

COLTON VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of Thursday 29th June 2017

Members Present:

Richard Monbiot (RM) Chairman	Marie Havelock (MH)
Sonia Jenkinson (SJ)	Ian Jones (IJ)
John Macmillan (JM)	Polly Macmillan (PM)

In attendance Kerry Ball (KB) (external hire bookings) and, for item 1 only, Odette Ghent (OG) Treasurer

Apologies

Alan Freeman (AF)

1. Prior to the start of formal business OG was introduced to the members by RM. She explained that she was unable to stay for the meeting for personal reasons but she had already agreed procedures with KB concerning passing of information re external hires and would do the same with Ann Nunn (AN) in respect of regular hirers and parish private hirers. OG then left the meeting.
2. Confirmation of committee members. The members of the management committee as announced at the AGM which had immediately preceded the meeting was confirmed.
3. Appointment of officers. RM was unanimously appointed as chair but he indicated that he would not be prepared to serve for more than the current financial year. OG was appointed as treasurer and JM as secretary.
4. Appointment of deputy/assistant officers. As there were so few members of the committee it was decided that there was little point in appointing a vice-chair or an assistant treasurer or secretary. If RM was unable to chair a meeting those present at that meeting would elect a chair for the purposes of that meeting only.
5. Induction for new trustees. Concern was expressed over the low number of trustees. MH said that it was important that we find volunteers to run specific events such as the Christmas Fair without the need for them to become trustees. All trustees apart from AF had received induction training and it was not clear whether he was willing to continue as a trustee because of recent changes to his working patterns. RM would ask him whether he was willing to continue and if so to arrange induction training. JM invited trustees to consider imposing a minimum quorum for meetings. There had only been three trustees present at the last meeting and he thought this was unhealthy. The constitution did not prescribe a minimum number but we had power to make by-laws to govern meetings.
6. Amendments to committee to be notified to the Charity Commission. No amendments.
7. Minutes of last meeting. Approved.
8. Matters arising. JM expressed concern that the impression may have been given both in the minutes and at the AGM that the VHMC was in some way responsible for funding the new playground which was never the intention of the committee. RM confirmed and the committee agreed that there could be no question of the VHMC funding the replacement playground. That must be done by the Playground Group. Our traditional fundraising activities and our reserves would not be used to fund the playground but we would continue to host joint one off events where funds

raised would go partly to the playground and partly towards the refurbishment of the car park. While the playground was on the VH's list of assets this was purely an historical necessity as we had made the land available at no charge and had been required to be the legal entity behind the fundraising which had taken place for the original playground. To avoid the issues which had arisen in the parish over liability for playground maintenance and replacement it was essential that this time clearly worded agreements were entered into about who was responsible for doing what both now and into the future.

9. Thanks to retiring trustees. RM thanked all members who had retired during the year for their services and in particular AN was warmly thanked by the committee for her services as acting secretary for the previous 12 months.

10. Chair's report. Nothing to add to the presentation just given at the AGM.

11. Treasurer's report. Nothing to add to the presentation just given at the AGM.

12. Members to serve on Sub-committees.

12.1 MH was very worried about our ability to attract non-committee members to serve on sub-committees because of the impression that many people in the parish seemed to have that you couldn't get involved with the VHMC without becoming a trustee which people seemed very reluctant to do. JM confirmed that there was no requirement for all members of sub-committees to be trustees. SJ referred to the concept of 'Task and Finish' groups i.e. groups set up to achieve a specific objective which disbanded once the objective was achieved. The idea was welcomed and MH said she would write a piece for Parish News to see if we could encourage people to come forward to run the Christmas Fair in particular but also to assist generally. JM felt that there was little point in attempting to hold the auction planned for October as there simply weren't enough committee members to make it work and the effort involved was considerable. RM agreed that at the last auction the quality of the goods on offer had been poor but it was a traditional revenue stream. However, on analysis, roughly 50% of the total income had come from sales of cakes and tea/coffee, all of which was dependent on volunteers giving time and donating the cakes. The return from a huge amount of effort was relatively small. MH said that we needed to find new fund raising events which would encourage younger people to take part such as a black tie casino night or a horse racing evening. It was agreed that the proposed auction would be scrapped and that MH should include a plea for a fund raising group in her Parish News article.

12.2 Ways and Means. IJ said that unless we could improve recruitment the whole system by which the VH was run was on borrowed time. Village organisations didn't seem interested in helping run the hall despite the fact that many held their meetings there. It was becoming more and more difficult not to have to pay people to do what had previously been done by volunteers which put more pressure on VH finances. The idea of a Ways and Means sub-committee seemed outdated and it should be replaced with a small maintenance team of volunteers who would not have to become trustees or indeed have any other involvement with the hall apart from doing maintenance work as required.

12.3 Environmental Amenities sub-committee. There were no issues with this committee which was necessary because of the 'joint venture' nature of the arrangement between VHMC and Colton Local Nature Reserve to establish the wildflower meadow as a nature reserve. JM would continue to chair the committee whose other members were not trustees.

12.4 Hiring and Pricing and Marketing sub-committees. It was agreed that these committees be scrapped and their work be brought back to the main committee. RM confirmed that Kate Staples was willing to continue to assist the management committee with marketing advice and support.

13. Request by History Society for storage facilities. SJ explained that the idea was not just that the HS's important archive of local historical material be stored at the VH but that it should be made accessible to members of the public wishing to inspect it which it currently was not. Such access would be supervised by HS members. Unless space could be found at the VH it seemed likely that the archive would have to be donated to the County Records Office which was a much less satisfactory option. It would be very nice to have a resource area where people could examine documents, historical photos etc. The idea was welcomed in principle although there were clearly some logistical problems to be overcome. The committee required detailed plans for both the storage and access arrangements. SJ agreed that the HS would put forward a fully worked up proposal as soon as possible.

14. AOB.

14.1 RM said that JM was to ask Staffs Fire and Rescue to advise on fire safety procedures. KB would be shown how to test the fire alarms. Each alarm would be tested once a week and a record of the test kept.

14.2 JM said that it was important that the committee looked long and hard at the governance arrangements for the VH as we clearly needed to refine many things. Were monthly meetings really necessary for such a small charity for example and did there need to be quite so much email traffic? It was agreed that for a trial period there would be bi-monthly committee meetings. JM asked all members of the committee to think of things we could do to improve the management of the VH and to raise with him any item they wanted including in the agenda.

14.3 Many members were concerned about the friction caused by the removal of the Friendship Club cupboard from the kitchen and expressed the desire that every effort be made to move it back if possible. MH would work with RM and KB to find a solution to the problem.

15. Date of next meeting: to be confirmed after start of the bi-monthly cycle had been agreed between RM and JM.

The meeting closed at 9.40.

Signed

Dated.....