

COLTON VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of Committee Meeting held in the Village Hall on Thursday, 28 July
2016 at 7.30

Present

Richard Monbiot (Chair)
Ian Jones
Marie Havelock
Sonia Jenkinson
Polly Macmillan
John Macmillan
Alan Freeman
Tony Winter

Apologies - Ron Lawrence

In attendance - Ann Nunn, Kerry Ball, Jim Carter

Appointment of Trustee

Richard reminded everyone that Kerry had resigned as a Trustee a few months ago as she had accepted a paid role as a cleaner of the Hall and it was felt that, to continue as a Trustee in those circumstances, would breach the Charity Commission's rules. But Richard was pleased to report she could be re-elected as a Trustee as, on the Charity Commission's website, it is only Trustees who receive salaries in excess of £1000 per year that can no longer remain as a trustee without the Charity Commission's permission. As Kerry's salary is not in excess of £1000, the way was clear for her re-appointment if the Committee so wished. Ian proposed and Polly seconded, and the vote was unanimous. Welcome aboard (again) Kerry. Ann agreed to make the appropriate amendments to the list of Trustees on the Charity Commission website, and request Duncan to make the appropriate amendment on the village hall website.

Matters Arising

It had been suggested that Tony might accept the position of Vice Chair. Tony mentioned that there was a time when a Chair served 2 years in that post, and was automatically succeeded after that time by his/her Vice Chair. Clearly, in view of the length of time Ian had been chair that did not now apply. He felt that it might well be a system that would benefit the Committee but as no-one volunteered to take up the vacant post, Tony accepted the position of Acting Vice Chair until the AGM unless someone came forward willing to accept the position before then.

As for Shirley Barnett, Richard agreed to ask her if she would like to attend meetings as a representative of the Parish Council. The shortage of Councillors might mean she would be reluctant to become a Trustee which would mean she could attend meetings but not vote.

Acceptance as Trustees

Both Kerry and Tony signed the form confirming their willingness to act as Trustees and which asked them to disclose any conflicts of interest.

Chair's Report

Copy attached and in which Richard recalled it had been a difficult 12 months but the priority for the year ahead was to concentrate on preserving and protecting the viability and fabric of the Hall for future Trustees. Many problems had resulted in a backlog of jobs and he was keen for the Committee to find ways of shortening and making less frequent the Committee meetings. He believed insufficient income was being raised to meet anticipated expenditure so fund raising was a priority as was attracting younger people to join the Committee.

Secretary's Report

Ann reported that the Ramblers had advised her they were not at present going to send a representative to join the Committee. Jim Carter, as the Committee knew, had withdrawn his application to be a Trustee because of the shortage of Councillors and possible conflict of interest. However, Jim confirmed he was willing to attend meetings and take part in any discussions and report back to the Parish Council. The amended Constitution had been forwarded to Duncan for publication on the Village Hall website, and the Charity Commission had been advised amendments had been made. A list of Trustees was also available on the village hall website, and this (and the Charity Commission's website) would be amended to include Kerry's appointment. Lichfield Council had asked if the Village Hall could be used as a place of safety in an emergency, Ann had sent a positive response, and expected a visit from the Council to check whether or not the Hall was considered suitable.

Bookings Report

Richard reported the value of the bookings so far, as calculated by Ron, fell short of the income generated for the same period 12 months ago. Both Kerry and Ann expressed surprise as they were both of the opinion that bookings were well up in numbers on what they were. Ron will be requested to keep this matter under constant review for monitoring purposes. Certainly the Hall was being used, only that day Ann had been unable to accommodate two bookings because the Hall was already in use. Jim queried if both rooms could be used at the same time, and it was explained that the lack of soundproofing made it difficult and, in order for both rooms to be booked, approval of the party who was already using the Hall was sought. If no positive response was received, then that was accepted and the proposed new booking did not go ahead. Richard agreed to liaise with Ron to review the practicality and potential cost of soundproofing the Bellamour Room and would report at the next Committee meeting. Kerry mentioned that she had had quite a few enquiries, but could not put them in the diary until the Contracts had been signed and deposits paid. Ann reminded the Committee that the list of bookings for the next 6 months was kept updated. (Copy attached).

Kerry mentioned that the last Table Top Sale had made very little money, and there had been little interest for tables at the proposed August event. She had, therefore, cancelled it.

Working Groups

Richard intended to re-name Sub-Committees as Working Groups - he felt that was more suitable and might attract volunteers. There would be at least one Trustee on each Working Group and he hoped others in the Group would not necessarily be Committee members.

Marketing - Kerry agreed to be on this Group with Richard. Further names were to be confirmed later. In the meantime, Marie confirmed that the Church always mentioned the Village Hall as a possible venue, and Richard intended to put a list of events that were taking place for the coming month on the Notice Board in the Hall foyer.

EASC – This comprised John and Polly, and 4 non-Trustees, Allan and Brenda Lloyd and Alice and Ian Hadridge. John thought the team was already working well and needed no alterations.

Ways and Means – Ian and Alan agreed to be on this working Group with Jim. The biggest job that needed to be finished as soon as possible was the painting and the fixing of the dado rail. Tony also offered to join the working Group with Jim, Ian and Alan and this was agreed.

Fund Raising – a new working group but one which Richard felt was vital to finance any capital projects that needed to be done. The application for a £2000 grant to carry out updating of electrics etc had not been successful and he suggested that John be involved with Allan. John agreed provided he was told for what purpose money was needed so that the appropriate applications could be submitted.

Induction of New Members of the Committee

Ron would be asked to arrange this for Alan and Kerry as soon as possible.

Playground

There followed a long discussion beginning with Richard reporting that he had liaised with Jim and there was every possibility that the Parish Council would continue to make financial assistance available for repairs and maintenance provided quotes were obtained. There had been 3 inspections of the playground, the first of which was the annual inspection organised by Lichfield Council in September 2015. That had highlighted several issues, and, following the results of two further inspections by the original contractors and another contractor, a quote for £3500 had been received. However, Jim and Alan felt that the work could be done for far less, and estimated £300 using their own expertise. All work would be subjected to inspection and approval by a third party professional. It was thought that this would be acceptable to our insurance company and Richard agreed to check. It was agreed by all that the playground was coming to the end of its life, but there was no money for replacement either from the Village Hall, the Parish Council, or both. The suggestion was made that a group of volunteers was needed to raise funds to replace the playground in two to four years, by which time any attempts to repair the equipment would probably no longer be possible. Two estimates of around £45000 plus VAT had already been given in the last 12 months. Jim stressed that, although the Parish Council had reserves, which could be seen as considerable, these were needed for various projects, either planned or arising as an emergency, and money from the District and County Councils was constantly being reduced. So, whilst the Council took a sympathetic view, there was a limit on the financial input it could give. It was eventually agreed that it should first be established if a new playground was wanted. It was decided that a joint statement on behalf of the Council and the VHMVC should be issued in a well publicised manner to all parishioners and parents of those children attending the school in the village. The statement would indicate that a meeting would take place (a tentative date of Wednesday 19 October was suggested) and anyone interested in the future of the playground should attend. (If very few turned up to vote, it could be taken as a total lack of interest and trigger an almost certain closure of the playground. Jim anticipated that he should have a decision at the next Council meeting on 8 September to confirm that there was no difficulty in a joint statement being issued. John volunteered to draft a request to the Council officially seeking the co-operation of the Council for a joint approach to the Parish to assess whether or not a playground was wanted. When approved he would send it to Alison James.

Any Other Business

John asked Jim if there was any possibility of the Parish Council ordering equipment for the wildflower meadow because, if it could, there would be no VAT payable. However, Jim did not consider that a possibility bearing in mind the money had been funded by Tesco and the Council was not involved in the funds application.

Polly thanked Alan for the installation of the dog bins.

Tony asked Kerry and Ann to make organisers aware of events that rubbish should not be left in the bins by the playground. Tony emptied the bins on a regular basis.

The Auction was going ahead on 24 September and Richard agreed to talk to Brenda to see what needed to be done. Tony offered to help having been involved with the Auction for several years. An article would be needed to go into the Parish Magazine before the date of the next Committee meeting and Richard agreed to organise this.

Next Meeting

Thursday 25 August.

The meeting closed at 9.35pm.

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