

New Community Hall Update Note for Parish Council Meeting 11th April 2024

- Since the last PC meeting at the end of February, there has been considerable progress on the construction of the new community hall. The sub-structure masonry and drainage have been completed and the floor slabs installed, so it is now possible to see the shape and dimensions of the floor layout. The outside brickwork has also been commenced and steel 'goalposts' that will support the main hall roof installed. The scaffolding that will facilitate the construction of the upper parts of the hall, including the roof, has been put in place during the last week. Agreement has also been reached on the installation of the electrics and the types of locks to cater for the various uses and users.
- There have been some inevitable delays to the construction programme resulting from the heavy rain experienced in January and early February. There has also been an extension to the programme due to the alterations requested by the Parish Council to the layout of the kitchen and the air conditioning installation. The combined result of these factors is that the original completion date for handover has now been put back to the third week of August. It has been made clear to Draper and Nicholls that the Parish Council really needs the new hall to be available for use by the start of the Autumn school term at the latest, and it would not wish to see the completion period pushed back further. This will of course depend on the weather, but could also be affected by possible delays to the procurement of materials. Whilst the weather is out of our control, it has to be understood, that any additional design changes requested by the Parish Council, could further delay the date of the opening!
- A design issue that has arisen following the regular site meeting with D&N at the end of March is the cost and treatment of the external areas to the hall, including the pre-school 'play area' to the north of the main hall. It has been agreed after much discussion that the proposed gabions (steel cages containing large stones) and seating on the slope from the patio to the hall and the playing fields will not be installed, and the area will remain as a planted bank. There will however still be steps from the patio to the playing fields and the disabled access ramp will be retained. The pre-school area will be enclosed by a fence and have appropriate surfacing and security arrangements to meet the requirements of the pre-school (and Ofsted). This alteration to the current plan will help reduce the prospect of further delays and should save money from an already stretched budget. This will help fund other areas of the project, such as the internal seating with dedicated trollies, patio furniture, and the resurfacing of the unimproved section of the car park to the front of the new hall. The omission of this relatively complex feature, currently scheduled for the end of the project, should also help reduce the possibility of further delays to the handover date. It will still be feasible to install seating on the bank, and remodel the disabled ramp at a future date, if funds become available!
- The next meeting of the New Pavilion Group is scheduled for 7.30pm on Tuesday 16th April in the Church Hall. It is hoped as many Parish Councillors, as well as established members of the group, will be able to attend. Key considerations at this meeting will be the governance, the proposed management, and the usage of the new hall. It is now only 4 months until the Hall will be handed over and it is vital that the Parish Council has addressed these issues and has measures in place, well before it opens.

Glyn Davies – Chair, New Pavilion Working Group