Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Pulford Village Hall Management Committee held on Tuesday 26th April 2022 at 7.30pm

Those present

David Ewins (DE , Chairman and Trustee), Peter Gosmore (PG, Treasurer and Trustee), Jan West (JW, Secretary , Parish Councillor and Trustee), Richard Cole (past Chairman), Stella Hough (Material Girls), Chris Brown (Art), Scilla Green (Bridge), James Harvey (History), Kate Fairhurst (Village Hall Committee, Bells)

Apologies

Mike and Jenny Nethercott (History and Bridge), Jane Cullingford (Yoga), Rachel Williams (Yoga), Louise Clancy (Pilates)

DE opened the meeting and everyone present introduced themselves. The minutes of the AGM of 26/10/21 were agreed and signed off.

Matters Arising

Chris Brown (CB) mentioned that to facilitate the back storeroom being re-organised some of the art easels etc had been removed by 2 of the members and they wanted to know when they could return these items. DE explained that although the stage cupboard had now been built it is not fully operational as tools are being stored in there for other ongoing jobs. DE will try and resolve this issue asap.

It was agreed by all that from October 2022 the Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC) will bear the full cost of the internet wifi and is was noted that the internet is valuable to many hall users. Appreciation was also given to the Parish Council (PC) and their clerk for allowing and organising the refunding of the VAT.

There was a discussion about having a website for the Village Hall , where a timetable of clubs could be promoted, furthermore a rota of clubs would be advertised on the internal hall notice boards, on parish notice boards , on Parish Councils website and in the Essentials magazine. CB asked could photos of all the VH improvements be updated to the parish website to encourage new bookings, especially the Lady Edna Room. This was agreed by all and JW to mention this in the PC meeting on the following evening.

Chairman's Report

There has been a steady increase in hall activity since the last lockdown with many of our groups returning. However, we have lost the Slimmers World, Tango and Ballet Class . Furthermore, we are 2 Bridge sessions down but do hope that this will increase to three in the future. PG will contact Slimmers World head office to update them of the hall's availability.
DE spoke about the working party (DE and David Roberts (DR)) who since the last meeting have completed the stage storage cupboard, the ironwork decorative safety rail, the stage flooring the cupboard for storing the tennis tables safely, replacing window panes, the electric blinds by the stage and in the Lady Edna room.

Just last weekend the emergency fire door has been altered so it can also be opened from the outside with a key. This job has been done following guidance from CWAC and fire safety officers. Now, those entering the Lady Edna room do not have to disturb any groups in the main hall.
After a discussion regarding tables, it was decided that new tables would be ordered for the Lady Edna room, these tables must be appropriate for the "bell ringers" and will be left permanently in the room.
It was noted that the perimeter fence had blown down in the recent heavy winds, the neighbouring property (the Fair's) kindly paid half the cost of the new fence.
Rising fuel prices were discussed; there was felt to be enough oil in the tank to last until September. DE and PG will monitor oil prices and order when appropriate.

DE thanked all committee members, especially DR and PG for all the work they do tirelessly behind the scenes. He also thanked the PC , but especially Barry Evans for claiming the VAT back for the VHMC , this has allowed us to do so many of the improvements mentioned.
The VHMC then all thanked DE for all his time and hard work he has devoted to the VH.

Treasurer's report

PG gave everyone hard copies of the accounts which DE noted to be a 'picture of clarity' PG explained that groups had paid different amounts as they all returned to using the hall on different dates . Next year's accounts will give us a better indicator. We hope to make £5000 a year profit from bookings to help fund future improvements to the VH.
After scrutiny of the accounts it was unanimously agreed they should be accepted as a true record. Proposer DE, seconder JW. A copy of the accounts will be submitted to the Charity Commissioner.
A review of hire charges was discussed and the previously circulated draft room hire charges reviewed. Longstanding local groups would be charged one rate and commercial groups a slightly higher rate.
CB mentioned that the Art group is currently restricted to 16 members due to spacing for covid safety. SG spoke about the financial difficulties the bridge group are facing. Richard Cole (RC) suggested that if these groups were struggling to meet the new charges, they should make PG /DE aware and assistance could be given. RC also mentioned that the person who books the VH is the person who is in charge at that event (reference safeguarding issues , entertainments licence). DE and RC to investigate this further.
PG told us how profitable parties were, but under no condition Bouncy Castles were to be used due to the delicate hall floor. CB asked if the heating could stay on longer as currently it goes off at 11am and for the rest of their session it becomes cold. PG will sort this.

After scrutiny of the accounts it was unanimously agreed they should be accepted as a true record. Proposer DE, seconder JW. A copy of the minutes will be made available for the Charity Commissioner.

DE commented that when the new tables for the Lady Edna room arrive, he will write to Diana Thompson (Lady Edna's niece) , organise an opening ceremony and a door plaque.

Future work;
Stage cupboard to be painted and Howard Tipping to replace the cracked glass windowpanes.
In the last meeting the toilet refurbishments were discussed, it was agreed this could not be done in house and professionals were contacted to provide quotes. The PC have agreed to give the VHMC £6846 from the Community Infrastructure Levy / CIL (awarded to the Parish from local new housing developments). Another potential source of funding is Space Hive a Crowd Funding Platform from CWAC. DE contacted 4 different plumbers but only has one quote at present . Work involves lowering ceilings, fluorescent lighting, extractor fans, toilets, vanity units, hot water, radiators to be installed in the lady's toilet (currently absent), hand driers, baby changing facilities in the disabled toilet. Ideas on where to obtain further quotes were discussed. It was agreed by all that a balance of £10,000 should be left in the VH account to cover any eventuality.

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Election of Officers

DE Chairman
PG Treasurer
JW Secretary
It was unanimously agreed that the above officers continue in their current roles.

Any other business

PG had earlier given those present hard copies of the accounts and stated that the accounts are always available at any time for us to view. He thought the copies he had given us in the meeting should be made available to general public, and it was agreed they would be displayed in the display cabinet in the main hall.

Although there will be room in the back storeroom and in the stage cupboard to store chairs it was agreed that for ease of access a number will continue to be available . stacked at the far end of the hall and the piano will also be sited there.

The date of the next meeting Tuesday 18 October 2022 at 7.30pm in the Lady Edna Room

DE closed the meeting at 9pm and thanked everyone for attending.

Financial Report for Parish Council - September 2022:

We are currently 'holding our head above water' but it is quite difficult to predict future trends particularly as we are facing winter at such a delicate time.

Oil costs have risen dramatically and while we have raised hire rates to our regular and occasional clients we are not entirely certain that this increase will be sufficient.

To illustrate, we have Pilates group at 9am on a Monday morning. If we do not have a reservation over the weekend, then we are starting to heat from a very low point and we need to fire the boiler at 5am in order to reach a reasonable level by the start of the booking period. The Hall is not and cannot readily be well insulated.

We will see how the winter progresses.

Reservations have not returned to pre-pandemic levels. We are actively seeking new bookings - particularly regular groups and hopefully things will get better.

I don't need to emphasise by how much inflation is biting at us - we are all similarly affected.

We do our best and despite the notes above I am optimistic for the future. The Village Hall presents a very respectable face and is a most attractive and useful space.