

ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2024]

Minutes of the meeting of Albourne Parish Council (Village Hall Management Committee) - meeting as the Trustee of the Albourne Village Hall held on Thursday, 28th November 2024 in Albourne Village Hall.

Present: Councillor Di Smith (Chair) (DS)
Councillor Shane Axtell (SA)
Councillor John Spencer (JS)
Councillor Suzanne Sawyer (SS)
Christopher Davies (CD)
Eve Gerhold/Tina Ware (EG/TW)
Dave Robson (DR)

In attendance: Iain McLean (Parish Council Clerk) (attending by Zoom), Gail Murray (Treasurer), Sandra Axtell (Bookings Secretary).

The meeting commenced at 7.00 p.m.

- 1. Chairs Welcome.** The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone present. No apologies for absence had been received. Cllr SA declared a minor, non-financial interest in item 6, as family members used the Hall as part of a regular hiring. It was re-iterated by the Clerk that decisions must be taken solely in the interests of the Trust, and not in regard to anything else. It was also noted that EG/TW as a principal user of the Hall (Under 5s Group) had an interest in item 6, and although allowed to speak on the matter, they would not participate in any decision, or vote.
- 2. Approval of minutes of the previous meeting.** The minutes of the last meeting held on 24th September 2024 were formally approved by those present, and duly signed off as a true record by DS.
- 3. Matters arising.** There were none.
- 4. Domestic issues.** DS raised an issue of access to the hiring's calendar for the Hall, and needs access to the password. DS will liaise further with the Bookings

Secretary in this regard. With regard to all correspondence, it was important that everyone uses the new dedicated Village Hall email addresses. SA will liaise with Dan Smith to ensure that the guidance as to how to set this up is available to anyone who still needs it. There needs to be an emergency telephone number for use in case of difficulties regarding Hall bookings and access.

5. **Financial Statement and matters.** Gail Murray presented her report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting and forms part of these minutes. The CCLA Deposit balance is currently £21,726.03 (as at 5 October 2024). The Lloyds Bank current account balance is currently £7,081.76 (as at 25 November 24), which includes the receipts and payments set out in the report. It was noted that the demolition of the garage will be funded from within these figures. GM raised a question about how the pub supplies are re-stocked, and DS said that this is handled by John Parks.
6. **Hall Hire charges.** The points discussed included (i) the lack of historic and full information regarding the running costs of the Hall. DS had circulated some details prior to the meeting, but it seems that not everyone received them, (ii) reference to the previous increases in the rates, and the concern that these had not been as kept up to date as regularly as they should have been, (iii) whether any increases should be regularly reviewed, and how often, (iv) the proposal to increase the Under 5s/Pre-school rate by 10%, (v) DS's concerns that the subsidy level, given the costs of running the Hall, was too high, (vi) the fact that the Under 5s have been a long standing user of the Hall over a period of some 46 years, and the general view expressed at the meeting that this should continue.

Therefore, after a full and frank discussion it was **RESOLVED** to agree the following :- (a) the normal/standard hiring rate to be increased to £15 per hour, (b) the discounted rate for residents, charities and community groups to be increased by 50p an hour to £12 per hour, (c) the further discounted hourly rate for the Under 5s/Pre-school to be a flat rate per hour, and to be increased by 5%, (d) the Under 5s/Pre-school storage rate to be £50 per half term, (e) the new rates to come into effect from 1st January 2025, (f) that the Hall's finances be reviewed no later than 6 months from the date of this meeting, so that the level of the hourly rate can be more accurately assessed in terms of its reasonableness. To that end, JS asked for the previous 5 year end of year accounts to be circulated to help this review. SA said he would get them from the Charity Commission's website. JS said that the Committee as a whole was responsible for the accounts, and so it needs to base its decisions on the costs of the running of the hall. Note: In regard to (c) and (d) above, EG did not vote, in view of her substantial interest in the matter, and DS voted against the proposal at (c) having maintained her view that the hourly rate rise should be 10%, with a graduated discount over 3 years.

7. **Projects.** (i) **Garage.** It was reported that MSDC has now drafted the License document for permitting the demolition of the garage. Details of the signatory have been provided (DS as Chair), but the officer needs to know the schedule and methodology of the work (particularly as to the asbestos removal), and also the

proposed start and end dates for the work. DS will liaise with the contractor in order to obtain this information. (ii) **Rolling list of actions.** DS went through the two lists, which had been circulated to members prior to the meeting-

To be agreed list – It was **AGREED** to provide a fire proof lockable cupboard to store important items that need to be secured and kept. It was also **AGREED** to provide a new hub for the Hall entry lock to facilitate allocation of door numbers to hirers. DS will email the Clerk regarding the need to update the Village Hall pages of the Parish Council’s website.

To be completed – the steam cleaning of the curtains has been done. The electrical items do not need to be done until next year. However, there are some outside light bulbs that need replacing. The wider advertising of the Hall is a work in progress. The heating thermostat may need moving to a more suitable location. The main door needs un-stiffening. This may be due to damp penetration in wet weather. CD will look into this.

8. **Social activities. Albourne Arms (Pop-up Pub).** The pub continues to be quite variable in terms of attendance but is holding its own in terms of the finances. **Future Events.** It is still hoped to organise a quiz night, probably now sometime in early March of next year.

9. **Any other business.** EG raised an issue concerning the wash basin tap in the disabled toilet, and wondered if this could be converted into a push style tap. This can be looked into further. Also the state of the flooring in the toilet was discussed, as regards ease of cleaning, but it was agreed to leave the matter for the time being.

10. **Date of next meeting.** This was agreed for Tuesday, 25th February 2024 at 7.00 p.m. in the Village Hall, and DS will book the Hall.

The meeting ended at 8.57 p.m.

SIGNED as a true record.....

Chairman

DATED.....2024