

EASTERTON VILLAGE HALL
King's Road, Easterton. SN10 4PS
Registered Charity Number: 305510
Village Hall Committee Meeting: Tuesday 14th MAY 2024, 5:30pm, Garden Room, Easterton VH

MINUTES

Present: Kieran Pierce (Chair), Raine Green (Vice Chair), Chris Saunders (Treasurer), Colin Ball (Vice Treasurer), David Green (Bookings Secretary), Jacquie Ball (Secretary), Geraldine Hamilton, Rebecca Harman, Dave Houghton, Heather Walker, Helen Hardman, Judy Boyt, Nick Beard, Nick Fuller		
	Item	Action
1	Welcome and opening remarks: Chair welcomed Trustees and Public members present and thanked them for their attendance.	Chair (KP)
2	Apologies: Anthony Snook	
3	Minutes of last meeting: Approved; Proposed by KP, seconded by CS Matters Arising – <u>a. Banking Issues:</u> The Village Hall Committee [VHC] officially appointed Colin Ball as a Village Hall Trustee in the Vice-Treasurer role, and for him and Kieran Pierce (Chairperson) to be added as signatories to the Village Hall's Nat West bank account; In addition, it was confirmed that Moira Armstrong should be immediately removed from the list of bank signatories, as is no longer a Trustee. All present at this meeting were in favour. Proposed by Chris Saunders (Treasurer & VH Trustee); Seconded by David Green (Bookings Secretary and VH Trustee). CS highlighted whilst moving forward with the bank, our current charity status (previously discussed and ongoing plans to likely change this) could still be an obstacle depending on how the bank determine validation of our status in line with their expectations. Ongoing. <u>b. Repairs to Drive (prev. 'Parking Contract):</u> The <i>Welfare Unit</i> from the team working on Strawberry Fields was removed from the car park area last week and now can be billed for, as previously agreed. Nothing further to report on the Hall's drive-way repairs as yet; DH updated that he was advised that it was likely to be about 4 weeks before the final road surface for Strawberry Fields is completed. Ongoing. <u>c. Committee Posts and Responsibilities:</u> All Office holders present indicated their willingness to continue in post. Annual declaration form signed by those present. HH organised this year's Fire safety check. JB as Secretary asked to flag a diary reminder in the Secretary's calendar to prompt reminder of such as this for subsequent year. Update since meeting: Secretary calendar reminder set up for: Emergency Light and Extinguisher service – May 2025, and Fire Alarm Service – November 2024. HH raised discussion re: when fire alarms set off or are faulty. Faulty to be reported to nominated Fire Officers for them to make a note of this and report where required. The hall also has a 'What 3 words' identification for Emergency Services. Action required: this information to be clearly communicated by the fire panel and as part of booking info. <u>d. Online Bookings:</u> KP updated that with the increase in our on-line presence, Google search engine <i>look-ins</i> are increasing, but we do not as yet have the facility to correlate those to actual bookings that occur. Additionally, the impact on the Hall's bookings, now using an online system we have to pay for, is still yet to be reviewed in terms of ensuring it doesn't continue to cost more than the return of improving timely access/availability to users and generated income.	a. Treasurer (CS) b. Treasurer (CS) c. Chair (KP) d. Chair (KP)

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Discussion highlighted that the current promotion of the hall, does not provide examples of the specific range of use opportunity and events that the hall space/outdoor area does, and can host.

As part of this, Judy B reminded of opportunity for promotion in the *Echoes* Newsletter (with advance notice to enable timely promotion/advertising). KP suggested the potential for future of enabling automatic notification to Judy for advertising of events and activities on in the hall. Nick B also reminded of the Parish Council website availability for promotions, noting that the Website was still in an update process presently. Nick F suggested including a notice board on the outside wall.

KP reminded of the ongoing waiting for online banking set up that will enable a couple of outstanding issues to be addressed, e.g. the system is not able to handle deposit transactions as yet.

It was acknowledged that some of the earlier set up invoices are yet to be reviewed to reduce the confusion on how the invoice is set out, e.g. the Sewing Bees (raised by HH) has referral to VAT which is not a relevant section; overall cost to them is not affected/altered. Nick F shared that as a customer (from *the Hub's* perspective), he was satisfied with his experience of the new online booking and invoicing system. CB updated that the current system was helpful for the setting-up perspective.

KP raised the future potential of the system for a QR code to be created and used to track and support ticket availability/sales when there are a specific number of tickets available for an event.

Ongoing.

e. Private parking on hall premises:

It was feedback that the vehicles (previously in question from the neighbouring household) have now no longer been seen regularly parking on the hall car park.

The same household has recently had a skip on the car park, agreed with the VH, for the time it takes to remove the debris from a wall that requires repair. It was noted that the skip had been full for a time and a query was raised to when this was planned to be removed. CS agreed to follow this query up with the household, and ensuring there was a plan to have it removed at the earliest convenience.

Update since meeting: CS emailed VHC to say skip was planned to be removed 20.5.24.

Discussion re: furthering the plans for new outside signage to draw attention to the public of the area being private parking for use of hall and ground users during normal daylight and booked use hours. With the potential of signposting the potential of the car park being closed outside those time. Consideration of moving the gates from the drive end entrance nearer to the start of the car park and putting in a drop post was mooted.

Discussion concluded with agreement to explore types of signage, where placed, wording and costings. KP, Judy B, Jacquie B and Nick F agreed to form a sub-group with KP to move forward with specific plan/actions on these.

Ongoing.

f. Outside Areas (parked from Nov 23):

Nothing to raise on this meeting occasion.

g. Martyns Law update (parked from Nov 23): [Martyn's Law Factsheet – Home Office in the media \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)

KP updated that discussion re: ML remit (specifically including small community facilities such as ours), continues to progress through government, as it is recognised that the Law's intentions was not meant to impact such small facilities in the way it would. Ongoing.

f. Chair (KP)

g. Chair (KP)

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4.	Financial Matters a. <u>Treasurer's Report:</u> As per the earlier timed AGM that all at this meeting were present for: CS confirmed that accounts presented were as those presented at March's general VH committee meeting, but now checked and signed off by L Austin, Ret'd Accountant. It was agreed for L Austin to be asked to examine the accounts again for 2024. Proposed by CS, Seconded by KP. Those Accounts proposed by KP; seconded by CB. Treasurer comments on accounts: - 2023 surplus of £1670, includes £750 Fete grant (yet to be spent), plus the one-off £960 car-parking income. - In real terms, the hall could therefore show a loss of £40 for the year, so 2024 commitment of over £300, for the new website and booking system, has to be actively encouraged to generate a return on that investment. - Correction - the forecast 5yr electrical inspection due this year was estimated at £600. This may or may not be correct as the cost in 2019 was £426 Additionally, Continued discussion included the need agreed, to raise money in other ways, additional to funds required towards modernisation needs being raised through specific fund raising activities and available grants. Ongoing specific discussion required. Running costs, such as the <i>Lemon Booking</i> system, still under review. Currently running slightly ahead of our normal annual income. As per previously discussed, the plan is to timely increase hiring rates as part of moving towards offsetting that.	Treasurer (CS)
5.	Hall Hiring Secretary's Report As per the update communication at the earlier timed AGM, DG reported that the regular bookings are ongoing and new hire is picking up. We are not as yet able to compare if bookings are up from previous years, as challenges, such as the Covid period, distorted figures. Positive feedback from hall users was shared. It included: the state of the hall, facilities and the on-line booking opportunity and experience. HH and Judy B, further added their appreciation of being able to timely see for themselves the hall availability when considering their booking needs. It was noted that some bookings have come in out of normal hours, enabling searches and bookings time to fit in with individual preference. A face-to-face support for those potential/actual users when people wish to see/access the space prior to their booking/event; which people have been appreciative of. Work is still moving forward to streamline the process through invoicing and the online banking. Ongoing.	HH Sec (DG)
6	Hall Improvements a. <u>North Side Paving and Drain:</u> Update was that the fence has been moved, which Parish Council paid for. So that job now complete. Quotes for addressing the drainage needs had significant differences, with concern from some on the high cost of the job; discussion ensued on whether we could get those costs brought down by revisiting what actually needs to be done, gaining independent quotes, and by who.	a.Chair (KP/ Treasurer (CS)

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	KP indicated the Parish Council advised the potential for applying for a grant towards materials, and he mooted the idea of finding volunteer labour, and/or independent contractor potentially to do the rest. It was agreed the need to gain more than one independent quote as a comparison, as KP highlighted to 'ensure due diligence on public money spend. RH agreed to approach BS for reconsideration of this (previously provided a like for like quote). Other suggestion to approach Martyn. Ongoing. b. <u>Sewage System:</u> CS reminded still looking at costs of approx. £30K+ No further forward at this point with quotes materialising. Ongoing. c. <u>Outside Lighting:</u> CP feedback on details of a Quote (from Declan): £1,488 inc VAT for supply, fit. Richard Harris suggested different bulk lights (cheaper) – CP chased for Quote from him. CP will update committee, via email, between meetings so we can move forward with this discussion/planning and action on this. Additionally, Judy B asked for specific step edge strips on front steps to highlight those for safety on darker nights. KP updated that was agreed to spend grant monies on this too. Ongoing.	b. Treasurer (CS) c. Treasurer (CS)
7	Bookings phone/email & security IT: Nothing to raise on this meeting occasion.	Chair (KP)
8	A.O.B: a. <u>Emergency Rest Centre:</u> KP updated from his meeting at the last Parish Council meeting – that PC now aware that this is something that would come through their channel remit. Together they agreed an action for an agreement to be put together between our two organisations, outlining and giving clarity to agreed specific responsibilities/mechanics in the event the village hall is required as an ERC. KP indicated his willingness to take this forward, unless anyone else on the committee wished to; no-one else came forward. b. <u>Hall Storage:</u> CS updated that work towards moving baby changing unit still in progress. Once front disabled toilet decommissioned and ready for use as a storage facility, Nick F agreed (as Hub rep) for Hub to support moving of equipment (e.g. bookcases) into that area on a Hub day. The need to then plan to move 'archived' meetings paperwork into storage areas was also brought up by Judy B (PC paperwork) and KP (VHC paperwork). c. <u>Batten in Garden Room:</u> RG updated that rails are painted and ready to go up. KP and Nick F agreed to put these up Wed 29th May whilst Hub is open. d. <u>Reviewing Village Hall's legal status (Trust V Charity status):</u> On the back of that the 'Martyn's Law' concerns that raise concerns of liability, KP highlighted continued concerns such as this raises for the who is liable in any future situations that arise, and expressed keenness to still move forward in exploring the change of legal status, which would set liability 'as a company', and not on individual Trustees as currently indicates in our status. Although agreed in principle for the need to change legal status, it was agreed that their was need to continue exploring the ongoing potential financial impact of that change, such as on Council Tax rates/payments. It was agreed that should we go ahead, the change process will incur legal costs – again which need to be explored and who we go with. Nick B (Trustee for Market Lavington Museum) shared that the Museum moved their status similarly, with the help of the Charity Commission, suggesting we speak	a. Chair (KP) b. Chair (KP) /Treasurer (CS) c. Chair (KP) d. Chair (KP)

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	to them. KP highlighted that the building is in Trust, with aspects that still need unpicking via Conveyancing system. KP and Nick B agreed to catch up on this to share information. It was agreed (by a show of hands) of all present that once deeds and land registry clarified/sorted, for KP and CP to lead on continuing to move forward with change of status plans. KP suggested potential of a budget of around £2K; RH suggested approaching specific Solicitors with potential of setting an agreed fee so costs are known upfront. Ongoing. e. <u>Electricity Cable Issues</u> (Prev. BT cable issues) CS updated that job was completed last week. Item closed. f. <u>Village Fete Liaison</u> (prev.VHC rep to attend fete mtgs) GH reported that still attending meetings and updating. Committee reminded of the upcoming Fete Quiz (end of May) to raise funds for Hall improvements. Ongoing. g. <u>Coronation Event record:</u> HH updated that the contacting persons identifiable on photographs have been contacted and, where required, replacement photos used of villagers who have subsequently agreed to use in collage picture. Hoping to have it finalised soon. Size of print, print options and potential contacts were discussed. It was agreed that names of those on the collage would be placed on the back of the collage and HH will leave a list of those who attended the event with the ML Museum for future record. HH agreed to continue liaising and actioning the final print and framing outside of this meeting. Item closed.	e. Treasurer (CS) f. GH/HH g. HH
8	DONM Tues 16 JULY 2024, 5:30pm, The Garden Room, Easterton Village Hall,	