

Minutes of the meeting of the Watton-at-Stone Community Hall Board of Trustees held in the Community Hall on Friday 16th July 2018

Present: Mr. John Meischke (Chairman) Mr. Ian Knight
Mr. David Stock Dr. Waltham
Victoria Nightingale (until 2010) Mrs. Jane Allsop (Clerk)

1. Apologies for absence: None.

2. Report on items resolved since Trustees meeting held on 12th January 2018

• Library items in the loft

One shelving unit was purchased for the storage of addition excess library books in the loft.

• Ladder

A 4-tear ladder, with handle supports was purchased to gain access to the loft hatch lock. It will also be used to allow access to the battery packs for the portable floodlights, which are stored on top of the cupboard in the referees changing room to charge and as a library ladder.

• Cleaners

The one-year contract with Little Gems, who clean the Community Hall on Mondays, came to an end on 15th February 2018. This has been renewed for another year at the same price per clean.

• CCTV installation

The Parish Council agreed that New Homes Bonus funds should be used to reimburse the Community Hall for all costs relating to CCTV installation.

• Kitchen lock

The kitchen lock repaired by Michael Lewis (AP Access) at no charge to the Community Hall.

• Meeting room chairs

Mr. Meischke fitted special glide pads to the bottom of the meeting room chairs, because they were scratching the floor.

• Meeting room ceiling lights

Mr. Meischke replaced one of the ceiling lights in the meeting room and noticed how much brighter it was than the remaining lights. It was agreed to purchase lamps to replace the remaining ceiling lights. This work has now been completed

• Shower heads

Mr. Meischke cleaned the shower heads in February and it was agreed to diary a reminder to clean the shower heads every six months.

• Gas contract

A new two-year gas contract with Eon to commence on 8th April 2018.

The daily standing charges remains at 27p, but the unit price, before a discount of 4%, has gone up from 2.84p kwh to 3.44 per kwh.

• Electricity contract

A new electricity contract has been negotiated via John Molnar of Business Utility Renewals Ltd.

The new contract starts on 26th April and is for a 2-year fixed contract with Pozitive Energy.

The daily standing charges are 24p and the unit rate 12.46p per kwh.

• Toilet leak

There was a bad leak in Ladies toilet in March, which James Turner Limited repaired.

• Kettle

The kitchen kettle failed and a Burco kettle has been purchased to replace it. The new kettle has a 4-litres capacity and a 'keep water hot' button.

• Floodlighting light meter fault

The floodlighting machine for the tennis courts has a problem in that it resets to factory settings each time there is a power cut. The factory settings are set at £1 for 2.5 hours, which explains why the floodlighting

income for this year is so low. Mr. Meischke has reset the coin machine but will need to monitor the settings on a regular basis because the problem may also occur during power surges.

- **Floodlighting light timer fault**

In April, D. P. Electrics charged £150 to fit an external clock to the floodlighting timer which ensures that the floodlights are switched off at 22.30, regardless of how much time is left on the individual floodlighting meter boxes. This installation was approved by Parish Councillors via e-mail as the fault needed to be rectified as a matter of urgency.

- **Outside toilet door lock**

Mr. Meischke thought that there was a problem with the outside toilet timer lock. However, it has turned out that the Tennis Club have been unlocking the toilets and failed to reset the timer lock, leaving the door unlocked.

- **Archery equipment**

Mr. Meischke secured a £500 grant from Stevenage Community Trust which will cover 50% of the cost of Archery equipment for the hall. The Parish Council has agreed to pay for the remaining costs out of New Homes Bonus funds and the equipment is now on order

- **Update of document**

Mr. Meischke has updated the following documents and these have been uploaded to the website. These will be reviewed annually.

- Hire Agreement
- Health & Safety
- Fire exit plans

- **Fire inspection**

Herts Fire Protection have carried out the annual inspection of the fire equipment. One new fire extinguisher was required.

- **Update Action Plan**

Dr. Waltham updated the Action Plan for the Community Hall.

3. Introduction to Victoria Nightingale

The Trustees and Clerk introduced themselves to Victoria Nightingale.

4. Wi-Fi - do we want it, and can we afford it?

As reported at the June Parish Council meeting, Mr. Meischke obtained prices for an internet connection for the Community Hall as follows.

- BT installation fee of £115 £36 monthly charge for superfast broadband
- Plus Net no installation fee £30 monthly charge for superfast broadband

Mr. Meischke said that we need to find out if there is a minimum contract-time and this is something that Victoria Nightingale could do for the Trustees.

The Trustees and Victoria Nightingale discussed possible usages for a broadband connection in the hall.

Tumble Tots has expressed a wish for Wi-Fi at the hall. Victoria Nightingale said that they may want access to their online bookings portal, so they know who is attending their sessions. She suggested that we could also look at what other village halls have in the area.

Businesses may also be interested in hiring the Community Hall if it had a broadband connection, e.g., it is sometimes beneficial for a Company to work outside the normal workplace.

The Trustees expressed some concern that any Wi-Fi password could quickly be shared around the village and people would be attracted to the hall to access this free service and cause it to slow down.

As far as Wi-Fi passwords are concerned there are many different options available to reduce the amount of people that have access. Victoria Nightingale said she had used the lockbox option at her workplace. Hirers have the code to the lockbox which has the Wi-Fi password inside, this password is then changed every couple of weeks.

Dr. Waltham suggested that the Trustees need to do some scoping to identify the need for broadband, however she did not feel that the Community Hall could realise its potential without an internet access.

Victoria Nightingale agreed to investigate the broadband contract options as well as carryout a scoping review.

Action: V. Nightingale

The lack of parking at the Community Hall was discussed. The possible use of the George and Dragon carpark by business users was suggested. A trade-off for the pub could be to provide lunchtime refreshment in exchange for our hirer's using their car park. The possible use of the Church and the Methodist Hall car parks was also suggested.

5. Forever Active - coaching costs, enlisting of more friends, new add drive

Mr. Meischke said that when the EHDC Forever Active scheme comes to an end, the Trustees need to take into account coaching costs.

The coaching costs for the current Forever Active schemes are.

- Bowls – none.
- Table tennis – no coaching cost, however the coach does charge for travel (delete) mileage costs to and from his home. This amounts to £13.50 per session, which is equivalent to the revenue of 4.5 people attending the table tennis sessions.
- Archery – Mr. Meischke said that he charges £25 per session for his archery (delete) services, which include insurance cover, a range-certificate and equipment maintenance. Attendance charges may need to be raised because currently they are unreasonably low. This activity could also be opened to the under 50s, which would increase the revenue.
- Tai Chi and Yoga – number for these is very low and it looks unlikely that this activity will continue past the end of the Forever Active scheme. Therefore this will be reviewed in October.

It was agreed, Mr. Meischke said, that attendance numbers are currently low because of the time of year and the very hot weather.

It was agreed that an advertising-drive should be put on Facebook, the Parish News and on the website as well as posted on the notice boards. Another advertising-drive should be carried out at the end of October when Forever Active comes to an end.

Victoria Nightingale to help push this forward with the Trustees. **Action: Trustees/V. Nightingale**

6. Library - commitment to continue, loft space

Mrs. Dinnin is rearranging a meeting of the library-volunteers to agree a way forward following the death of former District Councillor, Michael Freeman.

Victoria Nightingale asked if the Trustees had considered having a Toy Library. This is because parents are now keen to hire toys as children grow out of toys very quickly and are expensive to replace. Also many parents are keen not to purchase new plastic items for environmental reasons. After discussion, the Trustees agreed that they were concerned about the maintenance and safety aspects of running a Toy Library and would not pursue this item further.

Dr. Waltham said that Beane Valley Children's centre used to hire out toys.

7. Hirer's - spaces available, advertise

Victoria Nightingale suggested that the Community Hall Trustees could advertise on Facebook to groups in the area rather than trying to pull people onto their Facebook page. They could make a statement to attract private franchises such as Tumble Tots (who already hire the Community Hall).

Also, as a newcomer to Watton-at-Stone, she found that it was very difficult to find out what was going on in the village. Again, Facebook could be used to advertise what is going on in the hall. The notifications could be stylised to give us an instantaneously- recognisable identity on the News pages, with the use of colour changes to identify the different activities/events.

Victoria Nightingale said that she would be happy to prepare a rough discussion-plan.

She asked if the Community Hall had a mission statement and Mr. Meischke confirmed that we had. The Clerk to forward this to Victoria Nightingale together with a list of all regular hirers as well as the Sports and Social Club Groups and the website link to Community Hall hiring costs. **Action: J. Allsop**

8. Action plan – update

Dr. Waltham to update the action plan.

Action: E. Waltham

9. Kitchen - update on plans and estimates

The Trustees reviewed the three kitchen-estimates received and agreed that the quotation from Clive Mitchell be dismissed because he does not charge VAT. Therefore the Trustees would be unable to claim back the VAT element on the units and appliances he would need to purchase to do the job.

The two remaining quotations are from Kitchen Ergonomic and Silkwood Kitchens and Interiors Limited

It was agreed that before a recommendation could be given to the Parish Council, two of the Trustees need to inspect the quality of kitchen units and appliances to be used, as well as inspecting the quality of their kitchen installation work.

10. Decoration requirements - walk round to access decoration requirements

The Trustees and Victoria Nightingale walked around both the inside and outside of the building.

The outside doors to the boiler room and fire-exit door to the Main Hall were both identified for cleaning and re staining.

Rosemary Brown to be asked to clean both doors before asking Mark Blacktin to rub them down and stain them.

Action: J. Meischke

11. Annual Charity return - year ended 31/03/18

The Annual Charitable Trust return for the year ended 31st March 2018 needs submitting to the Charitable Commission. The Trustees instructed the Clerk to submit the return.

Action: J. Allsop

12. Any other business

- **Annual Playground Inspection**

Mr. Meischke said that East Herts Council emailed (late this afternoon) the Play Inspection Company's annual inspection report for the play area and trim trail on the sportsfield.

All items identified within the report were either 'Low Risk' or 'Very Low Risk'.

The report has been emailed to all the Trustees and Mr. Smith. Mr. Meischke said he would study the report to see if any action is required.

Action: J. Meischke

The meeting closed at 2030.