

SHERFIELD-ON-LODDON VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
Meeting Held on Monday 1st March 2021 at 7.30 pm via Zoom

Present: Alan Ball, Bruce Batting, Ivan Gosden, Bruce Jones, Natalie Lerner, Nick Robinson & Ian Sellars

Apologies: Apologies for absence were received from Eleanor Burt and Gilly Duckworth.

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on Monday 1st February 2021

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 1st February had been circulated and were agreed as a correct record.

Matters arising

Action reports would be given when agenda items arose. In addition:

Ivan Gosden had spoken with Pete and Hazel Cook (Caretaker) regarding their kitchen and pointed out that there was no budget for this. Nick Robinson will oversee the installation for their benefit and will arrange with them when they are ready to contact him.

Action: Nick will wait to hear from Pete and Hazel Cook to help them with kitchen installation

Bruce Batting has yet to discuss a financial role with a possible volunteer, as she has been busy.

Action: See Item 13 below

2. Update from Duckwood Marketing

As Gilly Duckworth couldn't attend, she had given the Chairman some bullet points for the meeting. A full report will follow next month.

VAT

Defra had committed to paying the VAT on the extension costs, up to £34,000, at project completion. Pleasingly, they have now agreed to pay out in stages. Our first claim has now been made to cover building work to date, kitchen equipment and gas supply: a substantial percentage of the overall bill.

Wedding Licence

An application for a wedding licence, with all accompanying paperwork, has been submitted to HCC.

However, before a licence can be granted, the premises must be inspected. At present, due to Covid, HCC members of staff are not permitted to make such visits. Therefore our application is being held up.

Action: Gilly will contact HCC to try to facilitate a site visit re. our wedding licence application

3. Fundraising

Natalie reported that fundraising is quiet at the moment. It usually picks up after the LVL appears but it is not being delivered to homes at the moment, due to Covid restrictions. Gilly and Natalie are preparing to send out another mailshot via Mailchimp.

Natalie has paid in cheques at the Sherfield PO but needs a paying-in slip for the £100 cash donations that she has. It was agreed that it would be good to display the banner, perhaps using Hazel Cook's posts, as used for the Sunday Market banner. Nick will look into it and put up the banner. Natalie and Gilly continue to work to promote Buy a Brick, Amazon Smile and BanD lottery. Money continues to come in through Amazon Smile and BanD lottery.

Action:

**Ivan and Wendy will drop off paying-in book for Natalie to pay in cash donations via PO.
Nick will look into the best method to put up the Brick in Time banner**

4. Building Update

Ivan Gosden reported that the drainage situation is still unresolved, that the exterior doors have yet to be installed, as there is a hold-up in supply from the factory and that the builder hopes to complete both tasks, along with some remaining smaller jobs, in one operation, to complete the project. The Trustees will try to resolve the drainage situation – see Item 7

5. Business Plan

The SVH Business Plan was completed in 2019 but, with the uncertainties of the pandemic, no annual update was carried out in 2020.

Ian Sellars proposed that we should carry out a timely review and update.

Ian will work on updating some sections himself and call on other trustees and Gilly for their draft inputs before submitting it to the whole committee for discussion and approval.

Action: Ian will begin work on reviewing the Business Plan and will call on other Trustees as needed.

6. Grant Application to Parish Council

Nick Robinson has drafted and circulated a grant application to Sherfield Parish Council for a contribution to the extension project. Natalie Larner suggested some additional information be added.

Following discussion of the document, modifications were agreed and written amendments would be emailed to Nick. It was also agreed that the application (with the appropriate financial documents), would be hand-delivered to Andy Morgan by Nick the following afternoon: for discussion and approval at the next Parish Council meeting, to be held on Tuesday 9th March.

Ivan pointed out that all personal details had been redacted from the accompanying bank statements.

He also mentioned that with maintenance jobs building up, he would be proposing that we apply to the Parish Council for another grant in the next financial year.

Action: Amendments will be made and Nick will hand deliver the final version of the grant application

7. Drainage

Bruce Batting said he had spoken again with the original Building Inspector, who has modified the recommended size of a soakaway, if needed. The Inspector mentioned the boggy nature of the area, said a pipe into the ditch was the obvious solution and commented on the negligible amount of run-off vis a vis the village green as a whole.

Bruce B. has drafted and circulated a letter to be sent to Andy Morgan, Chairman of the Parish Council, requesting that the Village Hall can now proceed with a pipe into Henn's Ditch, as agreed with the landowner. It was agreed Bruce B. would amend and forward the letter to Bruce Jones (Secretary) to reach Andy Morgan the following day.

It was agreed that if the request was refused, the Trustees would go back to the landowner's agent for further discussions. It was noted that the land agent had been keen to know the PC's opinion on the issue.

However, a decision is now a matter of urgency, as the Trustees require the work to be completed and the hall to be in a position to reopen as soon as Government Guidelines and safety allows.

Alan suggested that all Trustees make every effort to attend the forthcoming Parish Council meeting, to be held on Tuesday 8th March and said that he'd give notice of his intention to record of that meeting.

Action:

Bruce B. will amend the 'drainage' letter and pass to Bruce J. (Secretary)

Bruce J. will immediately forward the 'drainage' letter to Andy Morgan

Alan will notify the Parish Clerk of his intention to record the forthcoming Parish Council meeting, 8th March

All trustees will make every effort to attend the Parish Council meeting on 8th March.

8. Beer Festival and Fete

Ivan Gosden said that a provisional Beer Festival date had been added to the bookings calendar.

Ian Sellars was hesitant about welcoming 600 visitors *inside* the hall re. Covid and mentioned that discussions had taken place re. an outside village event incorporating Flower Show and picnic/fete to be held the previous weekend.

It was agreed no decision needed to be made, and no Beer Festival committee meeting called, but that background arrangements could be started: date could be given to bands (already interested), marquee suppliers and brewers.

Ivan asked that fundraising bookings be kept to a minimum as the Hall Manager was helping couples to reschedule their wedding receptions. Enquiries have been plentiful: virtually two years to schedule into one.

A fete/event committee meeting via Zoom is being scheduled for this month. It was suggested that the bank holiday weekend might be a suitable date for a combined community event.

Action:

Ian will circulate the provisional date for the Beer festival

Ivan will ask Hall manager to amend bookings calendar so Beer Festival reads: Thurs.– Sun. 9th-12th Sept.

Bruce and Natalie will call a fete/event meeting which Alan will host on Zoom.

9. Sunday Markets

Ivan Gosden reported that Hazel Cook is keen to resume, but Ivan councils caution regarding the risk of infection. Nick proposed that, as this is not a food market, the opening should be delayed at least until non-essential retailers are allowed to re-open. (*Step 2, no earlier than 12 April, will see the opening of non-essential retail; personal care premises such as hairdressers and nail salons; and public buildings, including libraries and community centres. Also most outdoor attractions and settings including outdoor hospitality venues, zoos, theme parks, and drive-in cinemas will be able to open.*)

It was agreed that the markets should be overseen by the The Friends of the Village Hall Committee.

Action:

Natalie will make clear to those involved that the markets will be overseen by the Friends of the Village Hall Committee and prepare, with them, a proposal for reopening.

10. New Trustee

Nick Robinson has established that Eleanor Burt (current Minute Secretary) is keen to serve as a Trustee. Nick Robinson proposed and Bruce B. seconded a proposal to invite her. The proposal was agreed unanimously.

Bearing in mind the difficulties of taking Minutes while participating in a meeting, and following the success of recording our Zoom meetings for Minute taking, it was agreed to record our live meetings, when they resume.

Action: Bruce J. will write to Eleanor Burt inviting her to join the Board of Trustees. Once accepted, Bruce J. will arrange the appropriate paperwork and the Charity Commission will be advised of her appointment

11. Acoustic panels

Natalie Larner reported that she has been trying to arrange an installation date with Nick Vincent, but he is a very busy man! It was suggested that the Easter break would be an appropriate time and Natalie agreed.

Action: Natalie will update the committee re. acoustic panels when all arrangements are in place.

12. Insurance

Ivan Gosden reported that the Hall Manager has contacted the Hall's Insurance Brokers, Norris and Fisher, (Policy with Ansvar Insurance) in view of our larger building and new extensive kitchen equipment. Normally, a member of staff would come to inspect but, due to Covid, this would not happen. Rather, they will email a questionnaire and a form to be completed.

As the policy is up for renewal, Ivan suggested that it might be a good opportunity to check if we have the most competitive policy. Coincidentally, he has recently received promotional material from Allied and Westminster.

Ivan asked for a volunteer to complete the forms and to look into policy pricing.

Bruce B asked if we had a three-year policy, to which Ivan replied that we did and it was now up for renewal. Bruce B also pointed out that the Underwriters should always be known.

Natalie offered to look into the Insurance.

Action: Natalie will complete the Insurance forms and investigate the competition.

13. Percy's Plant Sale

Percy's Plant sale is provisionally booked for 22nd May in the VH carpark, but final approval will depend on current Government Guidelines.

(NB STEP 3 – from 17th May Rule of 6 or 2 households INSIDE. Group of up to 30 (not just 6) OUTSIDE. Separate groups mustn't mingle but must be at a social distance. 2m rule still applies)

Nick Robinson suggested that if Percy's Plant Sale goes ahead, then this decision should affect how we deal with the Sunday Market opening date.

Action: Percy's Plant Sale booking will be revisited at the next meeting

Natalie asked about any other group bookings. Ivan reported that there's a lot of interest and mentioned Tot Cross Buns and Basingstoke Concert Band in particular. At the moment, it looks like some user groups will return in June.

14. LVL

During lockdown, LVL is not being delivered to homes – only online at certain pickup points.

Nick Robinson mentioned that the VH website and Facebook are receiving a good amount of interest.

It was agreed to include the pending financial role, with the proviso that it had not already been filled. Editorial deadline is 14th of the month.

Action:

**Bruce B will be approaching a possible volunteer and will get back to Natalie re. LVL
Natalie will prepare a draft VH Matters page and circulate for approval. Editorial deadline is 14th of the month.**

I5. Financial Report

Across all four accounts, there is approx. £14,000.

There is short of £3,000 in the fundraising account

Nick reported that BDBC will have £18,000 to distribute to small businesses that have been closed and that will be distributed through the rating system. He will look into this on behalf of the Village Hall.

Date of Next Meeting: to be advised; w/c 5th April.

List of Actions:

- **Nick will wait to hear from Pete and Hazel Cook to help them with kitchen installation**
- **Gilly will contact HCC to try to facilitate a site visit re. our wedding licence application**
- **Ivan and Wendy will drop off paying-in book for Natalie to pay in cash donations via PO**
- **Nick will look into the best method to put up the Brick in Time banner**
- **Ian will begin work on reviewing the Business Plan and will call on other Trustees as needed**
- **Amendments will be made and Nick will hand deliver the final version of the grant application**
- **Bruce B. will amend the 'drainage' letter and pass to Bruce J. (Secretary)**
- **Bruce J. will immediately forward the 'drainage' letter to Andy Morgan**
- **Alan will notify the Parish Clerk of his intention to record the forthcoming Parish Council meeting, 8th March**
- **All trustees will make every effort to attend the Parish Council meeting on 8th March**
- **Ian will circulate the provisional date for the Beer festival**
- **Ivan will ask Hall manager to amend bookings calendar so Beer Festival reads: Thurs. – Sun. 9th-12th Sept.**
- **Bruce and Natalie will call a fete/event meeting which Alan will host on Zoom**
- **Natalie will make clear to those involved that the markets will be overseen by the Friends of the Village Hall Committee and prepare, with them, a proposal for reopening**
- **Bruce J. will write to Eleanor Burt inviting her to join the Board of Trustees. Once accepted, Bruce J. will arrange the appropriate paperwork and the Charity Commission will be advised of her appointment**
- **Natalie will update the committee re. acoustic panels when all arrangements are in place**
- **Natalie will complete the Insurance forms and investigate the competition**
- **Percy's Plant Sale booking will be revisited at the next meeting**
- **Bruce B will be approaching a possible volunteer and will get back to Natalie re. LVL**
- **Natalie will prepare a draft VH Matters page and circulate for approval**