

BIDDENHAM VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting held at Barn House, Duck End Lane on Tuesday 11th January 2005

Present:

Richard Harris (Chairing the meeting in the absence of Ron Hope)	
Liz Watson (Treasurer)	Richard O'Quinn (Secretary)
David Watson (Technical Officer)	Barry Lowe (Assistant Secretary)
Terry Allen	Bridget Cristofoli
Richard Hall	Ken Johnston
Fiona Kraus	Mary Stothard

1). Apologies for Absence

Trisha Glanville, Ron Hope

Signing of Deed of Understanding

The deed was circulated and signed by all present, except for one new member, Mary Stothard, who will sign once fully understanding of the Constitution and the role of a Trustee.

ROQ/MS

2). Minutes of Last Meeting (2nd November 2004)

These were approved by the committee and were signed by the Chair of that meeting (Richard Harris).

3). Matters Arising (other than Agenda Items)

- 3.1). Yarl's Wood – ROQ circulated a letter passed to BVHMC by Bob Hutchinson (Chair of the Parish Council) received from the Risk Management Unit of Bedfordshire County Council regarding a feasibility study looking into "using a number of Village Halls as Emergency Reception Centres (ERC) for Yarl's Wood detainees in the event of a major incident at Yarl's Wood Detention Centre".

ROQ reported on two telephone conversations that he had with Tom Bennett (the person responsible for the letter at the County Council) to establish more information and one telephone conversation with Sue Norman (of the BRCC) to seek advice.

Sue Norman advised that decision (to give permission for the Hall to be used as an ERC) rests with BVHMC, however should the decision be in favour of the possible use, it may be that this would need to be taken to the Village for a vote of agreement. This may be necessary as the use as an ERC would be in breach of the constitution in removing the Hall from the use and benefit of the Villagers. Consideration also needs to be given to any disruption to regular users bookings. Sue also advised that the County Council could not demand the use of the Hall as the facility is not a Public Building

Tom Bennett advised that the feasibility study was still being carried out, in spite of the operators of Yarl's Wood finding a facility on the same site which could be used. He further advised that security was a key issue and we should be aware

that the previous incident (the fire) was an attempted escape by detainees. Mr Bennett also agreed that the Council could not requisition the use of BVH. ROQ advised Mr Bennett that the matter would be discussed at the January BVHMC meeting and a response would be forthcoming.

It was decided that BVHMC could not give permission for the Hall to be used as an ERC. It was decided that we would be in breach of our duties as Trustees and we would be at risk of significantly inconveniencing Villagers. Furthermore, the security risk to Villagers was substantial given the central location of the Hall and its very close proximity to houses and the Village School. In addition it may be that the use as an ERC would not be covered by our Insurance. ROQ to send a letter to the County Council.

ROQ

4). Treasurer's Report

- 4.1). Balances – Natwest Bank Account: £108
CAF (Charities Aid Foundation) Account: £12,560
- 4.2). Financial summary – a summary report (from Microsoft Money) was handed around for inspection.
- 4.3). Payment of Cleaner – LW approached the BRCC for advice and spoke to the Inland Revenue. The IR is sending a “starter pack” for deducting Income Tax from employees.

LW understands that our Cleaner is employed elsewhere and is therefore already paying Income Tax and National Insurance. Therefore it is likely that we will only be required to deduct 22% Income Tax. The Cleaner is currently being paid £220 per month and the last increase was in 2002.

LW to review the “starter pack” when received and discuss the matter with the Cleaner.

LW

- 4.4). Cash accounting – this has now been implemented.
- 4.5). Bank Signatory – ROQ is in the process of completing the forms (with the assistance of LW) and will get Ron Hope's signature before passing to the two Banks without further delay.

ROQ

5). Policy and Administration

- 5.1). On-Line Booking system (www.biddenhamvillagehall.org.uk) – improvements to the site agreed at the last meeting have now been completed but came in at a cost of £340 instead of the estimate of c£250. It was agreed that the actual (higher) cost represented good value for money.

LW reported (in TG's absence) that the monthly booking page is brilliant and that the email facility is working well. DW confirmed that the document uploading facility works well and is easy to use.

RHall agreed to take responsibility for uploading documents as appropriate – commencing with the recent minutes.

RHall

MS agreed to type up the constitution to be uploaded.

MS

- 5.2). Bookings cover during TG Holiday – TG will be away from 18th March to 18th April. MS kindly volunteered to take on temporary responsibility with BC kindly offering to support MS at times of excess workload.

MS/BC

Answer machine can be accessed remotely, LW/DW will arrange for TG's house to be checked for mail.

LW/DW

- 5.3). Old BVH Website – DW confirmed that the old site has now closed down and that if you now search on Google then the link goes through to the new site.

- 5.4). Biddenham Bulletin – ROQ read out David Osborne's suggestion for the February Bulletin, to produce an article on the aspects of the BVH as a charity that has customers (residents of the Village) and suppliers (the Committee).

Whilst the Committee agrees that this "message" needs to be established in the minds of the Villagers, it was felt that a single article may be too much and not the best way to achieve this. Maybe this message is better "dropped into" other articles as appropriate – along the lines of "don't forget to let the Committee know your views on this matter, after all the Village Hall belongs to us all and the Committee needs to know the needs and desires of residents so these can be built into future plans"

The Committee agreed that we should not feel that every issue of the Bulletin should have an article. It was agreed that about 6 to 7 out of 11 issues should carry an article, reporting on major developments and publicising successful uses of the Hall, with pictures where possible.

Topics over the next year or so should include: Licensing Law changes; Hall improvements; re-cycling progress reports; recruiting volunteers for the "Summer Clean"; and publicity of the AGM.

It was also agreed that given the limited space in the Bulletin, wherever possible, the articles should be shorter (maybe 200 to 300 words) than the more recent ones published.

ROQ to brief David Osborne, who has kindly agreed to continue writing the articles.

ROQ

- 5.5). Licensing Law changes – BL gave an update on the new Law reporting that some aspects of the changeover are still somewhat unclear.

There will be a transitional period for us from 8th March to 8th April and our Public Entertainment Licence (our current PEL runs out on 31st March) will be replaced with a Premises Licence (a no fee application will be required).

The above will apply if we choose not to apply for an On-Licence (or Alcohol Licence). This will mean that the Hall can only be used on 12 occasions per year when alcohol can be charged for and on those occasions "Temporary Event Notices" will need to be applied for. Given the circumstances above we will need to control the application of TENS, establishing which bookings require one.

BL will be attending a Seminar organised by the BRCC and Park Woodfine on 27th January.

BL

5.6). Insurance – The renewal notice has been received from Allianz Cornhill and will be checked over by RHar. ROQ passed the existing files to RHar.

RHar

5.7). Health & Safety – the annual inspection of the Accident Book took place at the meeting. DW reported that there had been no incidents since May.

DW reported on one very worrying incident when the Toddlers Group failed to take appropriate action when suspecting a gas leak. It was reported to DW that a smell of gas had been suspected but that they opened all the windows and everything then seemed OK so the group continued to occupy the Hall. The correct course of action (as detailed on instructions) would have been to evacuate the Hall without delay. DW subsequently called out Gas Inspectors and two leaks were in fact found (one at/by the cooker, the other at a heater pilot light) and resolved. MS to stress to all members of the Toddler Group the seriousness of suspected gas leaks and the correct course of action.

MS

Consideration to be given to the possible installation of CO detectors.

DW

LW raised the idea of BVH acquiring a Defibrillator. The Heart Foundation does have a scheme where they provide up to 50% of the cost of one (total cost likely to be c£1,000) under certain circumstances. LW to investigate further including the possibility of one being shared with the Three Tuns.

LW

6). Improvements, building & maintenance

6.1). Flowerbed wall - DW advised that repair to the wall is planned for the "Summer Clean".

DW

6.2). Cooker extractor – carry over to next meeting.

DW

6.3). New chairs & tables – LW advised that 10 new chairs have been purchased (to replace broken ones) at a cost of £100. Although a number of tables are damaged it was felt that replacements were not necessary.

6.4). Other works – DW reported that various electrical works had been completed including: emergency lights on the stairs; outside lights (rechargeable) by the fire exits; outside switches for the porch lights and car park flood lights; and improvements to the kitchen wiring.

Also the lobby gas heater was repaired at a cost of £310 plus vat. As parts for future repairs may be hard to find, the replacement of this heater may need to be considered in the not too distant future.

6.5). Big cupboard – MS asked if anything further could be done to improve the smell in the cupboard. Resolution to be scheduled for the "Summer Clean".

DW/LW

7). Re-cycling

7.1). Performance update – DW reported that we are continuing to satisfactorily fill 6 bins. A report received from David Osborne that Barn was over-full just after the New Year was purely as a result of delayed collection due to the Holidays.

7.2). Publicity – to be carried over to next meeting.

FK/MS

8). Social

8.1). Village lunch 23rd January – LW advised that David Osborne has already sold 70 tickets. ROQ to organise wine (1st glass free subsequent glasses/bottles to be paid for). FK to organise glasses. RHar BC JOQ to help LW and Sian Rosser with food prep. Other help needed for Hall layout etc.

ALL

8.2). Coffee Shop – recent openings of the Coffee Shop have attracted improved levels of interest. No action needed from BVHMC.

9). Any Other Business

9.1. Meeting schedule – the following dates were agreed:

1 st March	Venue to be decided
3 rd May	Venue to be decided
5 th July	Venue to be decided
6 th September	Venue to be decided
1 st November	Biddenham Village Hall (after AGM)

9.2). New booking – a new booking has been taken from a group offering country dancing.

The policy regarding bookings from commercial users was discussed. It was agreed that the current policy should be maintained i.e. that bookings from commercial hirers needed to be for the benefit of Villagers. Bookings purely to earn income did not fall under that policy.

TG

Next Meeting – 1st March 2005 Venue to be decided

Signed (Chair) Date