

LEONARD STANLEY VILLAGE HALL

MINUTES of Village Hall Management Committee meeting held on Tuesday 21st September 2021 from 7.30pm.

Apologies: Bobbie Ireland (Treasurer)

T = Trustee

Present: Chair: T.Phil Herbert, T.John Webb (Toddlers Group), T.David Pearson, T.Jan Bodiukiewicz, Penny Scott (Hall Manager), Jane Roberts (Secretary), Roy Wilkes (Twinning), Chris Connett (LSPC), Bailey Curtis (LS Art Workshop), Julie Cull (5 Valleys Dog Training), Pat Hearne (Friendship Group), Byron Fry & Sarah Wright (LS Social Club),

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday 9th July 2021: were circulated to those present previously and accepted as a correct record of the meeting.

Matters arising

PH confirmed what had appeared in the Village Newsletter: that the bell tower had to be removed because it was discovered to be dangerous. The school would be pleased to have the bell and when they had decided where it could go, PH could then arrange for it to be installed free of charge.

PH clarified the position of the Trustees to avoid any misunderstanding. Any village organisation could nominate a trustee, that still holds good as long as it is a village society. So trustees can either be nominated or are qualified to become trustees if they live in the village. He added that the VH is desperate for more trustees and will consider approaches from such qualified persons.

PH welcomed LSPCs representative Chris Connett as PH has given up that position. For the time being CC will not be a VH Trustee.

PH confirmed that Vicky Downey, a qualified Accountant has audited last year's accounts so that the new Treasurer would inherit an independently authorised set.

Treasurer's Report

Read out by JR and appended to the Minute Book. A Profit & Loss break down is also appended. In brief: Treasurer has just paid a large invoice for roof work £4960.80 bringing the current bank balance to £16,864.02. BI noted that VH is still paying the monthly Zoom DD of £14.39. It was agreed to discontinue these payments.

Manager's Report

Full Report appended to the Minute book. PS confirmed that approx. £8-9Ks worth of essential maintenance work has been done on the roof area recently – a big dent in VH funds. All ridge tiles were replaced on both roofs after storm damage. Roofer discovered the bell tower & chimney were both unsafe forcing their removal. Retaining bell tower would have cost over £6K with no help towards the cost. A stained glass window had to be rebuilt and other roof work done: flashing, guttering, downpipes, fascias, tiles etc. We are advised that the roof will need complete renewal in the next few years.

DP added that a CO detector is needed in the kitchen. JB would deal with this.

Extractor fans in the kitchen and Social Club also need replacing and will need to be dealt with by the VHs preferred electrician.

PH confirmed that the Manager is authorised to have minor works around £200 carried out without referring to committee.

JB asked for the room's thoughts on a Fire Alarm System. The VH has managed 30+ years without one but they cost thousands. There was no enthusiasm for this kind of expenditure. There is an Annual Fire Risk Inspection and a Fire Risk Policy has been put in place.

There was discussion on whether the Interior doors should be locked or left unlocked. Keys are available to hirers. In view of several occasions when people have come into the hall unauthorised it was decided to have them kept locked. The SC agreed that they preferred them to be locked.

There are two Heritage Framed Pictures that could be re-hung. The WW1 picture is scruffy & needs work. Agreed to look into this but VH does not want any pictures back up in the main hall.

Only one quote in so far for hanging the new gate (£300+) but Chris Fry has offered to help at no charge. VH would be very grateful for his help and would try and fix a date.

Whether the gate will be locked or left unlocked: If it is it would probably be a coded padlock and it will be set back so vehicles do not block the road whilst unlocking.

The whole issue of parking on & off road is one that nobody has been able to solve. LSPC looked into providing parking on the field by their pavilion but the cost was prohibitive.

The two adjacent parking areas are not sufficient when more than one function is on at a time. Tennis players also increase numbers parked, as do those who use them as off road parking, hence the gate to try to control it.

There is an informal temporary arrangement with Football club, brokered by the Parish Clerk, which has helped manage it but this may not solve it completely and it is up to VH Trustees as to whether there can be a permanent agreement. A difficulty is that the FC is so successful that it brings in more players and the two parking areas are supposed to be for the exclusive use of each organisation.

SW from LSSC asked whether VH intends putting up advisory signage as to when the gate would be locked for the night and what happens if a vehicle is left in there. Signage would be needed but the advisory should include for that possibility.

Social Club Report

SW gave the report. The social club's profit margin has been steadily in decline since around 2015. The last year that the club broke even was 2018/19 and the last (mainly) full year of trading (2019/20) resulted in a loss of £3k. The club was also, along with many other organisations, negatively affected financially by the C-19 pandemic to the tune of £4.5k.

Steps have been taken to improve efficiencies, reduce waste and cut costs where possible and this alongside a renewed membership strategy means that we are currently predicting a break even position for 21/22, this is dependant however, on the club continuing to remain viable by running solely on the use of unpaid volunteers.

Positives:

The club looks great after the refurb

The club now boasts an A and B team for both pool and Men's darts, both pool teams being in Division 1 this year.

Skittles re-started last week with a full evening of competition resulting in a marginal loss for the home team.

We now have 62 members and welcoming more each week.

PH advised that the matter of Social Club's rent negotiation would not be discussed now but later. He noted that the basis of SC's existence was to provide funds for the VH. Matters changed when the old lease was given up when SC did not wish to appoint any trustees, at which time the annual licence came into being. He explained that SC can't exist without the VH so it is in their interest to see that it is adequately funded. It will be the 4 trustees who discuss and vote on the licence arrangements and there is little time until 31st October to do so. He had only just obtained some information from old minutes regarding the current licence agreement which has been passed on to the SC. He would be back in touch as soon as possible.

Secretary's Report

A full copy is appended in the Minute Book. Briefly: JR noted that the VH relies heavily on income from SC and VH is a valuable Community Asset that should not be lost to future generations. JR felt that LSPC, which has been generous in the past, might think of being so again as they are able to raise funds with a Public Works Loan and repay it via the precept. The neighbouring KSPC borrowed money this way to fund the rebuilding of their VH. Crowd funding appeals might be another avenue to pursue. JR added that she had contacted the LSPC Clerk about this. The reply was that the PWL Board now requires a public consultation and it was feared that whilst some residents valued the VH, others would vehemently oppose paying more precept to fund such repairs.

Chairman's Report

PW noted that JR was aware of the PWLB because she had been Clerk at KSPC for many years and that she had not discussed this matter with himself or other LS P Cllrs. LSPC had in the past taken out a loan which was repaid in full. He advised that the S106 Agreement concerning the Mankley Fields development, which provides money from developers to parish councils for local uses, has been partly used already to refurbish the tennis courts and the VH toilets. LSPC have allocated the other half to complete renovation of the pavilion which they own and which is in a very poor condition. They are currently waiting on the Football club to agree a plan.

Any Other Business

Roy Wilkes reported that they hoped to continue with the Twining but the numbers are dwindling and it is less likely that people would go to France again. It needs new younger people. It is a shame because it has been one of the associations that have been around the longest – nearly 50 years. There is a German link which may have had some effect in that it had more appeal but possibly not.

JB asked if VH could look into getting a chair carrier to avoid dragging them along the floor. Agreed.

JB noted that the VH has a TV link to the new satellite dish. How did VH feel about getting a TV Licence to show major and interesting events such as Jubilee next year, rugby, Commonwealth Games & Strictly on the large screen? £150 pa was affordable and it could be a good fund-raiser. 40 people came to Strictly 2 years ago but a decision is needed now as November/December will be too late. Before VH could agree, Julie Cull said that her organisation would pay the licence – and she was thanked for her generous offer.

PS asked whether the SC would be prepared to run a bar at some of the events the VH might be hosting as it could work well for both parties. That would be looked on favourably apparently depending on availability etc.

JB commented that it was up to VH to organise events to fund-raise and recalled a visit from Barbara Pond at GRCC (Gloucestershire Rural Community Council), an expert on the subject. Her advice was that local people have to be seen to be trying to fund-raise for themselves [In order to hope to qualify for any grants]. The last 18 months have been difficult but there has not been any serious fund-raising going on for some time before that.

PS mentioned the Freezers of Love, the local Long Table initiative, which garnered considerable volunteer support locally but which could not start up at the time. PS is able to proceed with it assuming the VH still supports it.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Date of next Meeting will be on Tuesday 30th November 2021.