

Minutes of Village Hall Committee Thursday 9th Dec

Apologies

Nikki Charlie
Dennis Richardson
Miriam Moran

Present

Richard Taylor RT (Chair)
Peter Condon PC (Treasurer)
Judith Taylor JT (Housekeeper)
Suzanne Wheeler SW (Bookings)
Sophy Darlow SD (Deputy Housekeeper)
Anne Jones AJ (Trustee)
Sarah Smith SS (School)
Aila Richardson AR (Trustee)
Liz Tillot LT (Tennis Club)

Minutes of last meeting The Chairman asked if everyone had received the minutes of the AGM but several committee members had not seen them. The Chair agreed to re-send them to everyone.

Items arising from the Minutes

- (i) Provision of an Electric Vehicle charging point. This is still under consideration; although Electric Vehicles are becoming more popular it is doubtful whether there is sufficient demand (as yet) to justify installing an EV Charger at the Village Hall.
- (ii) Election of a deputy Chairman. Whilst all agreed a Deputy Chairman would be a useful addition to the committee none of the members present wished to put themselves forward.

Treasurers Report

The treasurer reported that he had paid the Performing Artists Fee and reminded the committee that the Hall does have an Entertainments Licence; this was a 'one off' payment and covers the Hall in perpetuity.

The treasurer also drew the committee's attention to the fact that in 2006, when the Youth Club closed down, their funds, £394.53, were transferred to the Village Hall. Given the recent request for funds for a Playground the treasurer felt that this sum might be allocated for that purpose without infringing our Constitution as the money was never ours to begin with.

The Chair asked that this be discussed later in the meeting as the Playground Appeal was a separate item on the agenda.

Maintenance

Lighting RT pointed out that the approach to the front of the Hall was very badly lit and asked the committee approve the installation of two lights, one at each side of the front porch. This was approved unanimously.

SS asked that an exterior, 'sensor' light be installed at the garden entrance to the Ian Smith Room as it was still dark when the teachers arrived at the Hall in the morning and the steps were difficult to negotiate. This was agreed, RT to install a light as a matter of urgency.

PC also reported that the floodlights in the carpark were no longer working and there had been instances where insurance claims had been made for accidents in poorly lit parking areas. RT undertook to get the lights repaired/replaced asap.

Keys for new doors. RT reported that he had spoken to Hereford Glass (who are fitting the replacement, UPVC doors) and it is possible to have a common key for the Front Door and Kitchen Door. At present we have a 'security' lock on the front door whose keys cannot be copied without written authorisation. Although such locks for UPVC doors may exist Hereford Glass had never heard of them and they will undoubtedly be expensive. PC reported that he had managed to get one of the existing 'security keys' copied at Timsons without being challenged.

SW stated that, in her experience, most people were honest and felt that a security key was not really necessary. PC added that we had little of value and the security at many Halls was almost non-existent but there seemed to be very few problems.

The Committee decided to accept the standard locks on the new doors.

Housekeeping

JT informed the committee that the cleaner, who comes once a fortnight, was raising her rates to £13.50 an hour. PC asked if she might be available more often? JT replied that unfortunately the cleaner was fully booked at present. RT asked if any of the committee could recommend a good cleaner but no-one was able to help.

JT reported that the Hall had been left in a poor state after the meeting of the Covent Garden Residents and two glasses had been broken. RT wondered if the Covent Garden Residents should be asked to pay for the glasses but SW was against the suggestion as too much time had passed. It was agreed to let it go.

JT passed on the thanks of the Newent Inner Wheel Association who had their Xmas lunch at the Hall. Apparently the ladies were delighted with the Hall and had a really good time...

Bookings

PC reported that all our users are paying on time and there have been no complaints/problems reported.

Playground Appeal

RT asked if all present had received a copy of the Village Hall Constitution and were aware of its provisions, especially the clauses covering the use of Hall funds. All present indicated they had.

RT reminded the committee that, should it ever be found that the trustees had acted outside the Constitution in disbursing funds, they would be personally liable to repay the money. In light of this RT was against drawing on our reserves to fund the proposed playground.

AJ pointed out that the recent government grants had been received from the COVID Community Support Fund which had been set up for the benefit the whole community during lockdown, this included, but was not exclusive to, the Village Hall and, as such, she suggested that the money could be used (in part) to fund a playground.

RT agreed to look into this but was of the opinion that, had the playground been proposed earlier, they could have applied for a grant from the COVID Community Support Grant themselves however, once the funds had been allocated to the Village Hall they became our responsibility and we were governed by the Constitution.

PC added that, in his capacity as treasurer, if the committee decided that AJ had a valid argument he would have to insist that the committee took legal advice before disbursing any funds – which would probably cost more than any grant we could hope to make to the playground.

RT then raised the possibility, mentioned earlier by the treasurer, that the money entrusted to the Village Hall by a Youth Club in 2006 be given to help fund the playground. LT pointed out that, as the money had come from a now defunct Youth Club, it would be more appropriate if it was allocated to a current Youth Club. After some discussion this was put to the vote and the majority was in favour of giving the money to the Youth Club.

JT remarked that she had not seen any attempt by the Playground Appeal Group to raise funds for the project, unlike the Church Heritage Society who had been tireless in their efforts. However, if there was to be a fund-raiser perhaps the committee might consider allowing the Playground Group to use the hall 'at cost'? SW was doubtful that this was a good idea as other charities paid the full rate for the use of the Hall and it didn't seem fair to discriminate. RT pointed out that we hadn't yet been asked and the committee could discuss the issue should it ever arise.

AOB

AJ asked if the kettles in the kitchen could be replaced as the current ones were both leaking. JT agreed to action this.

RT asked if the barrier was still being closed at week-ends. AR replied that the Motor Club finish late on a Friday night but had informed her that they didn't require the use of the main carpark therefore DR had been closing the gate on a Friday evening at the usual time.

Date of next meeting

It was agreed to hold the next meeting at 7.30pm (to allow for Pilates to leave the Hall) on Thursday 20th January 2022.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7.50pm.