

## SHAVINGTON-CUM-GRESTY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE HELD ON  
23 OCTOBER MAY 2019 IN THE VILLAGE HALL, SHAVINGTON

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Councillor V Adams	Chairman
	Councillor K Gibbs	
	Councillor R Hancock	
	Councillor G McIntyre	
	Mrs J Clarke	Non-Parish Council Member

**12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Parish Councillors were invited to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest which they had in any item of business on the agenda, the nature of that interest, and in respect of disclosable interests, to leave the meeting prior to discussion of that item.

No declarations were made.

**13 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (15 MAY 2019)**

**13.1 RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2019 be approved as a correct record.

**13.2** Matters arising (not detailed elsewhere on the agenda).

- A hot water boiler was required for the kitchen, but it was agreed that this be considered as part of the kitchen refurbishment.
- There were still no mirrors in the ladies' toilets.
- Cutlery required for the kitchen; 100 pieces of knives, forks and spoons. Members agreed to inform the Clerk of the type of cutlery to be purchased.
- The vacuum cleaner was broken and it was agreed that this be disposed of.

**Quotation for window blinds.**

The Clerk reported that following a meeting with a representative from Abbey Blinds on Friday, 18 October 2019 she had now received a quotation which was under the threshold of £1,000; the Parish Council would not be required to seek other quotations.

This was not a budget item and would need to be considered for priority for funding when the budget for 2020-2021 was considered.

**14 TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE COMMITTEE**

The Parish Council had recently reviewed the Terms of Reference for the Committee. A copy was submitted. In summary, the following were the key responsibilities which were more strategic than the previous Terms of Reference.

- Marketing the Village Hall as an asset to ensure optimum occupancy (and income).
- Review the occupancy of the hall to inform the pricing structure.
- Budget monitoring on a quarterly basis. (Note: Although this was agreed, the Committee was only scheduled to meet three times a year.)
- Consider operational matters with a view to making recommendations, as appropriate, to the Parish Council.
- Consider the level of fees to feed into the annual budget process, making recommendations to the Finance Committee or full Council.

The Terms of Reference were noted.

## 15 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### 15.1 Delegation Arrangements

It was reported that at its meeting held on 10 July 2019, the Parish Council considered the accounts for 2018-2019 and noted the Internal Auditor's report in which he commented that the delegation of financial matters to Councillor Kevin Gibbs was not lawful (as agreed at the Council meeting in March 2019). Therefore, with immediate effect, any approval of expenditure must be either through the Clerk or this Committee.

The Council agreed that it should be the Clerk as this would avoid delays in decision-making.

### 15.2 Marketing/Occupancy/Fees: Village Hall

**15.2.1** The Committee was invited to consider what measures it would put in place to increase the income from the Village Hall in the next financial year.

These measures could be a mix of increasing the occupancy, adjustments to pricing or introduction of a marketing strategy. The outcome of this discussion should ideally be a recommended pricing update for 2020-2021, a target occupancy rate (averaged out over the year) and a suggested marketing budget. This would allow Members to predict the estimated income for the next financial year.

Using the current pricing, if the Village Hall was used at 100% occupancy (365 days, 3 sessions per day, £20 per session – upstairs and downstairs combined) it would bring in a revenue of £21,900 per year. It was suggested that Members potentially select an occupancy target; for example, 50%, as a break-even point and adjust the pricing accordingly based on the costs of running the Village Hall. The costs of operating the Village Hall should factor in any additional marketing costs required. Members should also consider the current trajectory of occupancy, bearing in mind that when the hall re-opened late in 2018, it started at zero.

**15.2.2 Marketing:** At present, the only marketing for the Village Hall was via the newsletter which was distributed four times a year. The Committee was asked to consider the use of targeted Facebook adverts, newspaper adverts, or banners and/or posters around the parish or Village Hall area.

If Members were of the view that developing a marketing strategy was outside their area of expertise, the Committee could discuss this with Brave Little Tank. As the Parish Council already had a contract with the company, some of the potential work involved in promoting the Village Hall could be covered in the current contract.

The contract arrangement with Brave Little Tank included four meetings a year (every three months); two were in person and two were online meetings. In July 2019, the Communications Committee met with the Managing Director of Brave Little Tank at which time the Village Hall was discussed as a significant priority for the Parish Council.

The next meeting with Brave Little Tank was due in the near future, and it would be possible for this meeting to be arranged with Members of the Village Hall Committee present to discuss promotion of the hall.

**15.2.3 Slot availability:** Members discussed the available slots for hire and, in particular, the loss of income by allowing some organisations free use of the hall; for example, the Parish Council and Committee meetings, some village organisations and the PCSOs' use of the upstairs meeting room. There was, currently, no breakdown to show the free use of the hall. It was suggested that the most appropriate way of dealing with these bookings would be to list the dates as unavailable for hire.

Members agreed that it was important for the PCSOs to have free access to the hall in the interests of service to the community. With regard to Parish Council meetings, it had previously been suggested that the Parish Council account should pay for hire for its meetings by making payment from the main account into the Village Hall account. The Clerk advised that this would not be acceptable to the auditor as there was no income. All the transactions would simply be a movement of a payment from one account to another but did not amount to genuine income.

Councillor Gibbs reported on the breakdown of bookings and referred to arrangements at other village halls in the area. He also explained the booking process to Members. Clients would submit a booking form, and payment must be made before the booking was accepted. Bookings were on a 'first come, first served' basis.

Although there was an on-line booking system, this was not currently advertised and clients were not encouraged to use the system.

#### 15.2.4 Change in Opening Hours/Increase in Hire Rates

The current weekend opening hours were noted and the following changes were recommended:

Monday - Thursday	No change to time slots	£20 per session
Friday	Evening slot be changed to 6.00 pm – 11.00 pm	£25 per session
Saturday	Evening slot to be changed to 7.00 pm – midnight	£25 per session
Sunday	No change to time slots	£20 per session
Upstairs Meeting Room		£10 per session

**RESOLVED:** (a) That the opening hours and charges as indicated above be recommended to the Finance Committee at its meeting on 30 October 2019; and <sup>1</sup>

(b) That Brave Little Tank be asked to design a corporate page for the Village Hall for the website.

#### 15.3 Receipts and Payments – 1 April – 30 August 2019

A Receipts and Payments statement for the Village Hall from 1 April–30 August 2019 was submitted for information. The bank reconciliation was noted.

Balance brought forward	1,955.76
Receipts	3,825.00
<b>LESS</b> Payments	<b>-2,604.17</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>3,176.59</u></b>
Balance at bank	3,217.71
<b>LESS</b> Unpresented cheques	<b>-41.12</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>3,176.59</u></b>

#### 15.4 Recording of Village Hall Receipts

The Committee was asked to review the recording of Village Hall receipts.

During the audit of the accounts for 2018-2019, the Internal Auditor had been unable to test the income systems for the Village Hall as there was no audit trail from (a) diaries to booking forms; (b) to invoices; and (c) to banking. A copy of the Internal Auditor's report was enclosed for ease of reference.

He stated that the Council needed *to urgently re-establish effective internal controls over hall hire and ensure that all hall hire documentation is retained*

He also commented that the *Council should investigate the shortfall in hall hire banking of £315.00.*

<sup>1</sup> These were not considered by the Finance Committee but were recommended to the Parish Council on 8 January 2020.

A copy of the receipts statement for 2018-2019 was now submitted and this showed that a total of £3,740.00 had been receipted, but only £3,425.00 had been deposited. This represented the shortfall of £315.00 referenced by the auditor. The Clerk had re-checked the deposits on the bank statements and the amount was accurate.

Councillor Gibbs undertook to provide the receipts books to the Clerk to enable a further check to be carried out.

### **15.5 Keys for Access to Hall Users**

The Committee reviewed the arrangements for opening and closing the hall for clients.

At present, one of the Members opened and closed the hall; however, a lockable key cabinet was purchased in 2018 and fixed to the outside wall of the Village Hall. Members were asked to consider if this should be used as the principal means of access for clients.

Members were also asked to consider whether there was a need for clients to be shown around the hall and informed of the various safety procedures, eg. fire exits, first aid kit, accident reporting book, or if a client check-list should be prepared to be issued along with the hire terms.

**RESOLVED:** That the current opening and closing arrangements for bookings at the Village Hall remain unchanged.

## **16 BOOKING FORM FOR VILLAGE HALL**

To receive for information, a copy of the booking form for the Village Hall. This was revised recently by Councillor Kevin Gibbs.

**RESOLVED:** That the list of outside caterers and outside bar providers, on the reverse of the form, be deleted.

## **17 SPECIFICATION FOR REFURBISHMENT OF THE KITCHEN**

There had been no further progress on this. A floor plan had been submitted to the Parish Council meeting on 4 September 2019 at which time Members agreed that the plan was not adequate and that it would be appropriate for the Village Hall Committee to set up a Task Group to discuss the details and draw up its own specification to enable quotations to be sought.

A copy of those documents was now submitted.

As suggested at the Parish Council meeting held on 4 September 2019, the Committee was asked to set up a Task Group to draw up a specification for consideration, either by full Parish Council, or at the next meeting of this Committee.

Members were reminded that Task Groups could meet informally, either in person or communicate by e-mail; there was no requirement for an agenda, nor was there a requirement for public notice to be given.

The following were agreed as the principal requirements:

- Safety flooring
- Ceiling – replace polystyrene tiles.
- Re-plaster where appropriate.
- Paint all walls.
- Add hot-water facility.
- Move the cooker or fridge
- Heat resistant work surfaces to replace all.

**RESOLVED:** That this be recommended to the Parish Council.