

COLTON VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of Thursday 30th November 2017

Members Present:

Richard Monbiot (RM) (Chairman) Chris Dale (CD)
Sonia Jenkinson (SJ) John Macmillan (JM) (Secretary) Polly Macmillan (PM)

In attendance Ann Nunn (AN) (regular users and Parish bookings):

1. Apologies

Marie Havelock (MH); Stevie Dale (SD)

2. Conflicts of interest

None declared

3. Appointment of new trustees

RM proposed that CD and SD be appointed as trustees under para 6.3 of the constitution to fill two of the several casual vacancies that had arisen in recent months. Their appointment would run until the 2018 AGM when it was hoped they would offer themselves for election as elected members. Seconded by JM. All trustees (including MH who had notified the secretary by email) voted in favour. RM welcomed CD as a trustee. CD explained that unfortunately SD had a pre-arranged function to attend and sent her apologies. CD completed and signed a declaration of acceptance of the role of trustee and agreement to act in accordance with the scheme of the charity.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

These were signed as a true record having been previously agreed by trustees.

5. Matters arising

5.1 No.2 account. RM reported that so far a second bank account to hold the playground group's money had not been opened because of difficulties in making contact with HSBC. JM and PM had now visited the Lichfield branch and ascertained that opening the new account (and removing Ian Jones as signatory) had to be done on line. RM would now take the necessary action [**Action RM**].

5.2 History Society. The History Society's cupboards had been installed in the Bellamour Room. SJ thanked the trustees for their support for the project. She welcomed the suggestion recently made by JM and approved by all trustees that a plaque be erected on the VH stating that it was the home of the History Society's resource project, not least because the HS itself had had a similar idea. Bill Brown was drafting some suitable wording for approval. JM reported that he had had a very nice letter of thanks from Gill Sykes the Chair of the HS.

6. Treasurer's report

RM said that he had not received a report from the Treasurer and so had had to update the report received in October as best he could. The cash position remained very healthy with £22,967.62 in the bank and an additional £5,881.67 held on behalf of the playground group which would be transferred into the new account as soon as it had been opened. £15,000 was earmarked for replacing the car park surface and £4,000 was the general contingency reserve. Several trustees expressed concern about the figures shown for the Summer Fayre as they did not seem to be accurate; in particular nothing was shown for the proceeds from the kitchen. RM agreed to provide a more detailed breakdown [JM's note - revised figures attached to the minutes]. It was felt very strongly that we must have a new treasurer as soon as possible. CD said that he hoped SD would be able to take over the role from the January meeting. CD asked that in future the expenditure figure be broken down in a similar way to the income figure. He felt that it was important for the financial position to be reviewed at the end of each year and a decision taken in the light of known liabilities

and likely income whether to revise hiring fees. He was assured that this was always done but at the moment the trustees were severely handicapped by lack of proper management accounts. Once the car park had been relaid (which would not be done until after the new playground had been installed) a detailed reconsideration of the finances would be undertaken. RM explained that as it was highly unlikely that we would get a grant for any part of the car park it had been essential to raise all of the money ourselves. We had had a written estimate of £15,000 but the estimate may now be out of date. Although the overall financial picture was very healthy we could not be complacent because there was no guarantee that the income from hiring out the hall would continue at its current level.

7. Chairman's report

RM reported that a regular system of fire alarm checks had been reintroduced and will now be done monthly. There did not seem to be a key for the alarm in the chair and table storage area and as our fire alarm advisor had failed to attend a meeting at the hall we were currently unable to test that alarm. RM and JM would carry out the December test on Sunday afternoon. All the external lighting was now working and the stage lights had been replaced at very reasonable cost thanks to Duncan Shortland. The Christmas Fayre had raised a very impressive £1070 well over £200 more than the previous year. RM expressed his thanks to everyone involved with the event. The latest wine tasting evening had been a success in terms of the numbers attending (all tickets sold) and enjoyment had, but had only broken even. As it was intended to be a fund raiser for the hall ticket prices would be increased for future tastings. RM reported that the playground had had its annual inspection in September. Some medium risk issues had been identified but only one item – the replacement of a bar on the monkey climber – needed to be done in the short term. If the bid for funding from Biffa to replace the playground failed (we would probably know the outcome in February) the suppliers of the existing equipment had agreed to do a full survey and would quote for replacing any parts identified as life expired. If the bid failed we would have to try and keep the existing playground going for a further 2 years when a grant from HS2 seemed likely to be available. Peter Knowles has repaired the access gates and will make other straightforward running repairs where possible. The surface has been thoroughly cleaned thanks to a grant by the Parish Lands Trust. Monthly inspections were being carried out. He had done one yesterday and no further deterioration had been noted.

8. Booking officers' reports

PM produced a note explaining the external bookings already made between now and the end of 2018. There were only 10 with a total value of £5070 of which roughly half had already been received as deposits. CD asked how we would deal with a shortfall in bookings by undertaking special offer type marketing exercises. It was explained that we had very limited ability to advertise special offers at short notice but PM said that it could be done via Facebook although the VH's Facebook page was currently still administered by Kerry Ball. This was an area which required input from those who understood Facebook. CD offered his and SD's help. JM said that we were currently only advertised on our own website and Facebook page and in a list of halls for hire on Lichfield DC's website. We would be registering with the Halls Hire website as soon as possible.

9. Playground

9.1 Safety report. Already dealt with under Chairman's report.

9.2 Draft heads of agreement re future responsibility for the playground. Previously circulated and approved and now attached to these minutes. The playground group had also approved them and they were now with the Parish Council for consideration.

10. Maintenance issues

RM reported that the outside toilet had now been cleaned. There was a discussion about the need for greater flexibility in the cleaning arrangements for the hall. Everyone recognised the difficulties which Kerry Ball faced in living some distance from the village and being unable to drive but it was

felt that it was essential that the hall was cleaned at intervals during the week when the need arose rather than at weekends only. AN and PM reported concerns expressed by both Tai Chi and the art class at the mess left after an M3 session which in the past would have been cleaned before the next user. It was understood that Kerry had two people in the village who would clean for her if she was unable to attend but their identity was not known to trustees. It was agreed that Kerry should be told that we required the hall cleaned before the first users came in on both a Tuesday and a Wednesday morning and she was to be asked to identify her village helpers so that they could be asked to come in and cover for her at short notice if the need arose. It was stressed that the cost of doing this would have to be met by Kerry out of her contract. RM agreed to speak to her [Action RM].

11. AOB

11.1 JM said that in connection with the proposed registration of the hall with the Halls Hire website he had recently circulated some material to trustees for comments. He asked for feedback. The material was approved although CD thought that the descriptive narrative needed a punchy headline or bullet point summary. JM asked to be provided with photos of the interior of the hall set up for weddings and parties that could be placed on the website. RM said that he understood the maximum comfortable seating capacity for the hall was 160 while overall capacity was 240.

11.2 JM asked for approval to replace the Henry Hoover at a price of £169.99. Approved.

11.3 RM reported that Mike Pyle had offered to organise and run an auction in 2018. Our decision to discontinue the twice yearly auctions had not gone down well in some quarters but in recent years both the income from the event and the quality of the goods on offer had declined markedly. He estimated that the last auction had required 34 'man' hours to run and the majority of the profit had come from the kitchen. However if Mike was prepared to take responsibility RM felt he should be encouraged to do so. All trustees agreed and Mike was thanked for his offer.

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Signed as a true record

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Dated

COLTON SUMMER FAIR CASH

Items marked * to be split 60% to playground 40% to VHMC. Other items 100% to playground

Food*	485
Buckets*	23
Dun Cow BBQ	230
Raffle*	258
Scarecrows	58
Dog Show*	70
Stalls*	192
Greyhound	1000
School	600
Church	175
Other	75
	3166

COLTON VILLAGE PLAYGROUND

Draft proposals on the split of responsibilities for phase 1 of the new playground once installed. The following working assumptions apply:

Playground largely funded by third parties; no conditions attached to the funding that defeat any of the proposals; all money currently earmarked by the PC expended. I will deal briefly at the end with two possibly overlooked implications of phase 2.

Generally

Each party agrees that its responsibilities are as set out below and acknowledges the roles and responsibilities of the other parties. Given that one proposed party (Friends of Colton Playground) is not a legal entity the agreement can only be enshrined in the minutes of the two that are.

VHMC

- Will host the playground on its land at no charge to the parish either by way of rent or for access
- Will ensure that the playground is included in its public liability insurance policy (and obtain a separate quote for the premium) and will comply with all conditions in the policy with regard to the playground such as the need for monthly inspections
- Is the legal entity responsible for the playground in particular for H&S purposes and will therefore ensure that all appropriate H&S and other relevant policies required by law are in place with regard to its use
- Will ensure that all necessary maintenance is carried out promptly but –
- Has no financial responsibility or risk for the playground of either a capital or income and expenditure nature
- Will hold in a separate bank account all funds raised for the playground by the Friends of Colton Playground
- Will, if requested to do so, make the VH available free of charge for one fund raising event per annum for playground funds
- Will include the playground in its assets register thus ensuring that the playground equipment has the same protection as other charitable assets.

Friends of Colton Playground

- Will continue the work of the current playground group and will take primary responsibility for raising funds for future capital expenditure but which can also be used for urgent repairs where the cost exceeds the PC's funding levels for maintenance
- Will hold one major fundraising event annually

Colton Parish Council

- Will include in its annual budget an item of £750 to meet maintenance and insurance costs for the playground
- Will transfer into its playground reserve fund any amount unspent in a year from the maintenance budget
- Will designate its playground reserve as a fund for both replacement of capital items and to meet maintenance costs which exceed the annual budgeted sum

Other issues

Before any further work is done on phase 2 it will be essential to have a very clear idea of the annual running costs and how they are to be funded. A reasonable working assumption might be that they will be the same as those for phase 1 so roughly £750, but where is that money coming from? Given the constraints on public spending it seems very unlikely that the PC would be prepared to double its annual playground budget. But the rough estimate may be wrong. If phase two is more of an adventure playground for teenagers and possibly even adults with more sophisticated equipment and possibly greater risk of injury, the insurance premium may be much more than double the current figure of £126. The VH's insurance brokers should be asked to advise at the earliest opportunity. Once the figure is known the PC needs to be approached for its views on meeting the annual costs of running phase 2. If the answer is no then before any work can proceed other sources of annual income must be identified and secured.

If phase 2 does not proceed or for any other reason at the end of the process the PC still has money in its earmarked playground reserve fund, what is to happen to that money? Ideally it should remain in the reserve as a contribution towards future replacement costs but this needs to be the subject of separate agreement with the PC.

Jkm

12/11/17