

## BUCKLAND NEWTON VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Village Hall on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at 7.30 pm

### ATTENDANCE

Nicki Barker [NB] (*in the chair*), Jeremy Collins [JC], Katharine Hayens [KH], Jan Marpole [JM], Vinny McKenna [VM], Trevor Marpole [TM], Kate Parish [KP], Ian Scott [IS].

#### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Fran Parker [FP] and Susan Moring [SM].

#### 2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 29<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2018

The minutes were circulated prior to the meeting by the Minute Secretary. Approval of the Minutes was proposed by Ian Scott, seconded by Jan Marpole, agreed unanimously by those at that meeting and signed by the Chair.

#### 3. MATTERS ARISING

None

#### 4. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair reported as follows:

The past year had been an interesting and, in some ways experimental, year for the hall committee. With the retirement of Sue Sulkin in December after close on 30 years as the integral "one-stop" booking clerk, secretary and treasurer all rolled into one, reorganizing and redistributing these various tasks had proved a challenge.

Ian Scott and Katharine Hayens had risen superbly to the challenge of dealing with a hall booking system. Likewise, Vinny McKenna had risen to the complicated role of Treasurer, despite it being made frustratingly difficult and long winded by the requirements to change signatories and names with the Bank, the Inland Revenue and VAT office. Sue's other hidden roles of organizing the cleaner and gardener and ordering the oil had their own challenges, although the only major hiccup had been running out of oil one cold week in April. The gardener and cleaner had adapted and the hall now had a contract with Watson Petroleum whereby the tank was topped up quarterly.

The legacy of Sue Sulkin's years in her Booking Clerk role was that the hall had continued to be well used, not just by the "bread and butter" income of our regular village and outside clients, but also as the venue for a great number of splendid village events, for Artsreach performances, by the church during their winter/spring renovations, and by the Piddle Valley Players for their magnificent performance of "Oklahoma".

The upside of this was that our income had remained steady. The downside is that it had turned out to be an unusually expensive year in terms of repairs and replacements. At the January meeting the committee agreed that the hall cooker had reached the end of its useful life and we had just sufficient funds at circa £1,000 to replace it. The main regular users, the Luncheon Club undertook research to find a practical and user-friendly replacement and the Chair extended her appreciation to Susan Moring for organizing the purchase and installation of the new cooker, which seemed to be working well.

An early February storm had come as an expensive and unbudgeted blow. In one weekend the lap fencing between the tarmac and the rear garden had been destroyed, leaving the oil tank exposed to view. In the same storm the ceiling in the loo had shown up a serious water leak which had required replacement of the worn out lead between the coping stones and the main roof. Replacement of both were matters of urgency and estimates of over £1,000 put the cooker purchase in jeopardy. With great kindness the United Charities of Buckland Newton had come to the Hall's rescue and funded the principal cost of the cooker, leaving enough funds for the storm repairs to be carried out. The roof repairs and repainting were done by Pete Nickisson and the fencing, including a new gate carried out by Tony Perrett Fencing,

Despite these expenses, and thanks to freely given in-house maintenance from committee members along with the generous donation by both the United Charities and the Fete Committee who had funded the purchase of some much wanted green chairs with arms, the village hall had continued to pay its way. The August Clean Up day had been well attended and had brought the internal cleaning and decoration up to good order with the Luncheon Club tackling the kitchen a few days later. Artsreach had brought a string of very enjoyable evenings and really valuable additional income to the hall thanks to Ian Scott, Katharine Hayens and Fran Parker.

Outstanding for this coming year was finding a solution to the oil boiler programmer. This was relatively urgent in order to save unnecessary oil consumption.

## **5. TREASURER'S REPORT**

The Treasurer presented the accounts for the year and reported as follows:

Overall hire income was down year-on-year although hiring by regular users had remained similar to the previous year. This was mainly on account of hiring for social events being lower. There had been considerable expenditure on repairing storm damage to fencing and gates around the oil tank, repairs to the oil boiler and

re-sanding and re-sealing of the main Hall floor. The bill for repairing the roof had not been received prior to the year-end date. Overall, there was a deficit of £528.87 for the year. Donations (for the cooker replacement and purchase of additional chairs) had been most welcome. Energy costs (electricity and oil) had risen significantly and it was agreed that the hire charges to the Piddle Valley Players should be reviewed as the majority of their hire was in the winter months and may not fully reflect the additional cost of heating during this time. The Treasurer noted that the Auditor had advised that a full audit was not strictly necessary as total income was below the threshold of £25K. After discussion, the Committee agreed that auditing should be continued as it would give confidence to the community that the Hall was efficiently and transparently managed. The Treasurer reiterated the Chair's comments concerning the difficulty encountered with the bank in transferring responsibilities to a new Treasurer, particularly when cheques had to be signed. The Treasurer was looking into the practicality of online banking, but this appeared to bring its own problems in terms of permitted maximum payment amounts. The Treasurer also noted that the Hall was not registered for Gift Aid.

Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Trevor Marpole, seconded by Nicki Barker and agreed unanimously.

**6. BOOKING SECRETARIES' REPORT**

Ian Scott recorded their appreciation of the assistance given by Sue Sulkin in easing the handover of the task and for ensuring a full diary of pre-arranged bookings. Of concern was the reduced, or in some cases, waived charges for hire by local organisations running events which themselves raised money for charity. Whilst there was an element of 'robbing Peter to Pay Paul' inasmuch as the Village Hall itself was a charity, it was felt by the Committee that the position should be regularised so that such hirers were clear about how much they would be charged. It was agreed that a discretionary 50% charge rate should be made for genuine charitable fund-raising events run by local (in-parish) organisations. It was also agreed that charging for hire of tables for events outside the Hall (currently £2 per table) should be enforced. The Booking Secretary confirmed that discussions on the possibility of putting the booking system on-line should be undertaken, with Jeremy Collins offering to assist with this.

**7. NOMINATIONS TO THE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE FROM USER ORGANISATIONS**

Nominations were as follows:

Lydden Ladies – Jan Marpole  
Parochial Church Council – Jeremy Collins  
Parish Council - Nicki Barker  
Youth Club – Kate Parish  
Toddlers – Kelly Evans  
Buckland Newton Amateur Dramatics - vacant

Keep Fit – Sarah Mitchell  
Art Club – vacant  
Young Farmers – Bethany Foot  
Wayfarers – vacant  
Gardening Club – Viviane Bernhard  
Lunch Club – Susan Moring  
Fete Committee – Kate Parish  
Artsreach – Ian Scott  
Buckland Amateur Players Society – vacant  
Yoga – Katharine Hayens  
Pilates – Nicki Barker

Appointment of the above members was proposed by Jeremy Collins, seconded by Nicki Barker and agreed unanimously.

8. **ELECTION OF OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

No co-opted members were required.

9. **PROPOSED SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR HALL**

Jeremy Collins reported that a 'Survivors' group had raised issues with church websites, or websites which referenced churches, if such websites did not carry an explicit reference to a Safeguarding Policy. With concerns that similar action might be aimed at organisations such as Village Halls, a draft Safeguarding Policy had been drawn up for the Village Hall, although in general safeguarding was a responsibility of hirers and not the Management Committee. It was felt advisable that a Safeguarding Policy should be added to the Village Hall page of the village website and this, plus the wording of the proposed Safeguarding Policy was agreed. Kate Parish agreed to become the Safeguarding Officer, noting that she was also the Safeguarding Officer for the Youth Club.

10. **APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR**

The appointment of Sharon Calcutt as auditor was proposed by Nicki Barker, seconded by Ian Scott and agreed unanimously. The honorarium was agreed at up to £100.

11. **GARDENER AND CLEANER**

The Chair reported no major issues with either the Cleaner or the Gardener. The Gardener was reluctant to spray the weeds or tend the bed bordering onto Stevens Walk. It was agreed this bed could be dealt with in the annual Hall Clean-up.

12. **WORK REQUIRED ON HALL**

A quote had been received from Stephen White for replacement/upgrading of the heating programmer and thermostat. The Committee felt that as this quote seemed expensive at £800, alternative quotes should be sought. Wiseman Electrical and Martin Croft were suggested as alternatives and these would be followed up before a decision was taken. The

All Users

annual summer clean-up was fixed for the Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> August. Work needed was general internal painting, window cleaning, sanding and oiling of noticeboard, and clearing of flies from roof blinds.

13. **USE OF THE VILLAGE HALL AS A POLLING STATION**

In the past the Village Hall had been used as a Polling Station, but as elections always took place on Thursdays, this meant that the regular Pilates session had to be cancelled. The Chair suggested that once the Parish Pavilion was completed, this should be used as a Polling Station and that the Parish Council could agree to making up the difference between the £150 normally received by the Village Hall and the hiring income otherwise lost. Subject to a suitable agreement being reached, the Committee agreed to this change.

14. **ITEMS RAISED FROM THE FLOOR AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm.