

NOTES AND ACTION POINTS FROM 2ND MEETING OF VILLAGE NURSERY PARENTS ACTION GROUP:

Attendees: Amy, Anne, Catherine, Estelle, Gill, Janette, Liz, Nicky, Pauline, Sam, Sandrine

New group members: Hazel Kinghorn, Helen Pryor, Jenny Wood, Judith Gray

Apologies: Caroline, Kath, Kirsty, Tracy

1. Update on Progress with Council Representatives

The group reviewed Catriona Bhatia's update on progress made re 'tag hut site' on playing fields. The general feeling was one of cautious optimism, and we agreed on the following action points:-

a) Gill to ask Catriona Bhatia to advise:

- Who are the relevant officials drawing up the report for October 28th?
- What information do they need from us in the meantime
- The actual area being considered (so that we can better understand what the access issues might be re school and health centre)
- How she can help us progress the possibility of finding temporary buildings over the next few weeks (rather than hanging on till we get more details on the proposed lease at the end of October)
- Where the current school site is in the mix at the moment – i.e. OK for it to be on the backburner for now, but we may need to come back to it, depending on the outcome of the meeting on 28th
- The involvement or not of West Linton Community Council in the meeting on 28th October (if they will be included, we should meet them sooner rather than later...if they won't be included, it might complicate things to involve them because there could be other agendas across the group and it's possible they wouldn't unanimously support the proposal)

b) 2x members of the research team to take responsibility for researching building options over the next few weeks so that we are ready to move if the lease the council come up with is acceptable to Janette

2. Review of land and premises options to be researched

We talked about the importance of other options having the potential to support the development of the nursery over time. On that basis, further investigation of the Raemartin was shelved for the time being. The hope would be that if the council plan comes off, it is feasible to put in place within a year (or close to a year), in which case we bank on some reasonable flexibility re current premises. Focus for other options should therefore be viable long-term solutions. Areas to be explored:

- Local landowners to be approached re leasing / buying land. Group members to let the research team know if they have any links to Barbara

Jackson (Howieson farm), Mrs King (Cottage Farm), Jim Weir (Whitfield), Mr Clarke (Greenlaw Farm). In the meantime, members of the research group to contact council planning dept to clarify situation re development outside official village boundaries (no point in approaching landowners if we definitely won't get permission for a building). Catherine flagged that Donald knows Jim Weir and Anne thinks she may have a link into Mrs King via Isla -tbc.

- Leasing options in the village centre to be systematically researched by members of the research team: properties available to lease / properties for sale / advertising that we're looking for property etc. Catherine will also talk to Anna Wignall on her return from holiday to find out whether an approach to her parents-in-law re Arden Lodge on Medwyn Road would be appropriate
- Mrs Bell to be approached re both Robinsland Steading and Deanfoot Road site (designated for light industrial / employment)
- Kirsty, Janette and possibly Tracy and Nicky to meet with Care Commission to keep them apprised of situation and learn more about standards re space / facilities that any building would need to conform to.

3. Communications Strategy

Website

- We agreed that getting the website up and running is really important as a way of:
 - Clarifying the objectives of the group and giving people easy ways to get in touch (e.g. single point of contact?)
 - Highlighting the scale and importance of the issue: number of families and children affected / potential consequences etc
 - Keeping people across the village (nursery parents and others) informed about the options we are looking into and progress being made
 - Asking for specific kinds of help / new ideas: enabling us to tap into a much wider pool of resources and ensuring that people don't feel excluded (important that this aim is clearly stated on home page)
- Content of the site to include: objectives of gp / who we are / options we're exploring / calendar of key events / statistics highlighting the extent of the issues / minutes of meetings / quotes from key people: Janette / Parents (Dads too!), Councillors, Care Commission/ Link to nursery website, care commission website / west linton website...and possibly some artwork and quotes from the kids?
- Sam confirmed that domain name Nuts about Nursery has been obtained and that Andy has very kindly agreed to cover the cost of this. Website

should be up and running in 7-10 days. Sam to contact group members if more help with content is needed.

- Flyer promoting website to be designed to be circulated once website is launched

Meeting with Jeremy Purvis 30/9

- Amy has organised a meeting with Jeremy Purvis at the Rosehip, 8pm – so far 10 group members committed to attend: Amy, Sam/Andy, Anne, Liz, Estelle, Nicky, Hazel, Gill, Caroline and Jenny (possibly also Marc/Sandrine)
- Amy to draft provisional agenda for the meeting to include: How JP proposes to help? Involvement of other regional MSPs? Possibility of intervention re Broomlee Centre? Help with questionnaires e.g. to support planning application in future?...

Communication with the church

- Janette circulated a letter that she has sent to the Kirk session asking to extend the lease till Oct 09, but leaving the way open for terminating the lease sooner (as per 3 month notice period) if it appears no viable solution can be found
- Estelle summarised meeting she had had with Rev Tom Burt in which he made it clear that whilst he hoped a solution to nursery provision could be found, he does not actively support preserving Janette's business as the provider of this

Community Council Meeting

- We need to get back to the Community Council re whether or not we want to get the nursery on the agenda for their next meeting in early October. It was suggested that we seek advice on this from Catriona Bhatia (see above)

Wider Community Meeting

- We discussed the possible benefit of a wider meeting if the lease for the tag hut site goes through and we need support of community re planning. Judith suggested a more informal gathering where people would have the opportunity to review plans and talk to councillors / others to voice support / resistance to what was being proposed. That way we avoid an adversarial situation, but would understand where the concerns about the proposal might lie and ensure we counter / alleviate these in the way we approach our 'yes' campaign!

Other

- The group urged Janette to write a letter to nursery parents talking about the efforts that are being made to secure the nursery's future – and her support of this. It was felt that this could help to reinforce Janette's ongoing commitment to the nursery and shore up the situation for a little longer. Janette agreed to give this some more thought
- We agreed that wider PR e.g. involvement of local media should be discussed at the next meeting

4. Funding

We agreed that we need to research funding options and alternative operating models in relation to these as soon as possible (not wait till we solve the premises conundrum as this will only add to the lead times required).

It was agreed that this is something we really need more help with – no one in the group feels qualified to 'own' it. Something to highlight on the website and ask for help with

In the meantime, individual members of the group did agree to research specific items:

- Sam to talk to Tom Davidson about potential funding options
- Anne / Sandrine / Liz to pursue the Scottish Enterprise angle
- Hazel to contact a work contact who seems to know a lot about sources of funding / in kind support
- Caroline to write speculative letters to Margaret Harrison and Kirk Session re Alice Hamilton Bequest and Kenny Paul Trust respectively (Caroline wasn't at the meeting, but gave me permission to volunteer her for stuff – hope this is OK Caroline!)
- Kirsty to find out more about the Development Trust model that is in place re new community building at Newlands (Judith's understanding is that the trust part relates to the building only and that they intend to approach a private nursery provider)
- Gill to research other alternative operating models for nurseries (in case options available require us to consider a wider range of funding opportunities)

5. Other stuff

- Janette offered to cover costs associated with the campaign but we agreed that these should be shared across the group and Anne has agreed to keep a tally of these. To date, costs include laminating posters and securing the domain name (but Nicky and Sam have kindly offered to cover these themselves)
- It was agreed that the next meeting should take place in about 2 weeks – date tbc