

Minutes of the
Great Easton Village Hall Committee Meeting
Wednesday 26 July 2023

1 Welcome and apologies

Present: Tim Smith (Chair), Alice Murdock (minutes), Sally Armstrong, Lorna Bryant, Louisa Feltham.

Tim welcomed new member Teresa Chapman to the Committee

Apologies: Kay Mitchell, Vikki Halliday, Margaret Stamp

Meeting commenced at 10.10am

2 Matters Arising

Tree Overhanging Neighbours: It is understood that our neighbour may be planning works to other trees/shrubs in her garden which may address this problem **(TS c/f)**

Gazebo: The donated gazebo was found to be in good order and proved useful at Midsummer Sunday

Water Butt: this is now in position and full of water! Thanks to WOTWS

3 Finance. All lettings payments are up to date and our current total including petty cash is £17,679.06

Following an enquiry from Teresa, it was agreed that our treasurer should review our annual running costs with the intention of setting a minimum contingency amount. This would help us plan future spending with more confidence **(VH)**

Portable Payment Machine: As society becomes more cashless, this could be useful when running events however further information is required regarding transaction costs **(TS)**

4 Staging and Storage Options: As our requirements are quite specific, and the amount of blocks needed is rather small, it has been difficult finding a provider who is willing to bring demonstration blocks to us but Louisa reported that she is hopeful that a sample of a suitable type of staging will be made available to us in August. Rocky Road Music in Corby remain an option to contact.

Teresa wondered if this was a rather specific purchase only beneficial to one or two hall users and that maybe there were other items that more groups would gain benefit from but most felt that we wanted to fulfil this long standing intention to supply an easy to use system that would be available for all hall hirers to use in any way they wished.

5 Request from Mark Howson: We have received a request from Mark Howson, who runs occasional pop-up pubs and live music events, to reduce our hire fees on Friday evenings and Bank Holidays, bringing them in line with the weekday rate ie £18p/h down to £12p/h. This was discussed at some length. Teresa felt that we should be supportive of local groups that provided such social events for us to enjoy

at weekends and that our loss in actual income was a small price to pay to keep these events occurring. Louisa noted that whilst they used the hall for GELT performances, the rental rates forced them to rehearse elsewhere. Other Committee members felt strongly that it was important to maintain complete equity in our charging as giving special rates to different users, however deserving, would set an unwanted precedent. Tim explained that when he took over as Hall Chairman, the rental structure was very muddled and unclear with a variety of different rates for different groups and types of events. Under the current Committee the system has been simplified to remove any ambiguity and make the rates straightforward and equal for all users.

However it was agreed that it would be timely to review our charges and explore different pricing models based on hall usage and comparison with other similar venues.

To that end, a **Charges Review Group (Kay, Teresa, Lorna and Vikki)** has been set up to report their findings back to the main Committee asap.

Mark Howson is to be informed of this decision **(TS)**

6 Fundraising

Midsummer Sunday: this was a very successful and happy event which raised £1,235.80. A separate report has been circulated. A lot of books remain in the cupboard in the small meeting room - efforts should be made to take these to Charity Shops as intended.

Christmas Craft Fayre/Christmas Tree Festival: Lorna has received an email from Claire Farrar who is interested in organising a Craft Fayre in conjunction with the Village Hall. However it has been previously agreed to run something along these lines at the same time as the Church hold their Christmas Tree Festival. Currently the only information that we have about this is the date - weekend 9/10th Dec To be carried forward pending further information **(KM/LB)**

Lorna to inform Claire of the situation **(LB)**

Big Banger Quiz: Fri 3rd Nov - to be organised! **(c/f)**

Andy Murdock Photo Exhibition: 9th/10th Sept organising in hand - Alice will email details to Committee **(AM)**

6 AOB

Garden Bench: a portable picnic bench that can be moved around the garden was felt to be a better and more sociable option than a static bench. Not everyone had received the info from Kay so Tim will resend it for the Committee's consideration. Louisa pointed out that it should be a bench that was easy for all to sit on ie slide onto rather than needing to raise legs to get into. **(KM c/f)**

Hall Redecoration: Alice had obtained a loose pricing from a professional decorator based solely on photographs and measurements. This was £3,000 for labour with about £500 for materials and a timescale of about 15 days work. This was purely for information and would suggest that next August would be the best time to carry out the work as few bookings and no heating involved! However before proceeding, it was felt that a small group should take a close look at the hall and draw up a priority list of works asap **(TS, TC, SA & AM)**

Open Gardens: date set as Sunday 23rd June 2024 - no further info **(TC c/f)**

Saucepans: awaiting collection! **(TS)**

What's On in the Village Hall page in Parish Mag: put together and maintained by Alice

"Spring" Cleaning Day!: Sally to let us know if she would like anyone to give her a

hand with any extra cleaning during the quiet month of Aug **(SA)**

Volunteer Session: Fri 15th Sept an event arranged by the Parish Council to inform and encourage people in the village to volunteer. Awaiting details from the PC before we know what our role may be.

Committee emails: it became evident during the meeting that sometimes people do not receive joint communication emails and that threads can be too long resulting in lost information. We should all try and be mindful of including the whole Committee when needed and ideally keep threads short and to a single topic. Tim knows how to turn off threads if anyone really wants to!!

7 Date of Next Meeting is 27th Sep 2023 at 10am

Meeting ended at 12.30pm