

Residents get to vote on village hall plans

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A referendum will be held in Monks Eleigh so residents can decide which of two village hall proposals they want to see built.

The parish council, and a group of school and community representatives called Mesch, are behind two separate plans to replace the current hall on Church Hill.

Parish council clerk Vicky Waples confirmed that the 440 residents will have the chance to vote on which plan they prefer if planning approval is obtained.

She said: “The village will have a referendum on the two projects. It will be a poll for villagers only and it will be up to everyone to say which village hall proposal they prefer.

“We think it is the best way forward and we will get a clear mandate from the villagers for either project.”

If approved, the parish council’s hall would be single storey and situated on the village’s recreation ground on Church Hill on land the parish council owns.

It would be clad in black board to blend in with other “barn-type” homes in the village and have 20 car parking spaces.

The council has resubmitted its plans to Babergh District Council after revisions involving concerns about visibility issues.

Mrs Waples said the council held a public meeting two weeks ago at which residents were able to inspect the plans and ask questions.

The Mesch plan involves building a community hall in the grounds of Monks Eleigh Primary School and it has received a £180,000 grant from Suffolk County Council towards construction.

But the plan is dependant on the sale of the current hall and land, with plans to demolish it and build four houses on the site already approved.

A surveyor’s report shows the existing hall, built in 1953, can only be used for a few more years.