

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Holwell Village Hall Management Committee
held on Thursday 17 May 2018 at 7.30pm
at Holwell Village Hall**

Present:

Libby Wilton, Chair and Secretary (LW)
Suzanne Ford, Treasurer (SF)
Jane Goodfellow (JG)
Sally-Anne Holt (SAH)
Rebecca Oxenford (RO)
Philip Pigott (PP)

1. Apologies for Absence

None.

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

3. Approval of minutes of AGM 25 May 2017

Approved, subject to correcting spelling of PP's surname.

4. Acting Chairman's Introduction and matters arising

LW welcomed those villagers attending and introduced herself as the Parish Council's representative to the Village Hall Committee. She explained that she was currently chairing the Committee and had continued to act as Secretary, given the work and other commitments of our small number of Trustees. LW thanked all the Trustees who were appointed at last year's AGM for their continued hard work and support, including Sue Crosby, who resigned during the year for family reasons. She also thanked Jo Maidment for having continued as Booking Officer despite not being a trustee – Jo had now resigned for work reasons and Jane Goodfellow had taken over this role.

LW said that the Committee had continued to try at all times to keep in mind the need to be open and transparent in what it was doing, and had continued to post copies of meeting minutes on the hall's website and in the hall itself, and had also produced a newsletter in January.

LW introduced the Treasurer, SF to give her report, which would be followed by JG's report as the new Booking Officer, and LW's report as Secretary which should cover any matters arising from last year's minutes.

5. Treasurer's Report

SF reported that the hall's regular users had continued to make a major contribution to the hall's income, with Table Tennis the star performer over the year, contributing over £800. Income from Short Mat Bowls was lower than last year as the group now met on a monthly rather than weekly basis, while the U3A group had met more regularly and their contribution had increased. Dance Fit and Circuits again provided over £400 and the Youth Club now made much greater use of the hall. The Holwell WI and the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group continued to use the hall regularly, helping to offset a lower income from Music Nights which now took place only quarterly. Traditional events such as the Quiz Nights and Harvest Supper had again been profitable and SF said

that the two new events, the Skittles BBQ and Winter Warmer, had also helped raise funds. For the purpose of comparing the success of these events, SF explained that the draft accounts showed the net income figures for each as last year's figures were net of costs. The actual cost of the events was shown under expenditure. Money received from raffles held at the Quiz Nights and Harvest Supper was also shown separately, and was quite considerable.

The main item of expenditure had again been for insurance cover for the hall but SF explained that this would be reduced next year as insurance providers had been changed from the NFU to Allianz as Allianz offered a lower annual premium despite the increase in cover that had been requested for replacement of the hall in the event of fire etc. Electricity was the highest running cost followed by electrical repairs and maintenance. The door lock had been changed as users were finding it difficult to open, and then to keep shut, and a local woodworker had been commissioned to make new steps for the stage with wider treads – easier and safer to use, and conforming to health & safety regulations. There were new items for Stationery which included raffle tickets and printing costs for event fliers, and for the Website – which included hosting and domain name costs.

SF explained that the funds received from the Big Lottery Fund for the feasibility study had been shown separately, with a balance of £6,717 after payment of Oriel Architecture's initial invoice. SF reported that although the accounts had not yet been finalised by Andrew May who had again kindly agreed to audit them, the hall's net income was £1,609.22, some £200 lower than last year, due mainly to the greater expenditure on hall fittings and equipment. Funds held within the hall's accounts with CAF Bank at the end of March amounted to £36,992.14 which included the £6,717 grant money (giving a net figure of £30,275.14). With the exception of a small float, this was all held in the interest bearing CAF Gold account.

6. Booking Officer's Report

JG read out the report Jo Maidment had provided which confirmed that the hall had continued to have a wide range of bookings throughout the year. The online calendar allowed people to see exactly what was on and provided contact details for open events. Her report mentioned that there had recently been a couple of private bookings which had caused significant damage and resultant mess which required cleaning. These incidents were from hirers who did not live in the village. Macmillan Cancer had again used the hall as a comfort break for their Great Bike Ride free of charge as the Committee provided support for one charity event each year. Jo explained that work commitments had made it very difficult for her to supervise any events that are occasional hirings and as this had been a cause of damage and misuse, she felt compelled to stand down as Bookings Officer in favour of someone with more time in the village. JG then gave her own report which stated that the hall had been booked for a private party, but that the hirer and family were well-known to JG and she had accepted the booking. A further booking for the hire of tables and over 100 chairs had also been made. As a result of the damage caused recently, JG stated that the deposit had been increased from £50 to £100.

7. Secretary's Report

LW reported that the hall's regular events such as the Autumn and Spring Fish & Chip Quiz Nights had been enjoyed by participants and were also successful in raising funds for the hall. The response to the two new events had also been positive. The summer Skittles & Scoff BBQ was successfully master-minded by RO while the Winter Warmer event was devised and organised by SF who persuaded Cuffs, Woodbridge Farm, Primroses's Kitchen and Honeybuns to donate some excellent raffle prizes, with Middle Piccadilly's therapeutic massage vouchers going to a silent auction. LW thanked them all for their contribution to raising funds for the hall. LW also thanked Alison Hole and Helen Hollex who once again spearheaded organisation of the traditional Harvest Supper, when seating was arranged at two long tables rather than individual tables which generated a friendly and sociable environment.

Turning to the future of the hall itself, LW said that at the 2017 AGM, she had reported that the village hall site had been registered under the NP's Call for Sites as a potential site for residential development to ensure it was properly included in the NP process. The outcome of that process was that the site was not among those considered appropriate for housing development within the parish.

LW also referred to the village hall survey that was conducted at the same time, and which had shown a distinct division between village residents who wanted a new hall (53%) and those wanting the existing hall refurbished (47%). As a result of that division, LW said it had been decided to undertake a feasibility study into the various options for the hall's future, and a Big Lottery Fund grant had been applied for to enable the appointment of a consultant to carry out an independent study. SAH had taken responsibility for preparing the application, which was successful, and funds were received in December. LW expressed thanks to both the Lottery Fund and the people who support it.

LW explained that three consultants had been briefed and provided quotations for the study, and at the Committee's February meeting, it was decided to instruct Oriel Architecture, an architectural and planning practice based in Sherborne who have been involved in several similar studies. Two meetings had since been held with Oriel who presented various options with regard to retaining and repairing the existing hall as well as to replacing it with a new hall. The current position was that detailed costings of the different options were awaited from the Quantity Surveyor, and as a result it was likely to be June before the study could be presented to village residents for them to decide which option they wished the Committee to pursue.

Having reopened the discussions the previous Committee had with Sherborne Castle Estate regarding the purchase of the car park land, which is currently leased from them until 2055, LW reported that a price of £4,000 had been agreed with the Estate for the purchase of the freehold, based on an enhanced agricultural value. LW said that the possibility of leasing some additional land for recreational purposes had also been discussed with the Estate, and it had now been confirmed that it would be possible for the hall to lease about an acre of land adjacent to it for use by residents and users of the hall. The annual rent proposed was £200 and the term of the lease was likely to be a minimum of 50 years, as was the original term of the lease of the car park land, although a longer term had been requested.

LW confirmed that the Committee proposed instructing solicitors to act for the charity in respect of these transactions following the meeting, and that Rutter & Rutter, a small practice based in Wincanton had been selected. The partner dealing was an experienced conveyancer and was also used to acting for charities. LW explained that as a matter of course, the solicitors would inspect the trust deed which governs the charity to ensure it was able to enter these agreements, and would advise whether it was possible for the charity to change from a trust to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, which was a more appropriate structure in which to hold and manage property.

In conclusion, LW said the Committee would continue trying to keep the hall clean and welcoming for its regular users, and that some repairs had been carried out to the exterior to ensure the hall remained weatherproof and secure. LW thanked those residents who volunteered their time to help. LW referred to the worn carpet on the stage being replaced with much better quality carpet kindly donated by the Church of St Laurence and drew attention to the fact that the potholes in the roadside verge in front of the hall had been filled with scalplings by the Highways department following discussions with the Committee and the Parish Council.

8. Approval of accounts

LW explained that draft accounts had been prepared, but had not yet been signed off by Andrew May who had kindly agreed to act as independent auditor. The draft income and expenditure section had nonetheless been attached to the AGM agenda to provide attendees with relevant (albeit, not final) figures. LW stated that once the accounts had been signed off, a copy would be available in the hall and on the website, and in the meantime, a copy of the draft income and expenditure section would be available in the hall.

9. Appointment and election of the Management Committee to serve until the next AGM

In respect of Schedule 3 nominations, LW confirmed that Holwell Parish Council had nominated her to continue as its representative, and had also nominated SAH as representative of the Neighbourhood Planning Committee. Holwell Parochial Church Committee had again nominated JG to represent it on the VHC. No other Schedule 3 nominations had been received.

The three remaining members of the Committee, SF, RO and PP confirmed they would like to continue as trustees, and their nominations were proposed and seconded from the floor by William Ford and Patrick Constable respectively.

11. Appointment of independent auditor

LW confirmed that Andrew May would continue as independent auditor.

There being no other business, the Chair closed the AGM.

OPEN FORUM

Concern was raised that the wildflower garden area had been damaged, most recently by private parties, and that cars were driving over it on entering the car park. The wild orchids had come through but it was feared the cowslips that flowered last year had not survived. The Committee agreed to discuss the matter at the next meeting to determine the most appropriate way of protecting the wildflowers.

There being no further questions, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the Open Forum.

Approved, and signed by Libby Wilton, Acting Chair on 16 May 2019