

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WHITCHURCH-ON-THAMES VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

## Held in the Village Hall at 20:00 on Monday, October 25, 2021

**Members Present:** 

Chairman Keith Brooks (KB)

Vice-Chairman and Secretary Charles Cotgreave (CC)

Members Jean-Marc Grosfort (JMG)

Richard Scearce (RS) - hall manager

Treasurer John Bradon (JB) - representing the Whitchurch Society

Public and Press: None

The meeting started at: 20:00

1.0	Keith Brooks (Chairman) opened the meeting.	Action
	Absences: Councillor Higley was unable to attend.	
2.0	Approval of Minutes.	
	<b>Resolution:</b> The committee approved the minutes of the committee meeting on	
	September 10, 2021.	
3.0	Miscellaneous actions arising from the minutes.	
3.1	Fire extinguisher maintenance. Red Box Fire Controls, Didcot, is now the preferred	JB
	service supplier. Chubb will be informed that the contract with them is being	
	terminated. JB has an outstanding action to look into training offered by Red Box in	
	the use of safety equipment	
3.2	Internet coverage. Two of the three out-of-date sites (Cylex and HallsHire) have	CC
	been updated. A request for update has been made to CFO but has not so far been	
	actioned. CC will chase up.	
3.3	It has been confirmed that the Parish Council alcohol licence does not cover the	
	village hall. If one were required for a particular event it could be obtained at	
	moderate cost.	
3.4	Fibre broadband. KB has been in touch with Craig Bower, who confirmed that the	
	application is in hand.	
3.5	JB has negotiated a short and lower cost contract with XLN which includes fibre	
	broadband, guaranteed to be three times faster. The contract was kept as short as	
	possible (12 months) in case OCC's full fibre broadband infrastructure program does	
	deliver a year's free rental as they hope it will.	
4.0	Update on website upgrade and promotion/marketing.	
4.1	Website. The booking details of Tap Dancing have been corrected, and the Hire Rates	

	revised and simplified.	
4.2	Promotion of full re-opening. The Committee submitted an article about the hall re-	JMG,
	opening to the Bulletin. Details of the Open Day (Sat 6 Nov) will be posted on	JB, KB,
	Facebook and posters will be displayed around the village.	СС
4.3	New activities. CC will investigate the feasibility of setting up a program of talks by	CC
	guest speakers. There is a possibility that the History Society will reconvene in the	
	New Year.	
4.5	New bookings. (1) A Mother and Baby group has booked a 'taster day' for Mon 13	All
	December, as well as some bookings in the New Year. Sara Jackson runs the classes	
	and is part of a national franchise: 'Bloom Baby'. JB will contact her to say that, as	
	part of our safeguarding policy, she will need to share with us her safeguarding	
	policy. (2) One of the Yoga groups will now be meeting on Tuesdays, not Mondays.	
	(3) There have been two bookings by the Disability Trust. (4) There has been an	
	expression of interest in running an Antiques Fair in early December, subject to an	
	assessment of the hall's suitability as a venue. (5) One option for future	
	consideration is to encourage having a Travelling Post Office use the car park/hall	
	once a week.	
4.6	It was agreed to investigate various sources of grant funding to support the proposal	JMG,
	for a Friday Kitchen.	JB, CC
5.0	Update on online reservation system.	
5.1	The Hall Booking Online system has been configured and is ready for live operation.	
5.2	Implementation plan. JB will copy the contents of RS's book into the online system	JB, CC
	and CC will check this. The target implementation date is 1 November.	
5.3	JB will work with RS to resolve any outstanding booking issues.	JB, RS
5.4	JB is working through outstanding questions of contact details and past payments.	JB
6.0	Hall management.	
6.1	Winter-time hall operation. The government has issued fresh guidelines, and ACRE	
	have issued additional guidance. JMG has revised the Ts and Cs to state that there	
	should be a maximum of 60 people in the main hall and 10 in the small meeting	
	room. The 16-point plan puts the onus on the organiser of an event to ensure that	
	the venue is clean after the event. The guidelines will be displayed in the hall and	
	copies printed off to be issued to organisers of regular events. The guidelines are	
	essentially recommendations, not legally binding. But it would be prudent to re-issue	
	all the existing hall guidelines, e.g. on hand-washing, and to limit the number of	
	people in the kitchen to two. It is important to be clear about the responsibilities of	
	hall hirers and those of the Committee.	
6.2	CFO meetings. CC had joined zoom meetings on re-opening of halls, on Blewbury's	CC
	use of Hallmaster and on fundraising. (1) There was little of general interest in the	
	halls re-opening meeting. (2) The demonstration of Hallmaster confirmed that it was	
	more complex than necessary for Whitchurch. There were some useful ideas about	
	how to record and file 'correspondence' (mainly emails) associated with bookings. (3)	

	Grow Your Fundraising was a useful meeting and It was agreed to follow up the grant funding possibilities of Oxfordshire Community Fund, the National Lottery and Action Funder.	
6.3	Fire-risk assessment. <b>Resolution:</b> the committee should carry out an inspection according to the risk-assessment document with a view to signing off if all conditions are met.	All
6.4	Fibre connection application. In progress. The costs, once known, would need to be compared with the improved terms JB had obtained with the present broadband contract.	KB, JB
6.5	Charity Commission News (email circulated by KB). <b>Resolution</b> : KB would continue to circulate the newletter to Committee members, though there is no immediate need for action arising from it.	КВ
7.0	Building maintenance and upkeep	
7.1	Exterior painting. Painting of the brickwork above the windows is close to completion. Painting of the sills is under consideration.	JMG, RS
7.2	Emergency centre status. JB reported that an uninterruptible power supply for phone recharging would cost about £50 and could be located in the gap behind the cupboard. In case power were to be interrupted for more than 8 hours, a generator costing about £250 would be needed that could be stored under the stage. This was in fact part of the village emergency plan. The national grant for funding this type of provision has run out, and will not be renewed until 2023. It was agreed that JB would approach the Parish Council Emergency Plan Working Group to agree a way forward.	JB
7.3	Maintenance schedule. JMG has drafted a maintenance schedule, incorporating the ACRE periodic fire safety check and the annual electrical review. CC will review the draft and JB will assess the electrical aspects. JMG will include recommendations for food safety standards in preparation for registering the hall as a cooking facility in connection with the proposed Friday Kitchen, bearing in mind the need to be prepared for Health and Safety checks.	JMG, JB
7.4	Peter Woolhouse has repaired the downpipe at the north-east corner and together with CC has cleared the ground-level drain bordering the car park. CC will install some netting to prevent leaf blockage at the entrance to the drain. Roof-edge gutters will be cleared once leaves have fallen. Fallen conkers will need to be removed from the area outside the north-side door.	All
8.0	Update on finance.	
8.1	Bank account. KB is having temporary difficulties with his access. Although it was not originally planned, CC has update as well as read-only access. This was judged to be acceptable. RS's regular remuneration payments have been resumed.	
8.2	Grants. There is a small amount remaining from the National Lottery Loneliness grant. For new initiatives, see 6.3 (3) above. JMG emphasised the need to clarify the intentions of the Parish Council with regard to the regular subsidy of £1000 p.a., as it	JMG, JB

	is an essential part of his budget and cash-flow planning.	
8.3	Expenses and new items. JB is continuing to examine outstanding issues with past	JB
	payments.	
8.4	Official returns. Both the Charity Commission return and the Corporation Tax	
	declaration have been completed on time.	
8.5	Investment options. Resolution: CCLA Investment Management, which specialises in	KB,JB,
	investing on behalf of charities and non-profit making organisations, is the	JMG,
	appropriate choice as an investment institution. The final choice of investment fund	CC, KH
	remains to be agreed by the hall trustees.	
8.6	JB and JMG have a draft forecast for costs and revenue next year which they are still	JB,
	working on and hope to present at the next meeting.	JMG
9.0	AOB.	JMG
	(1) Dustbin container. JMG proposed that the Committee acquire a lockable	
	container for the external dustbins, and will circulate details of a one he judges	
	suitable. He also proposed that the big red charity drop box be relocated to the	
	upper end of the car park, giving more space in the area near the north-side door.	
	(2) JMG expressed concern about the current state of cleaning in the hall, in	
	particular the sticky patch near the doorway into the small meeting room. It is	
	especially important that this kind of thing is cleared up straightaway if the hall is to	
	offer kitchen facilities and meet Health and Safety standards	
10.0	Next meeting: Monday 29 November at 20:00 in the village hall.	
11.0	The Meeting was closed.	
	<u> </u>	1