

HORTON KIRBY AND SOUTH DARENTH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HALLS COMMITTEE held on Tuesday 15th March 2022 in the Parish Room, Village Hall, South Darenth at 7.30 pm.

PRESENT: Cllr Moyle, Chair
Cllrs I Blackamore (Vice-chair), R House, C Page, P Rushbrook

Pauline Rowley W.I., Peter Bradley Village Gardening Club, Riverside Pres-School, Falcons Table Tennis, Glyn Hughes

IN ATTENDANCE: Lisa Johnson, Parish Clerk

97 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

98 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received

99 MINUTES

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 17th January 2022 were signed as a true record.

100 MATTERS ARISING

Any matters arising had been completed or appear in the Minutes.

101 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC AND CORRESPONDENCE

There were no questions.

Correspondence had been received from the organiser of the New Monday club regarding the increase in hall charges effective 01 April 2022.

102 REGULAR HIRERS

Pauline Rowley, representing the local W.I. group stated that membership fees are set nationally at £44 per person per year and cannot be changed, they must run 11 meetings per year which should be of educational content to include speakers which cost approx. £50 - £100 per person. Prior to the Village hall rent increase they had to fund raise £400 to meet costs which would at least double if no concessions were given. They had transferred some meetings to the cheaper Jubilee hall but would still have to fund raise for the next financial year. Storage was also an issue for the W.I.

Chris Mitchell, Falcon's Table Tennis expressed dissatisfaction and said that he had received very little information with regards to the price increase and queried why it could not be phased in over a period of time. Instead of charging £6 per match he would have to raise it to £10 per match. The club had been using the hall up to 20 times per year but would not be able for the future and would have a rethink. The Table Tennis club had always paid their invoices on time, to which the clerk agreed and repeated that phasing in the increase in rates would have been more acceptable.

Cllr House replied that all expenses relating to the Village and Jubilee hall were looked at and that actual users of the hall should be paying to hire the facilities rather than increasing the Parish Council precept amount which all parishioners in Horton Kirby & South Darenth had to pay regardless whether they attended any classes/clubs or not.

Cllr Moyle added that the Local History Society had moved to the Jubilee Hall from the Village hall in order to keep their membership costs down which is something other groups, where possible, should consider. They also held raffles and charged for refreshments.

Peter Bradley, representing the Village Gardening club asked for fees to be phased on over the next 3 years and was incredulous that the Halls Committee would consider putting up the fees by

so much without consultation. Not offering local residents a discount was unacceptable and if the Parish Council had phased it in over the next 3 years there would have been far less complaints. Mr Bradley said that other villages offered their residents a discount which the Parish Council should do. Village club membership had halved and he would have to double subscriptions to £53 per annum.

Cllr Moyle said that the decision had not been taken lightly at all but costs to run the halls had increased significantly which had to be taken into account. He asked if the gardening club would consider moving to the Jubilee hall as that would be more suitable for a smaller membership and /or reduce the number of meetings per year. Cllr Rushbrook asked if they would consider moving to the day time rate as this would further reduce the hire charge. Mr Bradley said that he would consider moving to the Jubilee Hall if the Committee agreed to continuing with 25% discount to the Village gardening club. Cllr Moyle said that would not be possible as prices had been worked out and agreed.

Cllr Blackamore explained that income for the Parish Council came from three sources; grant funding; income from assets and the precept. There were many people in the parish that did not attend any groups using the halls and the Parish Council did not want to raise their precept in order to subsidise regular groups using the hall.

Trish Friday, riverside Pre-school Kindergarten explained that the Government paid for 3 – 5 year old infants and the rates had only increased by 14p per child. Enquiries were made if payment could be made monthly on a pro-rata rate in line with Government funding to which the Clerk would look into. Mrs Friday also asked if the fact that they didn't have the heating on could be taken into account and Cllr Rushbrook replied that the thermostat needed to be looked at for a more efficient model. The playschool would be grateful for any concessions as they have been a part of the local community for a long time and wished to stay at the Village hall.

Peter Bradley, speaking on behalf of the village pantomime, stated that ticket prices would have to increase from £7-8 per person to £12 in order to meet new rent rates if they went ahead for 2022/23. Ticket prices were set for the cost of hire and any surplus goes toward charities. Mr Bradley again requested that the Committee reconsider offering non-profit groups a 25% discount and phase the increase in over a 3 year period.

Mr Bradley then questioned Clerk for income and expenditure figures for the halls for the next financial year. Clerk replied that working on a 20% occupancy figure, suggested by councillors on the Halls Committee, for the year, target income was £49,965. Expenditure for the halls was estimated at £37,230. Mr Bradley then questioned why hall users were being penalised when there was a surplus of £15,000. Clerk and Halls Committee Councillors replied that staffing costs were also taken into consideration as the assistant clerk spent the majority of her hours administering hall bookings. Also, this was a target figure on which to work out in order to reach a precept figure. Cllr Blackamore pointed out that all the income and expenditure had to be taken into account to reach the end figure. The Clerk said that some regular hirer rates had only increased by £1.80 per hour in the last 9 years. Cllr House added that historically running costs had not been taken into account and the Parish Council had to ensure the halls did not run at a loss.

Cllr Rushbrook suggested that the Committee could help with storage facilities if the W.I. moved to the Jubilee Hall as a secure storage area was being made for Parish Council record behind the shutters to which a space could be allocated to the W.I. for them. Clerk said that the time of their booking could be looked at and if no-one was using the Village hall at the same time, they could gain access to their cupboard behind the stage. Mrs Rowley was agreeable to these suggestions. Cllr Rushbrook offered to meet with Mr Mitchell to view the Jubilee hall to see if it was suitable for the table tennis group, again co-ordinating with the Village hall so that they could get their equipment from their storage space to which Mr Mitchell accepted.

103 MAINTENANCE

The maintenance list, attached to these Minutes, was received and discussed. Clerk requested that parking lines to be painted outside the Village hall as weekend bookings tend to park alongside the Village hall rather than perpendicular which created fewer car parking spaces.

ACTION: Clerk to arrange with contractor

Additional cctv cameras were suggested by Kent Police when attending recent incidents at the Village hall to cover all areas.

ACTION: Clerk to contact J Turnbull for quote and estimated installation date.

Quote for additional Rotaspikes had been received at £320. Cllr Rushbrook will look into an alternative cheaper option.

ACTION: Cllr Rushbrook, Rotaspikes.

ACTION: Clerk to update and distribute maintenance list.

It was agreed to defer the review of the fire risk assessment report to the next Halls Committee meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to add review of fire risk assessment report to Halls Agenda May 2022

The titan folding chairs and trolley were considered not necessary for the Jubilee hall as several groups had reported no problems with accessing and moving the chairs currently stored in the hall. However, it was agreed that the trolleys used in the Village hall should be looked at or modified to make them easier to move and store chairs on.

ACTION: Clerk to add to Halls Maintenance List

104 STANDING ORDERS

The Committee discussed PC Minute 52, July 2019 and in light of the fact that Cllr Moyle was happy to continue as Chair of the Halls committee, Cllr Rushbrook proposed a special motion to revoke Standing Order 5 e. (p2) 'The Chairman and Vice chairman of the Parish Council and all Committees shall have a maximum time in post of 3 years'. Cllr House seconded and all were in favour therefore meeting Standing Order 26 b) "A motion to add to or vary or revoke one of more of the council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice (i.e. Minutes) by at least 5 councillors to be given the Proper Officer in accordance with S.O. 9 above"

ACTION: Clerk to add Special motion to the next Parish Council Agenda on the 4th April 2022.

105 NEW YEARS EVE

Committee discussed whether to hold a ballot for New Years Eve bookings. Cllr Rushbrook proposed not to go ahead due to recent incidents that had occurred at the halls and the Parish Council had a duty of care to Parish residents. Cllr Moyle seconded, all were in favour.

RESOLVED: The Village and Jubilee Halls will not be available for New Years Eve bookings for 2022

106 DATE OF NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 17th May in the Parish Room

Hand written note "Extraordinary Halls Committee meeting Tuesday 22nd March 2022)

Meeting closed at: 9.10pm

Date:

Chair: