



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

**Held in the Village Hall at 20:00 on Friday, September 10, 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. Apologies: Councillor Higley was unable to attend, because of work commitments.	Action
2.0	Approval of Minutes. <b>Resolution:</b> The committee approved the minutes of the committee meeting on July 28, 2021.	
3.0	Miscellaneous actions arising from the minutes.	
3.1	Laptop. A new laptop has been purchased for RS, for use with the new booking system.	
3.2	Boiler maintenance. Premier Heating Solutions have been engaged to carry out regular boiler maintenance and a first bill is expected soon.	JB
3.3	Proposal for protective rail outside the hall entrance. CC received a negative response from Highways and KH has expressed reservations about supporting the proposal. The matter was therefore closed.	
3.4	Fire extinguisher maintenance. JB has found an alternative service supplier – Red Box Fire Controls, Didcot – offering more competitive rates and better responsiveness. <b>Resolution:</b> it was agreed that Red Box should replace Chubb.	JB
4.0	Update on website upgrade and promotion/marketing.	
4.1	Progress with implementation of interim update. The website team have now completed work and the results are very good. JB has sourced larger photographs and provided an updated google map reference. Hire rates have been updated and Ts and Cs revised.	
4.2	Internet coverage. Three internet sites (CFO, HallsHire and Cylex) are displaying out-of-date or incorrect information about the hall. CC will arrange for updates.	CC

4.3	Promotion of full re-opening. The Committee will submit an article about the hall re-opening to the Bulletin. Cut-off date for submissions 10 October; target publication date 23/24 October. [Note: since revised to 17 October and end of month, respectively.]	JMG, JB, KB, CC
4.4	New promotional activities. JMG outlined various plans. (1) Starting from the end of October, JMG will host a Friday kitchen, on the last Friday of each month, where volunteers can demonstrate how to cook a favourite simple dish. JMG will demonstrate at the first session, which will be filmed by Nick Brazil as an instructional video. (2) There will be a celebration opening on a Saturday afternoon in November where the village is invited to come and look over the refurbished hall – the event to be publicised through the Bulletin, the website, Facebook and Next Door. (3) JMG is also planning a Spring evening meal, where participants bring individual dishes to share. (4) The committee would also like to encourage involvement of children from the school in cooking demonstrations. It was agreed that this should be raised through Sarah Hanfrey, who is a governor. [Note: Item (2) has been confirmed for Saturday 6 November 15:00 – 18:30.]	All
4.5	New bookings. (1) Christine Minton has made bookings for the last two weeks in September. (2) The Art and Crafts Exhibition will take place on 21-22 November. (3) Leslie Maynerd has expressed interest in using the hall for jazz band practice, prompting JB to point out that there are jazz bands in Tidmarsh and Theale that might also find the hall an attractive venue. (4) Nick Brazil has mentioned the idea of an animation film festival. (5) The committee would like to encourage talks to be given by, for example, Peter Worsley and Nick Brazil. (6) KH has mentioned the possibility of organising exercise classes in the autumn. [Note: KH's classes have now been confirmed, starting in November.]	All
5.0	Update on online reservation system.	
5.1	The Committee has committed to the Hall Booking Online system.	
5.2	Implementation plan. The system is now configured and available for operation. Initial tailoring and modification are complete.	JB, CC
5.3	Training and support. JB and CC are working with RS to develop confidence in the use of the system. JB and RS demonstrated its use, showing how provisional booking, issue of invoices and the process of approval works. <b>Resolution:</b> The system meets all essential requirements and should be brought into use as soon as practicable.	JB, CC, RS
6.0	Hall management.	
6.1	COVID rules relaxation. JMG confirmed that the relaxation in the rules meant that there are now no regulatory constraints on the use of the hall.	
6.2	Customer service. The Bridge Club, Yoga, Tap Dancing and the Camera Club have returned. JMG was concerned that the Bridge Club had complained about lack of table cloths at their first session since re-opening, even though the cloths were	RS, JMG, KB

	available in the Club's dedicated cupboard. This highlighted the need for a meet-and-greet approach to regular users returning to the hall and more especially to new hirers. KB offered to act as an extra 'host' if JMG and RS were unavailable.	
6.3	CFO meetings. CC had joined zoom meetings on cinema and hall re-opening. (1) The halls where putting on cinema films had been most successful were those furthest away from large urban centres. All halls agreed that cinema in itself was not likely to be profitable, unless supplemented by, for example, raffles and a bar. The village hall does not have a licence, but the Parish Council's licence may apply - CC will ask the parish clerk. If not, it might be possible to reach an agreement with The Greyhound or for people to bring their own drinks. Travelling theatre companies could provide a similar sort of entertainment where the same need to supplement takings would apply. (2) The approach of other halls to re-opening was much as might be expected, varying with size and capacity. One general concern was the likely increase in fuel bills during the winter, owing to the need for extra ventilation because of Covid and rising power costs.	CC
6.4	Fire-risk assessment. CC had carried out a review of KB's existing fire-risk assessment and concluded that it covers all points detailed in the ACRE recommendations. <b>Resolution:</b> the committee should carry out an inspection according to the document with a view to signing off if all conditions are met.	All
6.5	Fibre connection application. KB has completed and submitted the application and will monitor and report on progress. JB noted that he has an action to find a cheaper alternative to the present WiFi/Internet contract which expires in October.	KB, JB
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 requested discussion of acquiring a generator should be postponed because of recent developments.	JB
7.3	Maintenance schedule. JMG will draw up a maintenance schedule, incorporating the ACRE periodic fire safety check and the annual electrical review. JB will look into training offered by Red Box in the use of safety equipment.	JMG, JB
8.0	Update on finance.	
8.1	New bank account. This is now set up and working satisfactorily.	JB
8.2	Grants. The grant from the National Lottery, intended to foster community and help address loneliness, has been approved. The monies will be used to purchase baking equipment so that JMG can run baking classes in the hall.	JMG
8.3	Expenses and new items. JB will set up a standing order to resume RS's regular remuneration payments.	JB
8.4	Official returns. JB's work on the 2020 accounts is complete. The official return has been submitted to the Charity Commissioners. The declaration of Corporation Tax is still to do - target date end of September. [Note: The declaration was submitted by the target date.]	JB, KB, CC

8.5	Investment options. JB and CC have investigated options for investing surplus funds, and concluded that (as previously suggested by KH) the most appropriate options are provided by CCLA Investment Management, which specialises in investing on behalf of charities and non-profit making organisations. JB presented a paper on how this would work. The final choice of investment fund remains to be agreed by the hall trustees.	KB,JB, JMG, CC, KH
9.0	Update on governing document. The revised document has been registered with the Charity Commissioners. KB will keep its status under review.	KB
10.0	Update on safeguarding policy. The policy has been completed and published. KB will remain the primary contact. A separate or revised policy may be required if, for example, the hall were to be used for a children's group.	KB
11.0	Memorandum of agreement. To be resumed in due course.	
12.0	AOB. None.	
13.0	Next meeting: Thursday 21 October at 20:00 in the village hall.	
14.0	The Meeting was closed.	