

ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL [2022]

Minutes of the meeting of Albourne Parish Council (Village Hall Management Committee) - meeting as the Trustee of the Albourne Village Hall held on Tuesday, 31st May 2022 held via Zoom in the interests of safety.

Present: Councillor Graham Stafford (GS)
Councillor Jerry Butler (JB) (Chairman elect)
Councillor Suzi Sawyer (SS)
Councillor Di Smith (DS)
Councillor John Drew (JD)
Mick Gratton (MG)
Eve Gerhold (EG)

In attendance: Iain McLean (Parish Council Clerk); Jenny Gratton (VH Treasurer); Tina Ware (Under 5s); The Reverend Rachel Cornish.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 p.m.

1. **Apologies for absence.** There were no apologies for absence, and no declarations of interest from Councillors.
2. **To elect a Chairman.** This being the first meeting of the new municipal year, the current Chairman called for nominations. MG proposed that JB be elected to the Chair. This was seconded by DS. There being no other nominations, JB was duly and unanimously elected to the Chair for the ensuing municipal year 2022/23.
3. **Committee Membership.** It was noted and confirmed that at its Annual General meeting on 10th May 2022, the Parish Council had appointed the five Parish Councillors set out above to serve on the Committee for 2022/23. The Committee also confirmed the continuing co-option of MG and EG onto the Committee for the same year ahead.
4. **Approval of minutes of the previous meeting.** The minutes of the last meeting held on 22nd February 2022 were formally approved by those present, and duly signed off as a true record by JB.

5. **Matters arising.** There were none, not otherwise covered on the Agenda and in these minutes.
6. **Membership – vacancy for a new Committee member.** The vacancy for the third co-opted member on the Committee still exists, and no one has yet come forward. The efforts to fill the position will therefore continue. The Reverend Cornish said that she would consider coming onto the Committee, but had significant Parochial Church Council commitments at the present time.
7. **Domestic issues – Unwanted activity around the VH.** There are again no reports that the VHMC is aware of at the present time. The Reverend Cornish raised the issue of some damage to her car that had been caused by a low pole at the entrance to the footpath by the VH, just off the Street. This will be looked into.
Wi-fi Internet access. JB confirmed that the newly installed broadband in the VH is up and running, but the upload speed is not as good as it should be. He will continue to monitor the situation.
Replacement for the cleaner. The new cleaner is now in post, and the cleaning of the Hall is highly satisfactory. It was noted however, that she needs a new mop.
Under this item, JB mentioned that he has updated the Asbestos Risk Assessment document, and here are now only three areas of possible concern. He also recommended that now all mandatory Covid restrictions had been lifted, the operation of the VH could go back to normal. JB proposed this, and it was seconded by SS. It was therefore **RESOLVED** unanimously, to agree the recommendation accordingly. It was also thought that these meetings could now go back to being held in person.
8. **Financial Statement.** (i) The financial Statement provided by the Treasurer has been circulated, and is attached. DS therefore proposed that the 2021/202 accounts be agreed, and this was seconded by JD. It was then duly **RESOLVED** unanimously, to agree the accounts accordingly, and for them to be signed off by the Chairman, JB. It was noted that bookings have been a bit slow, but there is currently nothing to be concerned about. It was further noted that income is running more or less in line with expenditure, and that overall, the financial situation remains healthy, (ii) on the review of the VH hire charges, Jenny Gratton has circulated an email setting out her thoughts and advice on this. It was agreed that comparative rates for other halls in the area would be informative, and JG and JB will work together in order to investigate this further. It was noted that there has been no increase since September 2020, but that utility costs (especially energy costs) and inflation, have experienced unusually large increases just recently. Overall, it was felt better to have smaller annual increases for the hire charges, rather than wait, and then implement a big rise. It was therefore agreed that following further research, JB will circulate the Committee with a firm recommendation for discussion at the next meeting, which would allow any increase to be put in place in September. Under this item it was also noted that the protective cage and padlock around the thermostat needs to be replaced, so as to prevent any tampering, (iii) on the Review of Honoraria and Payments for the

Bookings Clerk and Treasurer, it was proposed by JB and seconded by GS that as these had last been reviewed 2 years ago, the payments be increased by 5% (rounded up). It was therefore **RESOLVED** unanimously, to agree the recommendation accordingly, and to implement the increase in September.

Under this item, JB raised the issue of the tables and chairs being hired out for the Platinum Jubilee events this coming Bank holiday weekend. JB has sent round an email about this setting out the detail of the requests, and so the hiring of 30 chairs to Sayers Common at no charge, because of the connection with Albourne, was **AGREED**. The hiring of chairs to the Warringlid Residents Association, who are also carrying out an event, was also **AGREED** but at a charge of 50p per chair, given their old condition. It was also agreed that there should be no hiring out of the new chairs in the Village Hall, so as to ensure they are kept in good condition, and so the Clerk will delete this reference from the website.

9. **Projects. Fascias and soffits.** The work had been successfully completed, and has greatly improved the appearance of the Hall. Jenny Gratton was thanked for organising this. **Garage current status.** The matter (demolition of the garage) is still on hold pending final resolution of the storage issue. **Garage contents and their future.** EG confirmed that with the making of alternative arrangements, there is no requirement for Under 5s storage in the garage. However, the situation regarding the Village Show items in the Garage, still needs to be resolved. Some alternative storage arrangements may need to be made.

Under this item JB mentioned that he wanted to add a new project for the VH relating to the windows. Some need replacing as they are “blown”, but they need to be properly surveyed and assessed. The Treasurer, Jenny Gratton, will therefore take this forward and seek appropriate quotes.

10. **Social Groups feedback. Albourne Arms.** Given the resolution at item 7, the pub can now re-open as soon as practically possible. The License is current, but it was agreed to have a separate “re-start” meeting in order to discuss what needs to be done to get the pub up and running again. This will involve refresher training for the volunteer staff, a thorough cleaning of the bar and items, stock taking, re-ordering of supplies, and also the putting in place of the ability for card payments to be taken, so as to minimise the need for cash handling. If all goes to plan, the aim would be to re-open the pub towards the end of June or early July. **Future Events.** There are none planned at present.

11. **Any other business.** MG raised the issue of the broken, dilapidated fencing alongside the VH. It was noted that the Parish Council has this in hand, and is in ongoing correspondence with West Sussex County Council about resolving this long outstanding issue. GS raised the issue of the internal lights in the Hall, and that 5 need replacing. JB is dealing with this issue, and also, on a point raised by EG, with installing a passive infrared sensor in the toilet, so that the lighting is appropriate to the time of day or night.

12. **Date of next meeting.** This was agreed for Tuesday, 30th August 2022 at 7.00 p.m.

The meeting ended at 8.22 p.m.

SIGNED as a true record.....

Chairman

DATED.....2022