

Colton Village Hall Management Committee

Minutes of the Meeting Held on 29th October 2015

- 1. Members Present** K Ball S Barnett M Godfrey S Jenkinson P Jones R Lawrence A Lloyd B Lloyd J Macmillan P Macmillan M Monbiot R Monbiot R Simcock P Waring
In the absence of IJ, RM took the chair
- 2. Apologies** I Jones J Kinsman
- 3. Membership** Kerry Ball was welcomed to the meeting and was proposed as an elected member, seconded PJ: elected unanimously as a trustee.
- 4. Disclosure of Interests** SB and PW in relation to item 12; SJ re item 14
- 5. Minutes of the Last Meeting** Signed as a true record.
- 6. Matters Arising** AL had attended the AGM of the Community Council of Staffordshire and had raised with the Village Halls' Advisor the question of grants for the car park, which she stated were very difficult to obtain. The date for the planned open day was agreed as 3 April 2016, 2 – 5 pm. MM to book. An induction session had been held for SJ, PW and Liz Craddock
- 7. Chair's Report** RM raised the question of whether the recent auction, which had raised c £230, was the best use of members' time. It was agreed that the auction already scheduled for next March should go ahead, with paid newspaper advertising, plus normal posters and free magazine advertising, after which the position would be reviewed
- 8. Treasurer's Report** RL presented the half yearly summary of accounts. He explained that though we were unlikely to meet the budgeted income from hire fees in the current year, we were likely to exceed last year's income from hire fees by c £500, the historic annual increase. Under the new SORP accounting system we are required to show any item of repair and maintenance in excess of £500 as capital, and therefore to depreciate it, which will give an impression of an increased surplus. RL drew attention to the cash accounting summary. The bank balance stands at £9476. In discussion it was proposed that £5000 be considered as set aside for major items identified in the reserves policy. Agreed
- 9. Pricing Review** RM reminded the meeting that the pricing group was committed to a review in November and needed to recommend to the November meeting prices for 2017. AL indicated that he wished to stand down from the pricing group. The following were confirmed as members: RL RM MM MG IJ and JM. AL proposed that the VHMC chair should be ex- officio on all sub-committees and working groups, in line with Parish Council arrangements. Agreed. RL advised that we had undertaken to consult parishioners on prices for 2017 and any other changes in pricing policy. It was agreed to do this by writing and via the organisations' representatives rather than by holding a meeting. The meeting then considered the proposal (appended to minutes) submitted by JM for the establishment of a pricing sub-committee. In presenting his proposal JM identified a number of recent incidents which had given rise to damaging perceptions within the Parish. Whether well founded or not, these perceptions needed to be addressed to avoid reputational damage to the Village Hall. He highlighted in particular the impression that the Village Hall was unwelcoming of the W I, given the simultaneous booking once a month of the Bellamour Room and the main hall. RM had raised with the W I the question of whether they would be willing to move to a Thursday evening booking: this issue had a direct bearing on the availability of the VH for future activities. The W I had declined such a move. PM explained that consultation with W I members had shown that a move from Wednesday, which had been the evening for meetings since the branch was founded, would result in a significant loss of membership. BL commented that it was reasonable for the W I to be asked to move, and PM added that we must accept their explanation. The committee stressed its unswerving commitment to the W I and its determination to support both it and the other village organisations. Members stressed the need for effective supportive two-way communication when perceived issues arise. After discussion JM's proposal was amended as follows and its adoption seconded by AL: a) the title be "Hiring and Pricing Sub Committee"; b) November be substituted for December: c) deletion of all but first sentence in paragraph B4: d) the reference to "profit" in 3.1 be replaced by "surplus". Agreed unanimously. (The amended version will be circulated separately with the minutes.)

MM asked whether a free of charge hiring would be covered by our insurance; this was referred to the Hiring and Pricing Sub-Committee. RM pointed out that simultaneous bookings of the main hall and the Bellamour Room were in line with existing committee policy. PM asked whether the M3 dance classes were being held on a three-month trial basis. MM confirmed that this was the case. AL and RM advised that a number of solutions were being sought to the joint use of the hall on certain Wednesday evenings, including a request to the school to provide a possible alternative venue for one in four meetings. It was hoped this issue would be solved by Christmas. AL had had a positive conversation with Peter Brightman, chair of the Produce Guild, during which Peter had raised the question of set up time for events and the apparent low price charged for weddings. These issues were referred to HPSC.

10. Sub-Committees Ways and Means: A number of repair and maintenance issues had been pursued, see item 14. **EASC:** More seed had been sown and areas allocated for the use of the school and WI. The Produce Guild had requested a briefing re the allocation of a space for its own use. **Marketing Group:** MG reported on the revision of the website, including updates of the pictures and the facilities available. Two articles had recently been published in the Parish Newsletter featuring developments indoors and outdoors. Kerry (Tesco Manager) wished her staff to continue supporting improvements to the play area.

11. Procedure and Agenda for EGM BL said that a notice/agenda had been placed in the November Newsletter, and further notice would appear in the December issue, with copies on notice boards. The December notice would be amended to explain the purpose of the meeting and who was entitled to attend. No items other than those identified on the agenda would be accepted and written notification of questions would be asked for in advance, to allow for researched answers. Mr A Chappell had already asked for an electronic copy of the papers, such copies to be sent nearer the date of the meeting by the secretary to those requesting them.

12. Playground, including Annual Inspection Report The annual inspection report had been received and would be circulated shortly to members. The promised risk evaluation sheet had not been received and would be requested again. The replacement of the timber log on the multi-purpose item was in hand. Thanks to Tesco managers and volunteers the painting of the fence had been completed. The surface cleaning was planned for 5 November, courtesy of financial support from the Lands Trust, subject to a suitable machine for hire being found.

13. Events RS reported on the planning for the Xmas Fayre, explaining that all categories of activity requiring donations of items still needed support. Letters to various supermarkets and businesses in the area had been distributed by Ruth Jones and had already proved fruitful. The committee expressed its thanks to Ruth. RS's brother Karl had volunteered to decorate a tree (provided by RL) on behalf of the VH for the Church's festival of trees, for which the committee was grateful. MM notified that John Carter had found it necessary to cancel the planned public meeting for the street party, because of Shirley's incapacity. The committee was very sorry to hear that she had been admitted to hospital following a bad fall. Members expressed their best wishes to both. BL reported that raffle prizes had been requested for the quiz to be held 14 November.

14. Repair and Maintenance Members were delighted with the quality and appearance of the new garden wall: a real asset to the hall. Several tons of gravel would be required to infill behind the wall and to replenish the surface below. A second wheel had come off a table trolley, both repaired by PJ. RL to raise with manufacturer together with the failing rubber strips. Both wall heaters had failed recently, that in the Bellamour Room repaired by PJ, that in the kitchen to be replaced urgently, RL to source. RL agreed to repair/replace broken toilet roll holder. New cigarette boxes were awaiting installation.

15. Secretary's Report/Correspondence An email had been sent to Joanna Low thanking her for support during her time as trustee. BL read out a letter to IJ from the independent examiner of our accounts. It set out the basis on which he examined them. He had found no matters to cause concern. Moreover he thanked our treasurer for his cooperation and excellent standard of the books and records of account.

16. AOB SB gave RM an extract from a draft report on licensing issues to be published in January 2016, and promised to copy to RM the section on whether a qualified person would need to be present at a licensed event. MM commented that we are short of chairs to seat 160 people. It was agreed to purchase 20 more (together with the 5 tables already agreed).

17. Date of Next Meeting Thursday, 26 November 2015.

The meeting ended at 10.15pm.

VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- A There shall be a Pricing Sub-Committee to be chaired by the Treasurer, to advise the VHMC on matters relating to pricing.
- B The sub-committee is instructed to review the current pricing structure annually and to make recommendations for change to the VHMC by not later than its December meeting each year, in the light of the following statement of principles:
- 1 The Village Hall is not a business or similar commercial enterprise whose objective is the maximisation of profit.
 - 2 The Village Hall is a charity which needs to be run in a business -like manner.
 - 3 This entails:
 - 1 making sufficient profit to enable the VHMC to deliver its charitable objects of providing and maintaining the village hall for the use of its beneficiary group as defined by the governing instrument;
 - 2 enabling the hall to be hired to members of the beneficiary group at beneficial rates;
 - 3 creating a sufficient reserve to meet known and anticipated liabilities.
 - 4 Access to the hall should be as user friendly as possible. In particular a hirer from the beneficiary group should be allowed free access to the hall for a reasonable period of time before and after an event to set up and clear up, free of charge, provided the request for the free time is made no more than (say) two weeks prior to the date of the booking and the hall is not hired out to a third party for the time in question.
- C In the event of a dispute arising over a booking or potential booking, the booking officer shall refer the dispute to the sub-committee for resolution.

JM/ 22.10.15