

## REMENHAM PARISH HALL COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022, 7.00pm, at Home Farm

**Present:** Jeremy Tayler (Chairman)  
Nigel Gray (Treasurer)  
Charlotte Jefferies (Secretary)  
Felicity Rutland  
Sue Laing  
Allan Henderson  
Charlotte Every  
Pat Sly  
Claire Fletcher-Hobbs

**Apologies:** Jan Watson, Jacky Ronald, Janette Brown

### 0. Opening Comments:

Jeremy stated that most of the members on the committee were volunteers, and it was important to remember to communicate respectfully and kindly with one another and assume good will.

### 1. Minutes of the last meeting (26<sup>th</sup> September 2022)

There was a short discussion regarding the format that minutes should take following each meeting.

**Jeremy proposed that the main purpose of the minutes was to record decisions taken and actions required, rather than a word for word account of the meeting. All in attendance agreed with this proposal.**

**Claire proposed that comments made during meetings that did not result in a direct decision there and then, but which required further action or evaluation, should be recorded in a separate section in the minutes and reviewed again at the next meeting. All in attendance agreed with this proposal.**

The committee then reviewed the comments sent by Janette via email, regarding the minutes of the last meeting, and **all in attendance agreed with the following adjustments to the minutes:**

- A post meeting note should be added to the minutes stating that Charlotte Every will remain on the committee until the next APC meeting, at which point she will be able to tender her resignation.
- With regards to the sentence "*for weddings linked to the community there should be a discussion about a concession*" it should be made clear that this was specifically referring to a discussion about the deposit requested for weddings, and whether there

should be concessions on this front.

- A new point should be added to the minutes stating that if a circumstance occurred in the future whereby a wedding party did not abide by the terms of the letting contract, then Jeremy would be in the best position to attend the party and remind them of their contractual obligations if he had married them earlier that day.

**Given the above adjustments, all in attendance were in favour of approving the minutes of the last meeting.**

## **2. Matters arising (Action Points) not covered elsewhere on the agenda**

Pat confirmed her intention to retire from the parish hall bookings manager role. It was agreed to discuss this at the end of the meeting as part of Any Other Business.

## **3. Hall Constitution (Purpose / Finance)**

Jeremy stated we need to bring our practices in line with the constitution, starting with making sure committee members have been legally elected. Voting rights can only be held by members who have been legally elected. It was stated that the Annual Parochial Church (APC) Meeting would be the next opportunity to formalise elected committee members, but until this time care would need to be taken during voting.

Jeremy stated that everybody who lives in the parish has legal rights in the parish church to baptism, marriage, and funeral, and you don't have to be a regular attender of the church to be involved in the parish. Church law does not draw a sharp distinction between the church and the community, it is the Church's responsibility to serve the community. The constitution is clear that funds over and above the threshold amount (undefined) are to be transferred to the Parochial Church Council (PCC), which in turn will be invested to serve the community through the work of the parish church. The committee needs to agree the appropriate level of reserve to be held in the parish hall accounts.

**Nigel proposed that £25K should be the reserve held in the parish hall accounts, and the balance of the reserve should be transferred to the PCC. This would be sufficient to cover recurring overheads for the hall, including contingency. All in attendance agreed with this proposal.**

Jeremy then brought the conversation back to membership of the committee, as defined by the constitution. **All in attendance agreed with the wording of the constitution, including the fact that people should not be prevented from being part of the parish hall committee if they do not live in the Parish.**

Jeremy confirmed the need to increase PCC membership on the parish hall committee, as per the constitution, and that this would need to be addressed at the next APC meeting.

Nigel confirmed the parish hall accounts are audited as part of the PCC accounts on an annual basis, not as a separate entity. Those accounts are available to be reviewed by any

parish member, in advance of the APC meeting. All accounting is legally bound and transparent, and all members who live in the parish can review them.

**ACTION: Charlotte E confirmed she would ask the PCC Secretary to send PCC meeting minutes and audited accounts which would then be uploaded to the Remenham parish website.**

A discussion was then held on whether the committee could void letting fees for the parish hall on specific occasions. Jeremy confirmed that the committee does have the power to void letting fees for the parish hall, but each specific occasion needs to be proposed to, and agreed by, the committee.

Pat proposed that the hall be offered for free to the NHS who would like to run a free COVID vaccinations clinic for adults (+16), as requested by Wokingham Borough. **All in attendance agreed with this proposal.**

**Sue proposed that agreement from the committee for similar proposals in the future could be done via email to the full committee (coordinated by the secretary) to ensure quick response time. All in attendance agreed with this proposal.**

Throughout the discussion on the constitution, the committee referred to comments sent in advance by Janette. Referring to the specific comment that the diocese may look to close Remenham church in the future, Jeremy confirmed that there was no reason to anticipate this as Remenham pays its church fees in full and funds its own maintenance bill.

#### **4. Hall maintenance**

Pat confirmed the following maintenance activities had been completed recently:

- Review and approval of the fire extinguisher
- Servicing of the alarms (by Active Security)
- Outside painting, including the arched window
- The large window has had glass refixed to prevent sections from falling out
- Minor electrical / non-electrical fixes have been made e.g., soap dispensers

Pat confirmed there was a documented 'snag' list, listing the required maintenance jobs.

**ACTION: Pat confirmed she would share this list with the committee.**

Sue recommended the snag list be reviewed more frequently to increase efficiency of maintenance jobs and reduce cost. Charlotte J recommended using Google Sheets, or similar, to help the committee manage the snag list going forwards.

#### **5. Hall lettings**

Pat confirmed hall lettings had reduced substantially in November and December. The confirmed hourly rate for the hall is £25/hour. Two key lettings requests have been received for the future:

- Anthony Duckett requested the hall on the 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> May for the Henley Arts Trail
- A toddler group request (commercial business)

Sue stated that the committee should look at additional storage solutions to enable toddler equipment / tables etc to be stored at the hall. Charlotte J stated there was an opportunity to monetise this equipment in the future e.g., renting tables and chairs for children's parties. Felicity stated that this needed to be a tasteful storage option, to stay in keeping with the aesthetic of the hall.

**Jeremy proposed that the committee should raise funds to build a new storage shed ('The King Charles III Shed') – all in attendance agreed with this proposal.**

## 6. Finances

Nigel distributed the latest hall accounts and summarised the following key points:

- Total receipts YTD £25,094 (vs £15,931 previous year)
- Total payments YTD £11,483 (vs £4,264 previous year)
- Total carried forward balance YTD £60,425 (vs £47,573 previous year)

It was noted that the accounts operated on a calendar year basis.

## 7. Future events, including the Coronation next year

The upcoming events are as follows:

- The Carol Service at Remenham Church on the 18<sup>th</sup> December, followed by mince pies and mulled wine
- The Letters Evening on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> March
- The Coronation Event, pencilled in on the 6<sup>th</sup> May
- Remenham Fayre on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September, starting 2pm

A discussion was held on the format of the Letters Evening. Felicity questioned whether the event was a private event, or a parish hall event. Allan confirmed that the event was a parish hall event, and that funds raised would go to the parish hall. The event has already communicated that £5 of the ticket price would go to charity. **Jeremy proposed that all funds raised by the Letters Event would go towards the new storage facility – all in attendance agreed with this proposal.**

Nigel confirmed that private events could take place in the hall, whereby money was not raised for the parish hall. In this case, the organising team would need to hire the hall on the hourly rate, as per other external hirings.

**A discussion was held on the format of the Coronation Event. Charlotte E proposed that the surplus funds raised from the Jubilee event should be used to hire a tent / marquee**

for the Coronation event. She also proposed that families then bring their own picnics, and the committee organise a bar. In addition, there would be a raffle and all funds raised would go towards the new storage facility ('The King Charles III Shed'). All in attendance agreed with this proposal.

**ACTION: Nigel confirmed he would circulate the value of the surplus funds from the Jubilee event.**

**ACTION: Sue and Claire both confirmed they would contact tent / marquee companies to determine the hire price.**

## **8. Any other business**

### **Pat's retirement from the Bookings Manager role**

The committee all recognised and appreciated how much work Pat was doing to manage the parish hall bookings on a daily basis. Pat confirmed her intention to retire from the parish hall bookings manager role and the committee discussed steps that needed to be taken to ensure a successful handover.

**ACTION: Pat confirmed she would send a list of all the jobs she currently owns and would like to handover.**

Felicity stated that she, Jeremy, and Charlotte J had met to discuss how some of the processes could be automated to save time. She and Charlotte J were in discussions with the website developer to determine whether an online booking and payment system could be created, along with improved website content to reduce the volume of email queries and correspondence. Claire confirmed that she had experience building websites and could help redesign the current parish hall website.

Charlotte J commented that the £25K reserve fund for the parish hall may need to be reviewed in the future if the solution was to hire someone to manage the hall on a day-to-day basis.

### **Ukrainian celebration and future free hall lettings**

Allan confirmed that a Ukrainian celebration had been requested in the hall on the 19<sup>th</sup> December. Given recent events in Ukraine, there was strong consensus from several of the committee that the hall should be offered free of charge. For this specific event, several of the committee had already privately funded the hall hire fee. **Allan proposed a mechanism whereby the committee could agree 2-3 causes a year which could have the hall for free, as per the recent NHS vaccination event. All in attendance agreed with this proposal.**

Sue stated that this mechanism should be flexible – there may be multiple causes one year and none the next, and each event should be reviewed separately.

## **Upcoming Binney Wedding in 2024**

A family that is very connected to the parish are planning a wedding event in the parish hall in 2024. They have requested the music for the event be allowed to run until midnight. The committee reviewed the premises licence which states music can run until midnight, and the site then needs to be vacated by 1am. However, it has been previously agreed with the neighbours that event music would finish at 11pm. **Given the family in question are well known in the community it was proposed that they be allowed to play music to midnight for their event. All in attendance agreed with this proposal.**

Charlotte E stated that the family will be reminded that this is an exceptional circumstance and the terms of the licence need to be strictly adhered to.

## **Email Phishing**

**Given recent email phishing issues, Felicity proposed that all personal emails be removed from the newsletter and the website. All in attendance agreed with this proposal.**

## **9. Date of next meeting**

It was agreed that the committee would meet on a ~quarterly basis, particularly before key events, and that the meeting times would be agreed and diarised in advance. The following meeting times were agreed:

- **1<sup>st</sup> of March at 7pm, Home Farm (Sue's house)**
- **19<sup>th</sup> April at 7pm (location TBC)**
- **17th July at 7pm (location TBC)**
- **4<sup>th</sup> October at 7pm (location TBC)**

There was no further discussion and the meeting finished.