

The future of the pavilion: what is best for the village?

After a lot of sustained effort by the Pavilion Sub-Committee, the pavilion is now in a better state than for many years. There remains work to do, but thanks to these efforts it is now an asset rather than a liability, so there is a need to consider its future.

Since the Pavilion Sub-committee has expressed a desire for the management of the pavilion to be handed over to a Sports & Social Club independent of YDCC (at which point the sub-committee would presumably be wound up), I have assumed this to be the front runner in any list of possible administrative and operational regimes, and asked myself what the implications of such a move might be. The discussion below is intended to inform that debate.

I do not doubt that independence could be made to work, but I am concerned that in practice it might prove administratively messy and time-consuming. So I also present an alternative which might address these issues. And of course there may be other possible arrangements that no one has yet thought of.

Hopefully, this discussion will help the process.

Suggestions for inclusion in any agreement transferring pavilion maintenance and operation from YDCC Pavilion Sub-committee to Yetholm Sports & Social Club

- 1 Confirmation from SBC that the club's constitutional and other arrangements qualify it for consideration for grant aid, and to what extent.
- 2 A working arrangement with YDCC to cover areas of shared interest, including toilets, electricity supply, use of storage container, access over YDCC-administered land, roadside front of pavilion parking, etc. This is vital because most activities involve both parties.
- 3 An obligation on the club, built into its constitution, to make the building available for functions not organised by the club. Such functions to fall into two categories:
 - (i) Pavilion-only functions: involving only the use of the building, and access to it.
 - (ii) Shared functions: involving pavilion facilities such as toilets or electricity supply, plus other facilities not within the club's remit, such as use of recreation ground and use of the YDCC container.

Administration and remuneration to be the responsibility of the club for pavilion-only functions, but of YDCC for shared functions, who would recompense the club in accordance with the working arrangement described in 2 above. The idea of this is to facilitate marketing of shared facilities as a package to outside bodies (assuming this is legally permissible, Simon Mountford to confirm) by ensuring that hirers need only deal with one point of contact.

- 4 A five year-business plan covering all normal maintenance and operational matters, not excluding the following:
 - (a) remaining refurbishment works
 - (b) ongoing maintenance

- (c) insurance
- (d) confirmation of continuing business rates exemption
- (e) hire charges for pavilion-only functions.

5 Basis for financial handover to be the total pavilion assets shown on the spreadsheet dated 7/12/22, adjusted for subsequent transactions.

A possible alternative

- 1 Create a Pavilion Group, a working group analogous to the Resilience Group. One councillor member, the Leader, reports to YDCC meetings. Other members signed on to YDCC policy for insurance purposes. The group's remit would be to handle the operation and maintenance of the pavilion, exactly as at present.
- 2 Ringfence an amount in the YDCC account identical to the balance in the Pavilion account and, to facilitate group access to funds, ensure that there is always at least one Pavilion Group member listed as a signatory to the YDCC account (as at present).
- 3 Invite all current members of the Pavilion Sub-committee to join the Pavilion Group
- 4 Transfer all monies from the Pavilion account to the main YDCC account, close the Pavilion account and disband the Pavilion Sub-committee.

Advantages:

- 1 Pavilion Group members could continue to do what they are best at – the practical business of maintaining, improving and operating the building – while being relieved of the procedural duties associated with YDCC. Independence is an understandably appealing concept to those who have put so much effort into rescuing the building, often with scant thanks, but without the arms-length scrutiny which followed from being part of YDCC, the club might find that access to grant monies actually demanded more rather than less procedural compliance.
- 2 Administratively much simpler: no need for financial adjustments between pavilion and YDCC when an event involves shared facilities.
- 3 Much better chance of viability if part of YDCC, as it could be marketed as a package with recreation ground (assuming legality, as already noted). With grant aid likely to get more and more squeezed, we need to generate our own income wherever possible. It would be tragic if an independent pavilion ran into financial trouble and the building deteriorated again.

Disadvantage:

Expenditure would be subject to the usual YDCC financial procedures, so spending over £50 would need council authorisation, whereas at present the signatories have complete discretion. However there is at least one precedent for allocating a budget and allowing discretion within that budget (namely Oktoberfest bankrolling), which if repeated could give considerable freedom of action.