Dear Vince, 20th September 2012

**Village hall finances**

As we discussed, I would like to suggest some minor changes to the way we deal with funding the village hall.

1. The constitution of the Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC) stipulates that ‘The Village Hall and the parcel of land upon which it is situated is held in Trust by the Parish Council who are responsible for its maintenance and repair, improvement, insurance, rates and taxes.’

At present the PC does pay for insurance, rates, fire prevention and electrical safety testing and, together with the VHMC, contributes to the maintenance, repair and improvement of the hall. With respect to the grounds the PC pays for the grass to be mowed. Other work (hedge trimming weeding etc) has been done intermittently by volunteers gathered by the VHMC but this approach is not sustainable or desirable in the view of the VHMC. Chris Cooke has quoted for an initial tidy-up of the grounds including hedge trimming and some landscaping (£250) and the VHMC has accepted this and will pay for the work to be done. Chris also quoted for routine hedge trimming, strimming and weeding (£215- 240 + VAT per annum) and the VHMC has agreed to fund this for 6 months but requests that the PC fund it from the new financial year.

1. At present income from the bottle banks (£428 in 2011 – 2012) is paid to the VHMC. I understand that this was introduced as a method of providing the VHMC with regular income. However there is no rational basis for it and I suggest that the money be paid to the PC from the start of the next financial year.
2. Through lettings and events the VHMC aims to cover the costs of water and electricity and generate a surplus to contribute to the cost of repairs, maintenance and improvements to the hall. We aim to maintain a minimum balance of £1000 in the bank for emergencies. A great deal of work has been done to the hall recently and it is in good repair but we suggest that we plan to insulate the storeroom, in the same way as the main hall, next year and we are seeking quotations for this work. In my experience it is important for the PC and VHMC to work together on funding the Village Hall and I suggest that the Chairmen, Treasurer and Clerk meet in September every year to discuss this and agree priorities for maintenance and improvements.

Best wishes,

Mike