

Meeting of the OVHMC

Tuesday, 8 October 2019 at 1930hrs

Present: D Titchmarsh (DT) (Chair), M Collins (MC) (Treasurer), A Pulham (AP) (Secretary), D Skipper (DS), M Ward (MW), B Sharman (BS), B Hollins (BH), V Rees (VR), R Daw, (RD), D Turner (DT)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Nigel Szembel, Josh Healy and Paul Squires.

2. Minutes of the Meeting on 9 July 2019

These were agreed without amendment and signed by the Chair.

3. Actions from Previous Meeting

- In respect of agenda item 5, MC advised he and RD continue to work on securing the name change with the Co-Op bank.
- In respect of agenda item 6, AP advised there had been no response from villagers to the article in the September Bulletin, asking them if they would like to see Wi-Fi installed in the Village Hall. AP would continue to explore options, including looking into a proposal recently forwarded to him by Joan Stammers.
- In respect of agenda item 7(i) BS confirmed the matter of the keysafe on the front of the building remained outstanding and was in hand.
- In respect of agenda item 7(ii) it was suggested that the Bowls Club and Pannier Market organisers have their own key to the hall, although it was suggested also that there could be a number of other keys in circulation and the true position might not be known unless and until the lock was changed and fresh keys issued.

4. Chairman's Report

Nothing to report.

5. Treasurer's Report

MC confirmed he now has access to the current account, although not yet to the savings account. He will now be able to reclaim the payments he made on the Village Hall's behalf whilst the transfer was going through.

MC re-iterated the request to all hirers, regular and casual, that they make bookings using the new online system. He confirmed that the online calendar and booking system appears to be working well and gave an outline explanation of how it works. MC appealed to regular hirers in particular that if when they make a payment they know they are not going to use one of their regular slots, could they please let him know, as he needs to marry the payment with the booked slots and update the online calendar accordingly.

MC asked also if the Gardening Club still required use of the Village Hall on the third Tuesday evening of the month. DS confirmed that they do.

MC advised he has yet to look at the budget implications of known increases in costs such as the new cleaner; however as costs are increasing he proposed a review of hire charges in the near future.

A number of questions were asked of MC as follows:

Q. Do we need a minimum cancellation policy?

A. Advising of a seven day notice requirement was held to be reasonable, although all agreed it was important not to be too 'hard and fast' on this point.

Q. Do you require payment for a booking 'up front'?

A. Only occasionally and probably not necessary from villagers/regular users. Payment upfront (and at the least a deposit) would usually be required in respect of a casual hiring.

Q. Would you be able to accept payment up to a year in advance?

A. Yes, this should be possible.

Actions:

MC to create link to the new Village Hall website from the Orwell Village website (Orwell Past and Present?).

MC to check with Jill Whiteoak as to whether payment has yet been received for the Gardening Club's slots.

6. Hire Charges

MC referred back to his earlier advise that as costs increase the hire charges need to be reviewed. The evidence of looking at other halls in the area suggests Orwell's charges are on the low side. He asked the Committee's approval to conduct a review of charges and sought views from the floor.

The Committee AGREED to the proposal for a review of charges, especially if Wi-Fi was to be added to the 'offer'; however the Committee wished that any increase be kept to the minimum necessary.

Action: MC to work up some proposals with DT and AP and present them at the next meeting of the Committee.

7. Updates on:

a. Cleaning Arrangements

The Committee agreed that the new arrangement with Monika was going well.

AP advised that when the initial contract was placed with Monika it was on the basis of the OVHMC requiring 6hrs cleaning a week, this being comprised of a 'core' 3hr clean each week, with the other three hours to be deployed across the week according to when there had been a booking. Monika had recently advised that 6hrs is not necessary to maintain the hall in its current condition and that she would prefer to work and claim on the basis of timesheets that detail the *actual* hours worked each week.

This was agreed as a positive step forward for the Village Hall and its finances.

Actions:

MC to design and issue Monika with a simple timesheet on which she can record her hours for payment.

Monika to be reminded to check the online booking calendar to find the times of the morning, afternoon and evening bookings when planning her visits.

b. Maintenance Arrangements

BS advised of a recent inspection he had undertaken and submitted a list of areas where he felt attention was required.

The question of whether these tasks could be offered direct to a single individual or whether it would be appropriate to obtain competitive quotes, was discussed.

The Committee AGREED that BS was authorised to approach the contractor he had in mind to ask him to make a start on the major items on the list, albeit he would first ask that contractor to provide a ballpark quote for the items specified.

BS suggested that there should be a maintenance book in the Village Hall where hirers could log apparent defects for follow-up. This was agreed as a good idea, although an email reporting route was also agreed as possibly more useful.

DT advised that PAT testing in the hall is overdue and asked if the regular contactor could be booked to come in and do this. The Committee AGREED that this was authorised.

The Committee AGREED also that DT, MC and AP should get together in the near future to discuss options for redecorating the hall.

c. Overall Building Condition

Nothing noted over and above the list submitted by BS against item 7b.

8. Website Development

This had been addressed under agenda item 5.

9. Communications – External and Internal

AP proposed that in the interests of accountability and transparency the minutes and supporting papers from these meetings should be made available on the new Village Hall website. This was AGREED by the Committee.

RD suggested that the presence of the 'Familiarisation Book' held in the kitchen needed to be drawn to the attention of all hirers. It also needs to be maintained.

Actions:

The importance of reading the 'Familiarisation Book' to be drawn to the attention of hirers during the booking process.

BS to take responsibility for maintaining/updating the 'Familiarisation Book' as required.

AP to PDF agreed copies of meeting minutes and send them to MC for uploading onto the website.

10. Committee Membership

AP reminded the Committee of DT's intention to retire as Chairman by the time of the next AGM in 2020. He asked all Committee members to give some thought as to who might be willing and able to step into the role. It was agreed by the Committee that Tuesdays were not fixed in stone as Committee meeting dates and alternatives could be found if this suited a prospective Chairman.

Action: The need to be reported in forthcoming issues of the Bulletin and also on the Orwell Email. Committee members to ask around.

AP advised also that he was still in the process of compiling what he hoped would be a definitive list of Committee members plus contacts. When he thinks it is complete he will share it with the Committee in case any details are incorrect or a Committee member is missing from the list.

11. Any Other Business

MC advised the Committee of a very generous, anonymous donation that had been recently received by the Committee.

Action: MC to advise AP of the identity of the donor and AP to write a 'thank you' letter on behalf of the Committee.

AP advised that the Committee had been asked by the Clerk to the Parish Council to advise where a defibrillator could be best placed on the front of the building.

Action: AP to advise the Clerk that the Parish Council should feel free to use its discretion, with the assumption that the defibrillator will be placed in an accessible location whilst causing the minimum possible obstruction to pedestrians on the footway.

The issue of the stage lights was raised. Their presence was confirmed, but it was agreed that they are somewhat 'technical' to operate without help and/or a guidance manual.

It was AGREED that a small surcharge would be added to the hire fee for those confirming their wish to use the stage lights, to cover the additional costs involved.

Actions:

BS to arrange a meeting with himself, MC to seek a meeting with Bruce Robertson to work out how the lights work.

BS to prepare an instruction manual for the Village Hall.

MC to identify and propose to the next meeting of the OVHMC a surcharge for the use of the stage lights.

DS advised he and NS had undertaken an inventory of all plates, cups, cutlery etc. and asked if some should be held elsewhere, with just an agreed number of each item being kept in the kitchen. It was AGREED that as long as there is space for them, all such items should remain in the kitchen. On a linked matter, the absence of a grill pan was noted.

Action: BS to procure a grill pan for the cooker.

DT asked the Committee if any bottles of alcohol were being stored in the locked cupboards in the back room, as to do so would place the Village Hall in breach of its licence which does not allow the presence of alcohol in the Village Hall for longer than 24hrs.

Action: VR to investigate and advise.

DT inquired who would hold the licence for the Village Hall once he had retired.

It was AGREED that this would be resolved by DT, MC and AP as it was likely that the new Chairman or the Treasurer or Secretary would assume this responsibility

Action: DT, MC and AP to discuss licensing issue.

The meeting closed at 2040hrs.

Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday 14 January at 1930hrs