

St Margaret's Hall Management Committee Minutes of Meeting

Thursday. 28 September 2023. 1900.

1. Present

Chris Bailward (Deputy Chair, Treasurer), Gareth Cherry, Paul Johnson, Gillian Miles, Jonathan Packer, John Macdonald (Chair).

Paul Johnson was welcomed onto the committee and gave a brief personal resumé.

2. Apologies Oliver Franklin, Emilie Gordon, Pippa Knight, Liela Moss, Honoria Thompson.

3. Minutes of previous meeting on 13 May 2023.

Previously circulated, signed.

4. Matters Arising.

Utilisation of Hall. Unfortunately, Candlelight Care decided not to go ahead with their proposal for regular use of the hall. The main reason being that there was no internet access. Penny Nagle (Feltham farm) has set up the Horsington Market and Kitchen. The first event will be on the 7th of October. See Villager magazine. Depending on the success of the morning, Penny is anticipating a monthly function on the first Saturday of the month.

Old crockery. All the unmatched crockery was disposed of via the Horsington School fête smashing plates stand. The Inventory was updated and the new crockery unpacked and placed in the cupboards.

Noticeboard. CB's farm sign post can be utilised. Action. CB, GC.

Website. Website speed has been improved by CB's neighbour.

Ash tree. CB confirmed the ash tree at the end of the car park was on his land and he had inspected it and it seemed to be in healthy condition.

5. Chair report.

The chair hoped that everybody had had a good summer and welcomed them back. The surrounds of the Hall have been cleared and provide a more welcoming environment. Thanks to all the volunteers for all the effort put in. Over the summer we have several requests for the hire of tables and chairs and a change has been made to the Rates of Hire to reflect hiring out of tables and chairs (blue metal chairs only). He thanked the committee for continuing to work away at all the functions necessary for the smooth running of the Hall.

6. Treasurers report.

I am happy to report that for the last six months, the Village Hall has pretty much broken even, with revenue of £1199 and expenditure of £1262, a net loss of £63. During this period there has been no unforeseen expenditure, electricity at about £28 per month has been less than might have been expected, whilst cleaning, repairs and insurance were as budgeted.

Water charges have increased significantly from £74 to £114 per annum paid in two instalments. There is nothing we can do about this without installing a meter which will, almost certainly, lead to higher charges. Insurance costs will increase in line with inflation from about £575 to £606.54. This is paid for monthly by direct debit at no extra cost.

As agreed to at a previous meeting the double doors to the changing rooms will be replaced with UPVC windows, as the doors are unnecessary. We have accepted a quotation from Valecraft for £1104 including VAT. The work should be completed in early December.

The deposit account with Santander has earned useful £59 in interest since 31st of March.

The Parish council have agreed to pay for the use of the hall for their meetings which have now been reduced to ten a year. As the meetings normally take place for less than two hours, they will pay the local rate of £12 per meeting.

We have agreed to spend money on tidying the changing rooms and bringing electrical systems up to modern standards.

As at today's date the current account stands at £742.72 and the deposit account at £17,322.24.

7. Bookings report.

The hall has been ticking over nicely even through the summer holidays it's been used.

The Autumn term has started with both art classes and the yoga class continuing. Penny Nagle, who lives at Feltham's Farm and makes Cheeses is trialling a Community Market and Kitchen, one month to start with to see how it goes and if it's successful will increase the number of Saturdays utilised.

Parties are getting booked for December so it's all looking very rosy.

8. Sports report.

TBN.

9. Parish Council report.

GM reported a continuing dispute over the siting of one of the dog waste boxes. A villager had complained about the siting of the box near his hedge and so the box was moved adjacent to the entrance to St John's Church. This position has now been declared as unsuitable so the box will now be moved to a new position on the bridge by the pond. The box must be sited in a position where council workers can easily empty it.

10. Maintenance.

Fire extinguishers. The three foam extinguishers were time expired (five years) and new extinguishers were purchased and commissioned at the time of the annual inspection in June. JM still has two foam extinguishers. If anybody knows someone who might be interested in taking them off our hands for a donation, please let him know. Both have maintained their pressure and should last some time.

11. AOB.

Hall surrounds. The issue came to a head in the summer. Since Steve Collins retired some years ago, the maintenance of the surrounds has become problematic and upkeep has slowly been reduced. So much so that this summer the grass was a mown only once. Fairly regular contact with the Chairman of the Parish Council produced no improvement, cost being the overriding consideration. The historical arrangement with the Parish Council was that they held their meetings in the hall gratis and the Hall had the surrounds maintained as a quid pro quo within the Parish Council's maintenance schedule. The decision was made to unravel the arrangement. The Parish Council will now pay for the use of the hall and we will maintain the surrounds. A team went to work to clear the area around the hall and the cuttings were burned. Thanks go to all those who helped with the clearing. Subsequently, JM has been mowing every 10 days or so. We have to make a decision as to whether the continuation of maintenance is paid for by the Hall or carried out by volunteers. Charleton Horethorne village hall's surrounds are maintained by volunteers on a rostered basis. A discussion followed, and the general consensus was that the surrounds could be maintained by volunteers from the hall. Action. JM.

Internet access. CB informed the committee that Wessex Fibre will eventually be laying a fibre optic cable from the School to Horsington Manor, passing by the Hall. Wessex are prepared to make a connection to the Hall and would charge the Hall £1 per month for the use of the connection. The committee approved the installation of internet and the purchase of a router in the future. They discussed various options about payment and utilisation. JM undertook to canvas other village halls as to how to they dealt with the internet. Action. JM.

12. Date of next committee meeting.

The date of the next meeting will be 7th December 2023 at 1900.

The meeting closed at 1950.