**DRAFT Minutes of Norton Village Hall Management Committee Meeting**

**Thursday 2nd May, 2019, 7.30pm (at Jane’s house)**

**Apologies**

* All present

**Approval of Minutes**

* April (previous meeting) minutes agreed and signed off.

**Finance AW**

Current Account : £ 233.34

Deposit Account : £ 15,520.37

* 2nd Equestrian Table-top raised net profit of just £143.83 with some food left over for next time, and drop in profits laid firmly at the door of the clocks having gone forward and not so much footfall because of that
* Rolling 3 year financial report was considered (AW having released figures a few days before the meeting) and we recognised some important trends across that time frame;
1. income from hirers jumped substantially last year, £8.1K, 8.8K, 13.5K, and that has been put down to improving facilities, better promos & good work from RA
2. fund raising income is declining steadily, £6.1K, 5.7K, 4.9K, and this is down to event fatigue to some extent, and the shift away from big-ticket profitable events, eg harvest supper, to lots of smaller less productive but intensive events, eg car-boots etc.
3. Costs of our own fund-raising typically take about half of what we raise and that is deemed fairly standard.
4. Electricity bills have risen steadily with more users, £1.1K, 1.5K, 1.9K, but it is hoped that new Air Source heaters replacing our old wall-mounted electrical fires will make a positive difference here
* Insurance policy has been renewed and runs from April 1st 2019, but PJ & AW have amended and added to our levels of cover under ‘personal accident’ & ‘legal expenses’. Following discussions at this meeting we agreed to raise our Indemnity under ‘finance & admin liability’ to £1m from £500K and PJ is to contact CAS, Ipswich (Agents for Zurich) to get that done, **ACTION PJ**

**Legals All**

* Upload last month’s minutes onto website as usual, **ACTION PJ**
* Lengthy discussion revisiting our legal position vis-à-vis NVHMC’s status as leaseholders of the VH (from PC who are assumed owners, although still no proof of that ownership), under our own separate charity (Charity Com #1063062) for which we act as Custodian Trustees. The importance of that lease and of our own out-of-date ‘Declaration of Trust’ cannot be overstated. It is imperative that the latter be updated and modernised, and also that we understand the realities of our legal position going forward. To this end several members of the VHMC are seeking free legal advice from different quarters; Jane & Angela will continue to talk to their contacts, Phil will continue to pursue Jon Eaton at Suffolk ACRE and Ali will contact the Charities Commission, **ACTION JW, AW, AJ & PJ**
* Advantages of registering the VH with Land Registry still to be pursued further, notwithstanding lack of formal proof of ownership and assuming that to rest with Norton PC, **ACTION PJ**

**Composition of NVHMC going forward**

PJ signalled his intention to resign the Chair and to leave the Committee at the next AGM in early November, as outlined and minuted at the last AGM. His rationale is uncomplicated – spending approx 3 working days each week on admin and fund raising which is much more than anticipated, and having extensive travel plans which take him away from Norton for lengthy periods. The same will go for Ali for obvious reasons. Hamish flagged his own desire to step down due to onerous work commitments, and Richard wants to withdraw having spent so many years running the bookings facility so effectively. Even Angela & Gary conceded that their own business workload combined with VH & Twinning is really testing their immense stamina and unswerving commitment.

Losing 4 active members from 8, all at one time, will dent the Committee severely although Richard & Phil feel that it will be necessary to help transfer the booking job together with the IT aspects of our current function (new website, on-screen booking service, social media interaction on Fb & Twitter etc) into new hands over several months. The problem is obvious and was readily appreciated at this meeting – we need to recruit a handful of new people or to seriously consider handing the running of the NVHMC back to the PC. This latter potential outcome needs to be discussed with the new PC membership, and it is possible that they could help us recruit new members for the NVHMC so as to keep the two units separate.

It was agreed that a series of contacts would be initiated in order that our difficulties be broached, not just with the new PC, but also with the residents of Norton who might support us.

1. New PC to meet on 8th May to vote in new Chair
2. PJ will attend (with others presumably) PC AGM on Mon 13th to present brief review of our last year’s progress, **ACTION PJ**
3. Around this time and as soon as new PC Chair is known, PJ to approach him/her in an effort to call an informal strategy meeting between the two groups to address our anticipated position in November and to seek their help in overcoming our difficulties, **ACTION PJ**
4. All to approach potential new recruits in the village or among hirers and users, **ACTION ALL**
5. Open invitations to potential recruits to be posted on the VH Facebook pages, Twitter account & NVH website, **ACTION PJ**
6. PJ to draft a ‘sales’ pitch letter & review of VH activities for recruitment purposes for possible inclusion in The Messenger, pre-15th June for July issue, **ACTION PJ**

**Bookings RA**

* RA reported a generally positive picture for bookings, and a few recent bookings have come through the website auto-booking system directly - hurrah!
* RA reminded PJ to check that new year’s pricing has been updated on the website, **ACTION PJ**
* RA has instigated managed changes to bookings through the period of Doug Meade’s work, latter half of April, and he will continue to adapt our position as required during Doug’s extended works

**Building, GW**

* Doug’s stage refurb/storage work has been extended because of supply problems with the runners. He has recently quoted 7-10 days before they get here. He has kindly committed about £500 *gratis* for decorating work to finish off the job as a mark of his own disappointment at the work dragging on! Still hoping to get finished before the French arrive
* Adam Dowd lined up to fit electrical supplies to ‘cistern misers’ in men’s loo, to replace battery operation, **ACTION GW**
* Stage curtains (black) apparently ridiculously expensive to clean and fire-proof, but Angela looking at options through Glasswells. May end up doing a DIY clean, but Angela to report back, **ACTION AW**
* Hole in wall reported by Susie (Gary aware) and serious degradation in pointing to south end of building reported by Gary – part of major extension project hopefully!
* Still lots of jobs on the worklist still to be done, but Angela keen to get through aspects of preparation for Twinning eg shelf in foyer, **ACTION GW & PJ**
* Planters x2 being made by Gary, almost ready, and then to be planted up by Jane & WI hopefully before French arrive, **ACTION GW & JW**
* Weed-killer required along front edges of building, **Action GW**

**Marketing**

* Everyone should be chipping away on Facebook when events (eg Pig Racing) are coming up or we have important news, but PJ & AJ will look to improve our ‘sharing’ and ‘repeat event’ functionality on Facebook, **ACTION All, PJ & AJ**
* PJ has opened a Twitter Account for NVH under @HallSuffolk. Very useful for marketing and news, but we need to build up a long list of ‘followers’ before it will be effective. Password coming out to Hamish by email so he can take a look, **ACTION PJ & HG**
* PJ will post more about events on our own VH website & via NDN local news board, **ACTION PJ**
* Marketing research questionnaires – following Jane’s review she will create 3 different but similar versions of the questionnaire for , i)hirers, ii) users, and iii) residents. We agreed that a bigger issue will be how we distribute and collect these questionnaires. Jane will approach the garage in the village to see if we can position a collection box there, and maybe Gary can take a look at getting a postal collection box at the VH so that people can drop things in when using the carpark? Jane was keen to get the ‘residents’ version included in a Messenger drop in the next few months and Ali should be able to help with that via Diana at Messenger, **ACTION JW, AJ & GW**

**Fundraising issues & events**

* Air Source Air-Con project - PJ now in contact with about 20 different potential donors and has already made x4 formal submissions (Havebury, Alfred Williams, Bernard Sunley & Jane Storey who has just been de-selected in the council elections!), and has several more lined up including Big Lottery, Geoffrey Burton, Martineau (Suffolk Community Funding). Note that some are closed to new submissions, some require bigger projects and bigger sums, whereas others won’t consider us until we have raised 70% of our stated fund requirement. NVH is now a member of CAS (Community Action Suffolk) via Suffolk ACRE which gives us access to the ‘Funding Portal’ which in turn gives us filtered, on-screen access to many potential sources of funds. There will be a clearer review at the next meeting, **ACTION PJ**
* Gary has provided 2 more electrical quotes to go with one via Kings for the preparatory electrical installation for the Air Source units. All 3 priced similarly!
* Pig Race confirmed 22nd June. We agreed the usual food format, raffle & bar. We have to sell tickets and we must push to promote this event. PJ has agreed to sponsor one of the races, but we need more sponsors and perhaps some new ones (compared to last time) to get more people involved with the VH. AW will push this among her contacts of course, and PJ, AJ & GW will push this on Facebook, NDN & Twitter, **ACTION** **ALL**
* PJ to get name of Pig Race + runners & riders to Angela, + £25, **ACTION PJ**
* Pig Racing posters handed out for distribution on posts and at VH, **ACTION ES**
* Other event ideas were put forward; Summer barbecue (ES), Beetle Drive (AW), Bingo (PJ) but Emma reported that Woolpit are doing regular bingo sessions, and in general our last ‘bingo caller’ suffered heavy criticism! Emma will research bands etc for Summer Barbecue idea,but no specific dates were fixed, **ACTION ES**

**Parish Council**

* New members are; Robert Lenco, Brian Aket, David Etchells-Butler, Theresa Long, Lesley Parris, Stephen Sadler. Any additions will be advised
* PC meeting May 8th to elect Chair.
* PC AGM Mon 13th May, 7pm at Baptist Hall.

**A.O.B**

* Nil return

**Date of next meeting**

**Wednesday 5th June, 7.30pm**

**At Herdwick House**