

Redlake Valley Village Hall

Ordinary Committee Meeting

Held on Tuesday, 17 January 2012 at 7pm

Present

James Middleton (Chairman)
Liz Campbell (Vice-Chairman)
Christine Page (Secretary)
Ian Campbell
Di Cosgrove
Simon Jameson
Becky Whitton
Jim Rogers (Treasurer)
Beryl Palmer (Bookings Secretary)

Apologies

Jeremy Jameson
Richard Barthram

Members of the Public Present

Karen Limbrick
Christine Rogers

Apologies

1. The minutes of the last meeting were read, approved & signed by the Chairman.

2. **Matters Arising**

A list of matters arising not covered on the agenda, along with all the papers for the meeting, had been circulated to the committee seven days prior.

Remote temperature sensor for hall – Ian had looked into this but it seemed slightly more complicated than first thought. A computer would be needed to transmit the signal and software bought; further investigation was necessary. Both Christine P & Jim offered old laptops if needed.

The heat recovery fans for the gents & kitchen would be around £250 each. It was agreed to see how much money was left after the boiler was installed and then see what other priorities there were before purchasing the fans.

James was working on fixing the window closures.

Di would get a quote for the window cleaning and email the committee. It was discussed that ideally this should be done, inside and out, four times per year but the cost needed to be known before deciding.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

The chairman reminded the committee of their responsibility to declare any personal or prejudicial interest in any topic discussed, either at the start of the meeting or when the item was tabled, as Ian had done at last meeting regarding the electrical work needed for the heating system. They should also consider if it would be appropriate for them to vote on a matter in which they might be seen to have an interest.

This is a point that is rarely of concern but needed to be raised at this time due to the strong financial position and potential for the hall to be more philanthropic in future, which may benefit organisations that some of the committee are members of.

4. **Financial Update**

Jim presented the financials, which showed a current balance of £14,052, of which £780 was ring-fenced and £10,196 committed in relation to the wood boiler and heating system, leaving £3,076 available.

It was noted that the solar pv panels had produced an income of £347 to date; bank interest was £86; performing rights payments have doubled to £101 and the water bill was £110 due to 81 cubic meters of water lost from an incident last year when the water system was not drained correctly and effectively a tap was left running.

5. **Finance Policy & Reserves Plan**

The treasurer expressed concern at the amount of paperwork and policies that were being proposed to the committee, highlighting agenda items 5, 6, 7 and 8 as examples of unnecessary documentation. He expressed his view that once things are documented there is an onus to adhere to that documentation and he would prefer an approach of 'trust' and 'common sense' rather than obligation. He thought there was a greater risk of falling foul of the law if we documented things but then didn't follow our own advice, than if we didn't document things and something went wrong.

Di, Karen and Christine R all expressed the view that paperwork should be kept to a minimum so as not to overburden the committee.

The secretary pointed out that there was little new in the attached documents and that, perhaps, because everything had been updated and put together in one meeting it gave the impression of a lot of new documentation when much of it already existed in various different forms:

- The finance policy consolidated all the disparate processes already followed. The only additional point was the suggestion that a budget be prepared at the start of each financial year so that the committee was in a position to prioritise spending.
- The reserves policy updated that which had already been agreed (to build free reserves to £5,000) to include monies set aside to cover maintenance and repair or replacement of items recently installed in the hall.
- The asset register has been tabled at several meetings now and this was the final list for approval.
- The Fire & Risk Assessment is a legal requirement which used to be done annually by Kim Smith, but had not been done formally since 2007. This was an oversight which this document rectified.
- The Hire Agreement has been in place for many years, this is an updated version ensuring that hirers knew their responsibilities.

The chairman stated that these days you could not ignore the paperwork: in his experience in farming, the gun club, church, etc all required far more documentation than ever before but it was a necessary evil to have in place and

in order.

Becky pointed out that committee members did not need to be worried about keeping copies of all the documentation as the secretary acted as a central repository.

Further, the secretary pointed out that as a member of the Shropshire Community Buildings Advisory Group, her close connections with the Community Council of Shropshire and the various charity networking events she attended, she was well informed on the legal requirements of small charities and good practice in running one and on the many things that can go wrong.

She said that regarding the law, not writing things down or not having a policy does not absolve the trustees of their responsibilities. The documentation is there to protect the trustees as much as to provide a resource for reference, direction and good practice. All of it was based on common sense and practical application and the purpose of tabling it at the meeting was to give the committee opportunity to comment and amend, where necessary.

The committee then moved on to discuss the Finance and Reserves Policy including discussing the necessity for the production of a budget. Becky then proposed that the Finance and Reserves Policy be adopted as it stood, seconded by Liz and carried unanimously.

6. **Asset Register** – Ian proposed its contents were accepted, seconded by Simon, carried unanimously.
7. **Fire & Risk Assessment** – this had been undertaken by Ian and the secretary in December and circulated to the committee for comment and for them to gather any feedback from the main hall user groups. These comments had subsequently been incorporated into the assessment and necessary actions suggested, many of which had already been undertaken. The committee was asked to approve the assessment and suggested actions. Proposed by Becky, seconded by Simon and carried unanimously. The secretary would follow up on the outstanding actions.
8. **Hire Agreement** – the secretary and bookings secretary had revised the hire agreement to take into account findings from the fire & risk assessment, notably to ensure that the hirers of the hall were fully aware of their responsibilities. The committee was asked to approve the new wording on the hire agreement. Proposed by Simon, seconded by Liz, carried unanimously.
9. **Hall Improvements / Maintenance** – the secretary had consolidated all the requests for improvements & maintenance to the hall into one list for ease of review by the committee. In addition was the list from the 'kitchen committee'. In order of priority:
 - **Emergency exit bar on fire door**, including insulating the door at the same time – James would follow this up.
 - **Roller shutter on kitchen hatch** – the secretary had obtained a quote, £648 for a sturdy, lockable shutter. Christine R offered to get a second quote for comparison. It was agreed the shutter should be white. Ian proposed that in principle the committee commit to purchase the shutter without the need for a further meeting once the best value for money version was found, seconded by Simon, carried unanimously.

- **Dishwasher** – Christine R had found a second-hand one but there was confusion over delivery and sadly the opportunity was lost. Christine R would look for another.
- **Stage** – it was agreed that we could stack the existing stage rather than pay for a fold up version to be made.
- **Hooks** – to be put on wall near gun club target to store the step-ladder and large broom, James to follow this up.
- **Fridge** – Becky offered to donate an under-counter fridge once the necessary reconfiguration work had been done to fit it. This was contingent upon getting the dishwasher first.
- **Kitchen items** – there was a list of lower value items that the ladies requested for the kitchen, including labelling the cupboards and drawers. It was agreed that Beryl should purchase these. Di would look into the teapots.
- **Kitchen paint** – needs scraping & repainting – James took this action on behalf of the gun club.
- **Flickering lights** – in hall and entrance hall, Ian to fix.
- **Kitchen clock** not working – Simon to remove and return if he can fix it but not if he can't.
- **Hole in wall** from removal of old water boiler in kitchen – air gun club to fix.

There were a number of 'lower priority' items that would stay on the list until funds allowed further discussion.

Having a cleaner for 2 hours, four times per year was also discussed: going rate is £10/hr. Also getting a window cleaner: Di would look into this and get quotes.

10. **Marketing the hall** – the secretary suggested that we develop the village hall website to help market the hall by putting some photos on it of events and giving more information. Also, although officially the hall is called Redlake Valley VH, locally it is known as Chapel Lawn VH. It was agreed that we should use Chapel Lawn VH for marketing purposes. We would also actively use the local free press, parish magazine, Clun Chronicle, etc to advertise. A press release to go out once the heating is finished.
11. **2012 Anniversary Events** – it is the 50th anniversary of the hall being built and opened and 60th anniversary of it becoming established as a charity and the land being transferred from Minnie Owen. The secretary had provisionally booked the w/end of 7-8 July for the celebration and the committee would all put their thinking caps on for what to do. Karen knew a ceilidh band and would look into availability and cost. Having a New Year's Eve Party for the community in the hall was also agreed.
12. **Parish Council business** – the committee agreed that Beryl should be the official hall representative on the PC.
13. **Hall Hire charges** – The chairman noted that although these had been increased slightly last autumn, in fact to the end user it represented a reduction because they no longer needed to put money in the heating meters. He picked up on the point that the secretary had put forward last year in making her case for the wood pellet boiler that the income from the RHI combined with that of the Solar PV panels should position the hall to become more philanthropic in future. There could be various ways in which this might take shape and Jim had suggested that one of these might be reducing, or even eliminating, the hire

charges to local groups, including the WI, Church, ODAS, Redlake Artists, etc. Jim had produced a budget showing his estimation of income and expenditure for an average year in the future, which supported the view that funds could well be available.

However, although there was general agreement to give back to the community in one way or another it was also acknowledged that we should not count our chickens and that there was still a long wish list of improvements for the hall. It was agreed that the topic should be revisited in the future once the financial expectations had come to fruition. Note: Di, Simon and James declared an interest in this discussion because they were all active members of local groups that may benefit.

- 14. Procedure outside of meetings** – Jim wanted to discuss ways to involve more people, not just the committee, in how the hall is run. He suggested using email to ‘discuss’ topics. Liz pointed out that we all get so many emails that this would not be welcomed and really anyone who wants to be involved can come to the meetings and the AGM, or better, join the committee. The chairman stated that committee meetings are the correct place for official discussions but, of course, views of the community are welcomed and there was nothing to stop people unofficially discussing ideas outside of meetings. As a matter of procedure he asked that items for the agenda should be raised with him or the secretary.

AOB

- The secretary had a £25 M&S gift voucher that belonged to the hall and asked if anyone shopped at M&S would swap it and give cash to the treasurer. Di did.
- The secretary had been contacted by Michael Macturk who had all the old accounts and wished to know what to do with them. Legally the past six years must be kept but it was agreed they all should be kept and we could put them in a box in the loft.
- Beryl asked what we should do with all the old crockery that was cleared out of the kitchen – it was agreed this should be sold at the AGM.
- Di suggested we put photos of events on the noticeboards to liven up the hall – this was heartily agreed.

No next meeting date was set.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.