

COLTON VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of Committee Meeting held in the Village Hall on Thursday, 27
October 2016 at 7.30

Present

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

Apologies - Kerry Ball

In attendance - Ann Nunn and Margaret Carter

Before the meeting a minute's silence was observed for Pete Jones who had passed away on 29 September.

XMAS FAYRE

Margaret Carter had been invited by Richard Monbiot to attend the meeting to give an update on the Xmas Fayre. She reported that the maximum number of stalls that the Hall could contain had been sold, with a good variety of products on offer. Posters had been put up in the Rugeley, as well as placing advertisements on Facebook, Parish Magazine, etc. All in all, she was satisfied that everything that could be done had been, and she would let the VHMC know if any help was needed. Help on the day she hoped would be forthcoming, as well as refreshments. Richard Monbiot thanked her for the update and she subsequently left the meeting.

RESIGNATIONS

Richard Monbiot reported that Shirley Barnett had resigned as a Trustee and Jim Carter had decided he no longer felt he could attend meetings as the Parish Council representative in view of comments made in writing by Ron Lawrence. Ron Lawrence felt that if he were to remain as Trustee and/or Treasurer he would be duty bound to pursue some issues he considered had been uncovered in e-mails about past responsibilities for maintaining the playground and this was not what the VHMC Chairman would wish. Ron Lawrence also felt it would probably make the relationship between the PC and the VHMC difficult and might also have repercussions within the village. As a result, Ron Lawrence felt that the interests of the village were best served by resigning as Trustee and Treasurer. His resignation had been reluctantly accepted. Tony Winter mentioned that the years Ron Lawrence had spent in making the Village Hall what it had become should never be forgotten, the number of hours of his time that he had freely given couldn't be counted, and he should be thanked for his contribution. There was unanimous agreement. Ian Jones felt a Certificate, similar to the one given to Pete Jones, might be appropriate, and this was agreed.

Notwithstanding his resignation, Ron Lawrence was still prepared to be Acting Treasurer until such time as a replacement could be found and he was discussing software systems that should make the job easier for a new treasurer.

In order to have a representative from the Parish Council at meetings, David Cook had agreed to attend but not as a Trustee. Richard Monbiot had understood David Cook would be at the meeting, and was disappointed that he was not.

It was agreed that the names of the current Trustees and the PC representative should be included in the article prepared by Malcolm Godfrey for the Parish Magazine.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 22 September were approved and signed for filing. Ann agreed to forward a copy to Duncan Shortland so that they could be published on the website.

Matters Arising

Although new notices had been placed by the litter bins, there didn't seem to be any improvement.

Chair's Report

Richard Monbiot reminded the meeting that a replacement for Ann Martin was needed. To help prepare the job description, Ann Martin was keeping a log of time spent cleaning the Hall etc. Kerry Ball had said she had contacts. All agreed that a lot more money would need to be spent on keeping the Hall clean, and probably two or three people in view of holiday periods etc.

New procedures to be followed had been published by the Charity Commission and John Macmillan agreed to sort through the detail.

The electric wiring needed to be checked as it was a condition of fire insurance that current electrical safety certificates (valid for a maximum of 5 years) were held and it had been 5 years since the last inspection.

The Auction had raised £358.80, the kitchen was the star of the show raising £117. It was felt that the goods offered at the Auction were not as good as previous years, and, although the event had been advertised, not many had attended. It was agreed that a discussion would be needed in early January to find ways of improving the next Auction due to take place on 11 March.

Treasurer's Report

Ron Lawrence had provided financial data which was distributed (attached) and indicated the amount of income from hirings was about the same as the previous year. Donations were up, but fundraising was about the same. Nevertheless, there was money in hand. Richard Monbiot had received a quote of £2100 which would be for a stage identical to the one borrowed from the School. Perhaps other items to be considered could include security cameras, WIFI, as well as the electrics that needed to be done. Ian Jones offered to get someone to carry out the electrical work, including the inspection, and, provided the works and cost were agreed with Richard Monbiot, it was unanimously agreed that it should go ahead without the need for further discussion. Richard Monbiot felt it was important to leave £5000 as a reserve - he reminded the Committee that the car park would need work in the near future as the resurfacing that had recently been carried out was simply a stop gap measure until such time as money for a more permanent solution could be found.

There was a telephone point in the Village Hall so WIFI could be installed – enquiries were to be made as to the best provider.

As for cameras, it was felt indoor ones that had been quoted as £200 in the accounts were unnecessary, but external cameras could be beneficial – it was agreed to discuss at future meetings.

As for the playground, the recent inspection by the Council had revealed more work needed to be done, and this will be passed to the PPG for action. A request, according to procedure, had been sent to the PC asking them to budget £750, as agreed, towards maintenance of the playground next year. It was agreed that a dedicated banking facility would be set up for the sole purpose of being used for replacement or refurbishment of playground equipment and to facilitate matched funding if required. John Macmillan in particular felt (and it was agreed) that, if the PPG were successful in raising funds, it was more likely that they would have success if this were done in the name of a registered organisation rather than by a group of individuals.

Secretary's Report

Ann Nunn said that at the recent meeting to discuss the playground there was a problem initially with the sound system inasmuch as batteries were needed so she advised everyone who intended to use the sound system to make sure they had batteries available. No-one had been able to attend the AGM of the Community Council of Staffordshire and she would send a letter of apology.

Bookings Report

Ann Nunn needed to fix prices for 2017 for M3 and Tai Chi as, without them, she could not arrange for new Contracts to be prepared and signed. It was agreed the current charge of £22 for Tai Chi should be increased to £25 (the same as for Village Organisations), and M3's charges should be increased from £30 to £35 and £40 to £45. The Contract for more Art classes was due to be signed on Monday, 31 October, and a Contract had been prepared and delivered to Pauline Burgess for 8 events in 2017 although the Contract had not yet been returned and the 50% deposit paid.

The bad news was that two weddings cancelled, and the September Show 2017 was not going ahead so a loss of approximately £1500 in income. However, the good news was that two weddings had been booked and a party, which brought income back up to slightly more than the £1500 lost. Nevertheless, she felt it unreasonable that anyone could cancel one month before the event without the loss of any money. Her view was that a 10% admin fee should be charged should an outside event be cancelled, no matter when that cancellation took place. After a brief discussion, that was agreed in principle, and Ann Nunn agreed to circulate an amended Contract for approval.

Working Groups

Marketing to include hiring and pricing – no working group as such but prior discussion sorted all current issues.

EASC – Mark Bull had completed the fencing and had been paid. Work was ongoing designing the signage although cost was an issue, but, once that was known, a bench would hopefully be purchased. A Bug Hotel project was to be discussed with the School, and the staff member responsible seemed very enthusiastic. Hopefully, everything would be in place by the end of the financial year.

Ways and Means – The dado rail had been fitted, toilet lock still ongoing, the wooden façade at the front of the Village Hall had deteriorated and Ian thought plastic would perhaps be better as a replacement. He would get an estimate which would depend on whether the old wood needed to be removed and battens fitted.

Richard Monbiot sought confirmation that the stage could be bought for the £2100 quoted, but Polly Macmillan mentioned that, at the WI meeting, members felt the money would be better spent on soundproofing the toilets. Bearing in mind the original cost of the stage had been expected to be in the region of £4000, it was hoped that both a new door (which would hopefully solve the soundproofing problems) and the stage (quoted at £2100) could go ahead. However, Richard Monbiot agreed not to place the order for the stage (deadline of 13 December) until the costs of soundproofing the toilets was known. Ways and means would check as to the best way to soundproof the toilets as a matter of urgency.

Badgers

After many (sometimes hilarious) suggestions as to the best way to deter badgers, it was agreed no action should be taken other than the re-rolling of the field as and when necessary.

Tree in Church

It was agreed with Marie Havelock that the VHMC would not have a tree in the Church in December.

Induction of New Members of the Committee

Still to be done, Ann Nunn agreed to remind both Alan Lloyd and Ron Lawrence whom Richard Monbiot confirmed were happy to organise.

Village Organisations

Sonia Jenkinson confirmed there would be a History Exhibition in the Hall in April, and she outlined the plans which included Lesley Smith portraying Anne Boleyn on Friday 7 April. Over the weekend there would be an exhibition of Colton through the ages, and she hoped that village organisations would be willing to take part. The WI had already agreed they would.

Any Other Business

Marie Havelock confirmed the appointment of Ann Noble as the new part time vicar and she and her husband would be living at the Vicarage in Colton. She would start work early in the New Year. No plans had yet been made for carol singing in the village, but Tony Winter confirmed Santa would be arriving as he had done previously.

Laura Crompton would be taking over from Heather Whibley as editor of the Parish News, albeit Heather Whibley would help out during the initial process especially as Laura Crompton's baby was due in February. Negotiations were in process with the PCC regarding the software which needed to be purchased in order for Laura Crompton to proceed. Marie Havelock confirmed Heather Whibley's retirement would be marked in some way.

It was agreed Ian should purchase 8 spotlights at £51 each.

Details of a website Goraise were given to John Macmillan as a possible way of fund raising. Kerry Ball had suggested a list of DJ's be given to those that

requested one when booking the village hall. Those DJ's on the list would have agreed to give a percentage of their fee to the Village Hall should a booking result.

At the request of Brenda Lloyd, Tony Winter reminded the Committee that decorations for the Christmas Fayre needed to be taken down for the wedding booked in December.

Next Meeting

Thursday 26 January 2017. Ann Nunn gave her apologies so someone would be needed to take the Minutes.

The meeting closed at 9.50pm.

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