents and thus the establishment of ownership and management, was discussed. It was established that the Management Committee administered the money and they should be approached for an agreement in principle to help pay for a solicitor's legal advice on School Room ownership.

The search for three missing documents pertaining to the sale of the plot of land upon which the OSR is built from about 1834, an order from the Ministry of Education from 1955 and the original trust deeds was discussed. It was agreed that the LCC archives in Preston should be investigated. The fact that an ancient parish records box is kept by the diocese was mentioned but it was assumed these must have already been consulted in 1932.

It was agreed that Frank Wareing should be consulted as a historical expert as he has already researched into the history of Gressingham and that he would have access to various documents if required.

Earlier it had been established that through the examination of the published legal proceedings in the case of Tatham v. Wright on August 23rd 1831 that a school had been in existence prior to 1820 and had been subscribed to by Mr Marsden of Hornby Castle to the sum of £5 per annum (as testified by Rev. William Nelson curate of Gressingham).

The PCC have offered to pay £1000 towards the legal fees of investigating ownership of the School Room on the proviso that the sum is matched by another body. The OSR Management Committee will be approached as previously mentioned.

It was reiterated that Sir Nick Pearson requires evidence that the village has committed to the project by investing in it.

The scanned documents and the summary will be sent to the chosen solicitor to get a quote for their work.

4 CHURCH ADVICE ON FUTURE LEGAL STRUCTURE/OWNERSHIP

Advice from Church Commissioners was discussed. From this a possible option of closing the church and then reopening it as a community centre was discussed with particular reference to the role of the PCC and the Diocesan Mission and the Pastoral Committee. It was suggested that plans are drawn up to present to these three bodies, and also that it was essential that everyone had to move forward together.

Ultimately, it was decided that what would be feasible should be established. To do this, other organisations need to be approached such as the Diocesan Advisory Committee, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and Historic England.

5 DECISION PROCESS

It was mentioned that Sir Nick Pearson had proposed a twenty- four month period for the village to decide if it wanted to take his offer of funding from the Pearson Trust. Absent such a decision the Trust's funds would be offered elsewhere. It was proposed that an outline 'right to build order' for a combined community and church building could be achieved in two years.

6 PROPOSED MEETING WITH THE DAC

The meeting is to take place on Tuesday 6th September 2016 at the church. It was mentioned that while consent needed to be gained from them this was only while the building was a Church of England church. Information regarding similar schemes elsewhere could be asked for at the meeting.

At this point it was mentioned that ten days previously the church had had its quinquennial inspection by the architect instrumental in the work at Yealand Church.

7 POSSIBLE COMMUNITY BUILDINGS PRE-FEASIBILITY FUNDING

The award of the central government funded Community Building Pre-feasibility Grant has to be made by a properly incorporated body with a minimum of ten members. Various ways of setting this up in the village were suggested and it was agreed the preferred option would be for the PTWG become a committee of the Parish Council.

Under the terms of the grant, funds, up to £10,000, would be paid up front into the body's bank account after quotes were submitted, if the application is approved. The grant money is only available for projects pursuing the 'community right to build order' approval, not via the traditional planning route. The end of the right to build process is a legally laid out referendum conducted by local government, and a 50% majority in favour of the project is required from those who vote.

8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

21st September 2016 7:30pm Venue: OSR