

West Wickham Village Hall Trust Management Committee

Minutes of a meeting held in the Village Hall on 22nd August 2022 7.30 – 9.00 p.m.

Present: Trevor Hall (Chairman), Andy Champ, Diane Hazlehurst, Brian Marshall, Georgina Magin, Andrew Morris, Caroline Mulley, Alex Schuilenburg, Nicci Trudgeon and Peter Grieve.

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th June 2022 were approved as a correct record, subject to an amendment to Minute 5 – Hall Repairs and External Maintenance. The first bullet point in this minute should begin ‘It was **agreed** that a dishwasher for the kitchen be purchased for £349 and fitted...’

2. Financial Position / Review of Hire Fees

(a) Finance

The Chairman had circulated an itemised list of income received between April 2020 and March 2022.

The final accounts for the financial year 2021/22 were to be submitted to the Charity Commission by 30th September 2022 but were not yet in final form.

It was noted that the Charity Commission was updating information that it was required to collect under the Charities Act 2022. Questionnaires had been sent to all charities and although many of the questions were not applicable to small charities such as the Village Hall trust, the Chairman indicated that he would complete those sections which were applicable and circulate to the Committee before returning it to the Commission. The Trustees’ annual report to the Commission would also be affected by the changes in the legislation.

It was noted that at the time of the meeting, there was £25,448.06 in the current account and £2807.73 in the deposit account.

(b) Review of Hire Fees

In the light of rapidly increasing running costs, mainly because of the increase in the cost of electricity, the Committee agreed that there was a need to increase income.

One way of doing this was to increase hire fees and the Chairman had circulated a proposed schedule of charges which had been the subject of consultation with the carpet bowls, gardening and local history clubs.

The Committee discussed the proposed new schedule and noted the fees charged by other halls in the area which did not necessarily offer the same facilities but were nevertheless often more expensive.

It was **agreed**:

- That all the charges published on the web site be based on use of the whole hall.
- That the rate of hire be £10 per hour for up to 6 people and £18 per hour for 7 people or more, with no specific reference to sports hire
- That specific rates be agreed for current users (Karate, Kenyukens Iaido, and Carpet Bowls £10 per hour), (Gardening £7 per hour) (Local History rate to take into account low membership).
- that the Chairman be asked to re-draft the proposed new schedule of charges for agreement at the Annual General Meeting to come into effect by 1st January 2023

The Committee also discussed ways of increasing the usage of the hall and the possibility of advertising for users from outside the village, for instance by advertising in their parish newsletters or on their Facebook pages, and wider, for instance in the Cambridge Independent, although it was noted that the constitution required the hall to be used for the benefit of the people of West Wickham. The Chairman said that he would do an item for the Village Voice drawing attention to the availability of the hall and the various facilities.

The need for fund raising was also discussed and it was suggested that at the next hub night the nominated charity might be the hall. It was also noted that a quiz was planned to coincide with the November hub night and that the proceeds of this may also be given to the hall.

3. Hall Cleaning and Inspection.

The cleaning of the hall was continuing to be satisfactory.

There had been an issue over lack of tea towels at one hiring. It was **agreed** that all clubs be asked to take tea towels home after use, wash them and return. For events it was agreed that hirers be requested to bring their own tea towels. The basket for used tea towels would be removed.

4. Hall Repairs and External Maintenance

In relation to the cupboards to be installed in the bar and kitchen areas the Chairman had received a quote from B & Q in the sum of £499 for all the materials needed and the Committee **agreed** that this should be accepted.

In relation to the garden areas surrounding the hall it was felt that a work party needed to be assembled to carry out necessary weeding and the Chairman said that he would place an item in the Village Voice to call for volunteers for such an exercise in early October.

There was a small triangular area outside the front of the hall which had degenerated into weeds and it was **agreed** that this be cleared and seeded with grass in the autumn.

5. Events

Coffee mornings were continuing on the second Thursday in each month. The most recent coffee morning had coincided with the referendum on the neighbourhood plan and it was felt this may have been beneficial for both events.

The wine tasting event on the 1st October had attracted just 9(+2) takers so far and more advertising was planned. It was essential to know numbers by 15th September.

The Quiz / Hub Night was due to be held on 26th November. The format was planned to be up to 6 per table and light bites to be provided. The entry fee had not yet been finalised.

6. PV Installation – Grant Application

The Chairman reported that South Cambs DC had approved a grant of £4000 which could be paid back in the event of the plan to install solar panels not proceeding. A physical survey of the roof was to be carried out on 22nd October. This would assess the viability of the scheme which would cost £15000 and would include a battery. In the meantime the Chairman would investigate the possibility of obtaining further grant aid. Some concerns were expressed about the extent to which the solar panels would benefit the hall (as opposed to the environment), but should the scheme go ahead, it was possible that the rise in electricity prices would effectively reduce the period of pay back for the capital outlay.

The committee discussed the financial position of the Trust in the light of several recent capital payments in addition to the proposal for solar panels and the question of a minimum level of reserves was raised (say £10 – 12 thousand pounds) to cover future emergencies. Reassurance was given regarding the condition of the roof and in respect of the recent renewal of the insurance policy. Although the valuation of the hall for rebuilding had been reduced, the premium had remained

the same to give extra cover and it was noted that any substantial damage to the roof would be covered by the insurance policy.

7. Items for Village Voice

- Availability of hall
- Request for gardening volunteers
- Quiz

8. Any Other Business

Alex Schuilenburg drew the attention of the Committee to the damaged playground equipment, regarding which the Parish Council were taking action to remedy.

9. Future Meetings

The following dates had been agreed

- Monday 24th October (AGM) (Village Hall)
- Tuesday 20th December (Zoom)