

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Holwell Village Hall Management Committee
held on Tuesday 8 December 2020 at 6.30pm
via Zoom**

Present:

Libby Wilton, Chair and Secretary (LW)

Jane Goodfellow (JG)

Sally-Anne Holt (SAH)

Philip Pigott (PP)

1. Apologies for Absence

None.

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

3. Approval of minutes of AGM 16 May 2019

Approved.

4. Acting Chairman's Introduction

LW welcomed everyone and explained that the trustees had decided to postpone holding the AGM in May reflecting guidelines from both government and Dorset Community Action in response to the coronavirus outbreak. As restrictions were still in place, it had been decided not to postpone it any further and to hold the meeting by electronic means.

LW said it has been a very difficult year for everyone, some more than others, and she had found it difficult to look back and review what had happened at the hall since May 2019 – in part because it seemed so long ago, but also because it was sad to think how the progress that was being made with the increasing popularity of new regular events, drawing in greater numbers of village residents and beginning to establish the hall as a real community centre, had been if not lost, certainly put on hold.

It will be a real challenge to re-establish this but whatever 2021 has in store, LW was confident the hall's small group of trustees would continue to care for the hall, and ensure it is safe and ready to welcome residents and visitors alike as soon as restrictions are lifted.

5. Treasurer's Report

LW reported that the hall's regular users continue to make the greatest contribution to the hall's income, with Table Tennis, the Dance Fit and Circuits classes, U3A Botanical Illustration classes and Short Mat Bowls all contributing funds equal to or greater than the previous year. The WI's cheque was not received until after the accounting year end, but their use remained stable. Youth Club activities were put on hold but this was offset by an increase in private hire of the hall. Although the traditional Quiz Nights and Harvest Supper remained profitable, the two relatively newly introduced events – film and supper nights and Sunday walks – contributed significantly more. The establishment of the 100 Club in February raised almost £700 and a donation of £250 was received from the Simon Digby Trust which will go towards new chairs, specifically for the film nights once they resume.

The main item of expenditure was again insurance cover for the hall followed by electricity which remains the highest of our general running costs. Expenditure on repairs and renewals has fallen,

reflecting the considerable amount of work carried out last year, while electric repairs and maintenance rose, as it included the cost of the previous year's inspection. There was a one-off cost of £487 for the planning application in respect of the change of use of the recreation space from agricultural to recreational and erection of benches and low level play equipment. An exceptional item of £1500 is also shown, reflecting solicitor's fees in connection with the property transactions with Sherborne Castle Estate, and includes the cost of local searches.

The accounts have again been finalised by Andrew May who kindly agreed to audit them. The accounts show the hall has made a loss of £1221.71 this year, largely as a result of the solicitor's fees, although this is not an actual cash loss as it takes into account £1017.72 depreciation figure Andrew recommends the accounts show each year in respect of fixed assets and equipment. The Funds held within the hall's accounts with CAF Bank at the end of March 2020 amounted to £30,808.23, the majority of which is held in the interest bearing CAF Gold account.

6. Booking Officer's Report

JG confirmed that the regular weekly users of the hall had been Circuit/keep fit training, table tennis, Dance Fit, U3A Botanical Illustration, and briefly the Youth Club, though all had stopped from March. Monthly users had also put their events on hold.

However, the annual Macmillan Bike Ride took place in the summer and used the hall free of charge as usual.

Several private parties took place during the year and chairs, tables and cutlery with crockery were again hired out to local villagers.

7. Secretary's Report

LW reported that at the AGM in May 2019, the proposal to change the constitution of the charity from a trust to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation was unanimously approved. The application was submitted to the Charity Commission in June, and the CIO was finally registered on 15 January this year. The first trustees were Jane Goodfellow, Sally-Anne Holt, Philip Pigott and Libby Wilton.

The trustees were then able to execute all the documents necessary to purchase the freehold of the car park and to lease the recreation land from Sherborne Castle Estate, but completion has been delayed while various issues between the Land Registry and the Estate are resolved.

In the meantime, the Estate granted permission for the trustees to access the recreation space which was fenced in March, with hedgerow saplings donated by the Woodland Trust finally being planted in May, thanks to a group of volunteers.

Planning permission was obtained for its change of use from agricultural to recreational and an application was made for grant funding to erect benches and some low level play equipment, although plans have been put on hold in response to the coronavirus outbreak.

Following the majority vote in favour of the new build option to replace the existing village hall, a funding strategy was drafted and a group of residents and trustees met to plan a programme of events. An open meeting was then held at the hall in January to present our ideas to village residents and to ask for their help. As a result of the coronavirus outbreak, however, all fundraising events were put on hold from March, with the exception of the 100 Club which had been established in February, and which has been drawn every month since then. Traditional fundraising events in 2019 such as the Harvest Supper and Fish & Chip Quizzes were successful as ever, and we also hosted a MacMillan Coffee Morning in conjunction with Holwell's Women's Institute which raised over £200 for the charity. The newly established film and supper nights and Sunday walks, both organised by Rebecca, were increasingly popular – although also discontinued from March.

Sadly Rebecca resigned as a trustee in August but volunteered to continue planning and organising our fundraising events for which we are all both grateful and thankful.

8. Approval of accounts

LW reported that the accounts had been signed off by Andrew May as independent auditor. A copy of the income and expenditure and balance sheet sections would be available in the hall and on the website.

9. Appointment of trustees

LW explained that as the charity was now a CIO, trustees would no longer be required to resign each year and stand for re-election if they wished to, as the first trustees were appointed for specific periods, though they could of course resign or be dismissed during that period. The CIO does still provide for trustees to be nominated by the organisations that use the hall, and for new trustees to be drawn from the general population and it was agreed LW would ask the organisations to propose trustees if they so wished, and also ask the wider community if they would like to be a trustee.

10. Appointment of independent auditor

It was agreed that Andrew May would continue as independent auditor.

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

OPEN FORUM

The question of encouraging people to become trustees, or supporting the hall by volunteering rather than becoming a trustee, was discussed and it was suggested that a job description be provided. It was also agreed it was important to stress that professional skills such as accountancy etc were unnecessary, but that some time and commitment were important.

Looking ahead to 2021, it was agreed that the fundraising programme should be revisited. LW confirmed that the current members of the 100 Club would be asked if they would renew their membership for 2021, and that the rules and application forms had been sent out to the hall's email address list.

In response to a question from the floor, it was confirmed that a village gathering would be arranged at the hall once the current restrictions were lifted.

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

DRAFT