

## GRAYSHOTT VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

### Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Grayshott & Hindhead Institute & Village Hall held in the Studio, Grayshott Village Hall on 20th July 2021

**PRESENT:** Trustees: Mr. S. P. Penny (Chairman), Ms. B. McSean (Treasurer), Mr. S. Georgii (Vice Chairman & Grayshott Parish Council), Mr. A. R. Legat (Booking Secretary), Mr. P.W.Budd (Minute Secretary), Mrs. J. Charters (Grayshott Stagers), Mr. J. Hardy (Grayshott Indoor Bowls Club), Mrs. J. Bearman (The Arts Society Grayshott), Mrs. Jill Levy (Friday Art), Mr. J. Price (Grayshott Gardeners), Mrs. J. Levy (Friday Art), Mrs. A. Seal (Grayshott Arts Society)

Also in Attendance: Mr. D. O'Byrne (Grayshott Folk Club), Mr. & Mrs. J. Spencer (Life Friends). Mrs. Hilary Marston (School of Dance), Mr. S. Townend.

#### MINUTE No:

#### ACTION

**1.00** **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Mrs. Pat Barrett, Mr. Graham Betts, Mr. L. Davis (Haslemere & District Dog Training Club), Mrs. Jan Gale, Gill Keitch, Mrs. Margaret Taylor, Mrs. Rosemary Paynter, Kim Parsons.

**2.00** **MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** had been circulated to those present and taken as read. Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Mr. Brian Spencer, seconded by Mr. J. Price and unanimously agreed by the meeting. The minutes were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**3.00** **CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT:**

3.01 Good evening ladies and gentleman; thank you for taking the trouble to attend the 119<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Grayshott and Hindhead Institute and Village Hall.

I know that they say that time passes faster as you get older but when I sat down to write this report it really didn't seem possible that a whole year had passed since our last AGM. On reflection I was relieved to realise that due to COVID we delayed the 2020 meeting until October, so it is only 9 months since our last AGM.

The last year has been one of extremes; varying between inactivity, when the hall was closed due to COVID restrictions, to frantic activity in making the Village Hall ready when we were able to open, albeit for a very limited range of activities for the most part.

During the last financial year the Hall was closed for more than 200 days and while bookings are steadily improving since we were permitted to reopen in April we still have a long way to go to reach anywhere near normality. In June, for example, bookings were just over half of what we would normally have expected.

As you will hear from the Treasurer while we made a loss last financial year thanks to support from government grants and one-off income relating to the telephone mast installation, more of which in a moment, the financial position is not as bad as it could have been. We need to bear in mind, however, that the coming year may be

more financially challenging than the last if bookings remain below the norm and government grants come to an end.

When you look at the accounts please bear in mind that while we currently have comfortable cash reserves at the start of the pandemic we put 'on hold' any non-essential works (for example the redecoration of the main kitchen which was last carried-out in 2008), thereby storing-up expenditure for future years. For the second year in a row we have been unable to increase the sum set-aside to replace the main hall heating system. Of our total cash reserves of about £85k, £45k is currently earmarked for the heating system which could cost as much as £100k to replace; the boilers are nearly 30 years old and the pipework feeding the radiators is original which means nearly 120 years old.

While, as I have already indicated, the hall was closed for much of the year under review a number of significant events have occurred.

In August, thanks to Steve Georgii's tireless efforts, we finally reached an agreement for the installation of the long talked about mobile 'phone mast on Village Hall land. As the Treasurer will inform you, this resulted in a significant one-off payment last financial year and an ongoing annual income. While we are still awaiting its installation, and hopefully improved mobile reception, I am pleased to be able to inform you that underground ductwork to supply the mast was recently installed, so hopefully we shall see some further developments in the not too distant future.

While we put on hold as much expenditure as possible to preserve our reserves during the year two significant building related projects did go ahead.

Before restrictions were implemented we had committed to refurbishing the kitchen in the caretaker's cottage and with his agreement this project went ahead in September. We have now completed significant improvements to the cottage over the last few years including refurbishing the bathroom, new carpet in the living room and installing double glazing. The cottage forms part of the caretaker's remuneration and while users don't directly appreciate the improvements the trustees believe that it is important that we maintain it in good order to ensure that we can attract and retain the right person for the job.

As expected the Parish Council vacated their office in the Nancy Little John room in May.

The Committee had already decided to partition the room to create a smaller meeting room and a 'control' room to provide improved lighting and sound facilities for events taking place in the main hall.

We knew that the extent of the works would require the closure of the hall for about 2 weeks and we had intended to schedule the project for the summer of 2021 so that we could give users good notice.

However as we were forced to close the Village Hall last year due to COVID with the support of our contractors we were able to bring the project forward and the conversion was completed in July 2020. As you will hear from the treasurer the cost

was met from donations and gift-aid, so was not a drain on Village Hall reserves. Kevin, our caretaker, did a sterling job of decorating the new meeting room when he had little else to do.

I am sure that we all extend our thanks to our employees, Kevin Woodage and Sarah Evans for their patience and fortitude during the long periods of closure, which can't have been easy for either of them.

Finally my personal thanks are due to my fellow officers for their good humoured support which has enabled us to survive the past year.

The time taken to review and implement hundreds of pages of guidance to ensure that we have been open in a 'COVID secure' way and have taken full advantage of the various government grants available has been enormous - who would have thought that being closed could be so tiring!

Adoption of the Chairman's Report was proposed by Mrs. J. Bearman and seconded by Mr. B. Spencer.

#### **4.00**

#### **TREASURER'S REPORT AND ACCOUNTS:**

##### **4.01**

The Hon Treasurer presented her nineteenth report as Honorary Treasurer of the Grayshott and Hindhead Institute and Village Hall. This report refers to the 2020-21 financial year, which ended on 31 March 2021. As with the previous year, Wise and Co were asked to examine the Charity's accounts.

The 2020-21 financial year has been unlike any other that has been experienced. The Village Halls were instructed to remain closed by the Government to help stop the spread of the Covid-19 virus and therefore the Charity's normal source of income has been greatly reduced. The Treasurer reported that it was not possible to provide comparisons to the previous year as usual, but she hoped to be able to explain sufficiently the impact on the Charity during this financial year.

In the 2020-21 Financial Year, the Charity received income from regular and one-off lettings of £9,909, which was significantly lower than last year's comparable income of £57,673. The decrease in lettings was caused by the fact that the Village Hall was closed for 6 months of the year and when allowed to reopen the activities were restricted for the rest of the year. The Charity also received income from the Grayshott Parish Council of £402 before it moved to its new office. The Friends of Grayshott Village Hall donated £110. The additional sundry income totalling £726, was for the sale of wooden furniture which had become surplus to the Hall's requirements and the Charity also received income as part of the Amazon Smile campaign.

As the Halls were forced to close, the Charity received funding from a number of schemes set up by the government to assist charities and businesses such as the Village Hall. As can be seen, the Charity received grants to a total value of £31,392, being £11,485 from the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and £19,907 from the various schemes set up to assist businesses forced to close during the Pandemic.

As reported by the Chairman, the Village Hall Management Committee negotiated a 10-year agreement with Vodafone to install a telephone mast in the car park. This resulted in a total payment of £9,952.12, although after legal fees were paid, this resulted in a net income of just under £7,000. Going forward, the Charity is due to receive an annual fee from Vodafone of £1,000.

The Chairman has also mentioned the work that was undertaken during the closure of the halls to create a technical control room from part of the Nancy Littlejohn Room. The Charity received a number of donations, which combined with the gift aid that the Charity was able to recover, meant that the project was cost neutral to the Charity.

So in summary the income that the Charity received this year was approximately £10,500 from normal activities, but with the additional monies from the agreement with Vodafone, the grants to assist business during the Pandemic and the donations & gift aid received, the total income for the year was £69,442.

The Chairman had already explained some of the measures that were put in place to reduce expenditure on the upkeep of the building where possible. On page 8 of the Accounts there is a comparison with the previous year's expenditure.

The Charity made use of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (more commonly known as "furlough"), which meant that it was possible to keep both employees and protect their full salaries. As can be seen from the Accounts, the payroll costs for both employees, which included salaries, national insurance contributions and mandatory pension contributions, was £18,499. As the Charity received £11,485 from the Government Scheme, it meant that there was a net cost to the Charity of £7,014.

The utility bills, which included electricity, gas, water, business rates and refuse collection, totalled £8,551. This decrease was to be expected given that the hall was closed for a significant period. While the heating and lighting had to be maintained throughout the year, the Charity received a rebate on the business rates, and the refuse collection was put on hold.

Although the Halls were closed, the Charity was required to carry out the mandatory checks and servicing of the boilers, water heaters, cookers and other appliances, as well as the annual servicing of the fire alarm and emergency lighting, intruder alarm, CCTV and fire extinguishers. Other general maintenance activity during the financial year included:

- Trimming of the outside hedges
- Clearing the guttering
- Window Cleaning (although much reduced)
- Ad hoc repairs and replacement of light fittings, kitchen equipment, etc.

Along with insurances and the cost of softwares and licences, the annual running costs (including the utilities and payroll cost) for the Charity were in the region of £38,000 before any refurbishment programmes were carried out. The administrative

costs of running the Charity, such as telephone and broadband, secure off-site backup of software, etc., and accountancy fees was a further figure of £1,685 (as reported on page 9 of the annual accounts).

The Chairman has already reported on a number of major one-off projects carried out during the 2020-21 financial year:

Replacement of the Kitchen in the Caretakers Cottage – committed to £7,198 before the Pandemic was underway

Cost of works to the NLJ Technical Control Room – costs were £16,352 covered by the donations and gift aid claimed

Sanding of the Main Hall Floor £947

Redecoration of the NLJ Meeting Room £198

The Charity continued to hold reserves on deposit. However, interest rates had dropped significantly and the interest received was just under £50, compared with £436 in the previous year. The Charity also received a small dividend from some shares which were invested many years ago.

The Treasurer reported that a full breakdown of the Charity's income and expenditure for the year was available on pages 8 & 9 of the accounts.

Funds in the Dedicated Re-Decoration Account (or as it is also known, the Friends' Account) stood at £520. The Hon Treasurer thanked all the Friends for their continued support of the Friends of the Hall.

The Balance Sheet for the 12 months to 31 March 2021 showed a decrease in total funds from £106,806 to £104,920. Some of this money was ring-fenced for specific expenditure – the Chairman had already mentioned that some monies had been set aside as a provision to replace the Main Boilers.

The Hon Treasurer would like to record her thanks to Alex Collins of AJC Accountants who has continued to provide payroll services on a Pro Bono basis as well as thanking the other members of the Executive Committee for their continued support over the last year.

The Hon Treasurer reported that the Trustees had always managed the finances of the Charity to ensure that sufficient funds are held to enable the Charity to continue for a period of 12 months in the event that no income was received. If the additional financial support from the government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and other government and local authority schemes had not been forthcoming, the financial position of the charity would have been a different picture.

On a positive note, as has already reported, many of our regular users had started to return to the village halls, once they had been allowed to under the government's

roadmap and the halls were getting busier; hopefully, the lifting of all the restrictions would mean that those who had not yet been able to return would be able to do so. The Hon Treasurer therefore felt that whilst the Charity was continuing to see the effects of the Pandemic, the Charity was in as good a financial position as could be expected at present.

As there were no further questions, the Hon Treasurer recommended the 2020-21 Financial Statements to the meeting.

Adoption of the Treasurer's report was proposed by: John Hardy and seconded by: Jennifer Charters

**5.00**      **APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS:**

5.01      The following had been appointed by user groups:

- Jennifer Charters (Grayshott Stagers)
- Len Davis (Haslemere & District Dog Training Club)
- Steve Georgii (Grayshott Parish Council)
- Ann Seal (Grayshott Arts Society)
- John Hardy (Grayshott Indoor Bowls Club)
- Jill Levy (Friday Art)
- Jackie Bearman (The Arts Society Grayshott)
- John Price (Grayshott Gardeners)

5.02      Elected Members:

Stephen Penny, Tony Legat, Barbie McSean, and Peter Budd had agreed to stand for election. There being only four candidates for the five elected posts they were declared elected without the need for a vote.

**6.00**      **ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

6.01      Des O'Byrne asked what the criteria was for the number of people attending a seated event. The Chairman advised that following Step 4 of the 'Roadmap' there were no COVID related legal restrictions on numbers however further guidance is expected in the near future.

6.02      Jan Gale had sent thanks to the Committee for all their work.

The Meeting closed at 8.17pm.

**Signed:**

**Date:**