**Belford Community Group Meeting**

**Wednesday 9th June 2021 at 2.00pm**

**Market Cross Guest House**

**Trustees Present:**Pauline Tucker (Chair), Phil Dodd (Secretary), Ruth Dodd, Amanda White, Del Hughes, Val Barnsley,

**Others:**Steve White, Jane Cowley.

**Apologies for absence:** Dave Ogden (Treasurer), William McLaren, Susan Husband

**Minutes of Last Meeting:**Everyone agreed they were accurate, and Pauline signed them.

**Matters Arising:**None other than those appearing on the Agenda**.**

**Finance:**The main income has been the Business Restart Grant and gym subscriptions. Various items of expenditure: the main items being a grant for the war memorial repair, the repair and painting of the shop front and a grant for the Belford Show.

**Shop:**The Shop Committee met and it is hopedthat the shop will re-open on June 22. It is hard to know what to do about the current COVID rules, but Del suggested she could make a screen for the counter and this suggestion was gladly accepted. The Committee will also see what the Government announces on Monday. With regard to volunteers, Claire has returned as a volunteer and Kate has left. The sign above the shop should just about be in place for the shop re-opening. The outside painting looks good.

**Gym:**All the issues with the gym remain complicated. An attempt follows to summarise all that was said and concludes with a succinct summing up from Del in her own words (for which many thanks, Del).

The surveyor is coming tomorrow and meeting with Steve and with Del in attendance later. Ian is no longer involved with the gym, so Steve is looking at the public liability situation. Del is talking to a company that may be able to advise with this too. The whole lease conditions have changed and continue to change. We won’t talk to our solicitor until we have seen the surveyor’s report. We may need to change our constitution to deal with the liability issues.

Del’s report: *BCG is an unincorporated Charity, which means that Trustees could potentially be held personally liable for any debts accrued by the charity.  According to a guide produced on Trustee Personal liability on the National Council Voluntary Organisations “If the Charity is entering into contracts, employs staff or has premises then its trustees should seriously consider incorporation.*

*The guide looks at liability in different scenarios and whether trustees are protected.  In the case of rental or leasing of property it suggests that becoming Incorporated does provide protection but Trustee Liability Insurance would not usually cover this.  It suggests having personal liabilities of the Trustees specifically excluded from the lease.*

*As changing from being unincorporated to Incorporated will entail some work, an application to the Charities Commission, a 12-16 week backlog and the need for legal advice regarding closing down the unincorporated charity and transferring the assets to the new Incorporated charity, it is no quick fix.    Val also raised the point that the COVID recovery grants we have received have a stipulation that the organisation must continue to exist for a year or the grant would need to be returned.   So we would need to either delay until this period has elapsed or get agreement from NCC that the change does not breach the terms of the grants.*

*Due to the need to secure the lease on the gym with the minimum of delay we should seek advice from our solicitor about requesting that Trustees personal liability is excluded from the Lease.*

There were 20 new members last month and 15 or so members are due to renew soon (although Steve thinks they won’t all renew). The continued interest in the gym is important as we need at least 60 members to self maintain the funds.

When the situation has been resolved some money needs to be spent on new equipment and general maintenance.

Pauline is to ask Brian if the community lawn mower could be used to cut the grass around the gym, which continues to be an expensive outgoing.

**Woodlands:**Brian reports that everything there is going well and more wild flower seeds are to be planted later in the year.

**Museum:**Karon has sent a report. In the report she mentions that the builder has not turned up yet. Karon and Brian hope to reopen the museum on July 3rd, guidelines permitting. Some new displays have been completed and the new website is coming along.

**Markets:**So far we have 16 or 17 stalls holders for the July market.

**Arts Festival:**No news to report.

**Newsletter:**Maureen (distribution) and Del are discussing issues involving sending out the newsletters**.**It is hoped to get volunteers to distribute to more outlying areas.

**Any other business:**

Pauline is to contact Kerry as money has been paid out for the war memorial work and the work has not been done.

Del is to work on trying to work with Hugo our solicitor, to get the personal liability issues removed from the gym contract.

**Date of next meetings at The Market Cross Guest House:**

**Monday 21 June at 2.00 pm to discuss the gym survey.**

**Wednesday 21 July at 2.00 pm**