

**Minutes of an Ordinary of the Trustees of the
Educational Foundation of Abigail Bailey and Ann Levett
on Wednesday 22nd March 2017 held at the Village Hall 3:30pm**

Present:

Martin Emerson, Malcolm Russen, Raymond Dyer, Arthur Wright, Melvyn Wooding, Adrian Dale

Apologies:

Arthur Wright (in Australia), Richard Kirk (unwell)

2017.14 Approval of minutes of last meeting and correspondence

Having already been circulated for checking, the minutes of the last meeting and subsequent electronic correspondence were **APPROVED**.

- a. Annual Meeting - [25th January 2017](#)
- b. Electronic Correspondence - [30th January 2017](#)
- c. Electronic Correspondence - [4th February 2017](#)

2017.15 Update on School House Tenancy

Notice has been served on the tenant to enable refurbishment of the property. Notice expires on 15th April 2017. The tenant has up to 2 weeks to vacate the property after this date before enforcement proceedings can commence if necessary.

2017.16 Update on Caretaker roles

Following the advert in the last newsletter no candidates have confirmed their interest in a cleaning role at the Village Hall.

The Clerk has been filling this role pro tem and has kept a detailed log of work involved for invoicing purposes.

Cleaner role

The Chairman has been reviewing the bookings calendar and identified that there are only 9 regular users of the hall with standing daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly bookings. In addition, there are ad hoc bookings for functions and meetings. Having looked at the new caretaker log, he felt that the current frequency of cleaning visits was probably too high and that more could be asked of the regular hirers to ensure that the facility was sufficiently clean for the next hirers.

Based on the experience of the last two months and of the previous 2 years of working with a weekly cleaner, the Clerk strongly disagreed. If the hall is left a week between cleans as it was during the last 2 years, then the state of the toilets floors (particularly the men's) is unacceptable and unhygienic. Basins and toilet bowls similarly become very messy, unhygienic and unattractive. Even if fully stocked up, paper towels in the ladies can run out in under a week. Similarly, the sanitary bins should not be left a week between being emptied as they smell. During the last two years, the Clerk has regularly emptied bins and topped up paper towels mid-week between cleans. Similarly, the kitchen quickly deteriorates, with the bins, tea towels and dishcloths smelling unclean by mid-week. The Clerk has been replacing and washing these mid-week even when we had a cleaner. If the dishwasher or cooker is used, then they must be deep cleaned immediately or the accumulation of food scraps quickly smells.

The Clerk believes that it is unrealistic to expect the regular hirers to clean surfaces, floors and toilets after their meetings/classes. It is unlikely that they will be done to

the appropriate standard and there is a risk that they will not be dry enough for the next hire and become a slip hazard, particularly if there is a short window between bookings. Even when we had a weekly cleaner we had one incident on a Monday last year when the main hall floor was a slip hazard for the afternoon sessions. The floor had been left sticky by a weekend party and could not be cleaned until the cleaner arrived at mid-day. There was insufficient time for it to dry before the next hirers arrived and one of the attendees slipped over. The responsibility for ensuring that the hall is fit and safe for the next use rests with the Trustees not the last hirer.

Based on the experience of the last 2 months, the Clerk recommends that the Hall is inspected and cleaned as required between each hire, with a deeper clean once a week.

The standards achieved under this regime would be considerably higher with all handles and surfaces being sanitised daily, hopefully eliminating the risk of the Hall being a source of infection. Nearly 100 children a week use the Hall now and it is inevitable that some of these will carry some germs with them.

During a full week last year with one party at a weekend, we used to spend £40 on cleaning in a single session. Under the new regime there are around 12-15 checks/cleans each week and the expenditure on cleaning has been £40-45.

We should allow for around 5 hours a week in this role increasing with usage. However, the cleaning needs to fit around bookings, not be in one session.

Caretaker role

During the last 2 months, the caretaker tasks have been as follows:

- Minor repairs
 - Fitting new door threshold
 - Re-fitting toilet roll holders
 - Lubricating door hinges and adjusting door spring tensions
 - Replacing light bulbs inside and outside (some requiring high-level ladder use)
 - Temporary repairs to damaged car park signage
- Replacing batteries in door stops
- Grass cutting
- Unblocking gullies and gutters
- Viewings and briefings for hirers
- Adjusting heating settings as season changes
- Opening and closing divider doors between sessions
- Building checks and meter readings

Other project work has been undertaken but not included in the logs where it is non-recurring and undertaken on a voluntary basis with one of the Trustees. e.g.

- Pruning of School House trees ready for broadband installation
- Painting of walls in the garden

Caretaker tasks have worked out at 1.5 hours a week but this will increase as the grass cutting season takes off. Although the Trustees might be available for grass cutting on a rota, the challenge will be fitting this around the weather and periods when the car park is empty. It would be more sensible and sustainable to build this into the job description of a Caretaker.

Bookings Clerk/Finance Officer

This role will be logged in detail during April. It involves the following tasks:

- Dealing with booking enquiries from new hirers

- Making and confirming bookings, issuing invoices and access codes
- Keeping the daily log of Hall usage for quarterly invoicing of regular hirers
- Invoicing of regular hirers.
- Recording of receipts and expenditure
- Reconciliation of bank statements

Ray has spoken with a recently retired finance officer who might be interested in a finance role. However, they have some time limitations and need to understand the commitment required for this.

The Chairman proposed that we explore options for advertising a post which was a combined caretaker/cleaner, paying a basic £75/week, increasing with usage. The wording for an advert would be agreed by the Trustees through email.

Post meeting - Example Job Descriptions

NACRE Village Hall information sheet 22 gives an outline job description for a Caretaker for a Village Hall. Although we no longer subscribe to NACRE, it is possible to get copies of job descriptions based on this leaflet from the internet. There are three types of caretaker:

Caretaker – Maintenance only

e.g. http://www.slinfoldvillagehall.co.uk/downloads/SVH-CaretakingDutiesSpecn_v1-0.pdf

Cleaner/Caretaker – Supervision, maintenance and cleaning

e.g. <http://www.earlscolne.org/uploads/jobdescription.pdf>

Cleaner/Caretaker/Bookings Clerk – essentially the role of the Clerk (minus Foundation work)

e.g. <http://www.stapeleyparishcouncil.gov.uk/documents/other/Item%206.2%20-%20Draft%20JD%20-%20Caretaker.pdf>

e.g. http://www.grayshottvillagehall.co.uk/pdf/caretaker_duties_23May08.pdf

The experience of employing a basic cleaner has shown that we would still need a caretaker to be on hand to deal with all maintenance issues uncovered during cleaning.

Similarly, a caretaker handling only maintenance would not be practical as a buildings supervisor/cleaner would be needed for daily checks.

2017.17 Update on CCTV usage for entry logging

The Chairman pointed out that the installation of a CCTV entry camera had not been discussed by the Trustees prior to its installation and that the approval of the CCTV Policy had been undertaken after the last meeting by email.

The Clerk agreed and explained that number of incidents/problems had led to the urgent need for an entry logging system:

- a. Instances of unauthorised access to the hall between bookings. On several occasions the air conditioning system has been found to be operating when no-one should have been in the building. The air conditioning system can be triggered only by someone activating the sensor on walking into the corridor.
- b. Bookings clashes when groups have setup their meetings before their booked time leading to overlaps with ad hoc meetings or rehearsals.
- c. A 15-20% variance between the actual energy usage and the number of officially booked hours, now found to have been caused by groups exceeding their booked hours.
- d. Access codes being widely shared amongst groups.

The insurance position is that the Trustees should be able to identify who is using the Hall at any point and who the “responsible hirer” is. This was not possible before the camera was installed.

All Hall users were informed about the camera’s installation and the reasons were explained. It was quickly clear after just 2 weeks that:

- Four groups were exceeding their booked hours by nearly 50%.
- Six of the access codes had been shared repeatedly, sometimes between groups where the membership overlapped.
- In four groups, the person opening up and closing the Hall had not been briefed on their responsibilities and on safety procedures. None of these people were known to the Clerk.
- One group had changed their meeting time completely and not told the Clerk.
- Two groups were regularly over paying for their use of the Hall.
- The historical “grace” period of 15 minutes to setup and 15 minutes to clear up has often “crept” and in one case has extended to 45 mins before and 30 mins afterwards.

There have been detailed discussions with hirers and in all but one case, an amicable agreement has been reached that bookings will now reflect the time actually needed for the event. The grace period will be eliminated. It is not needed. If hirers need 15 mins to setup, then this needs to be booked into the calendar so that there is no clash with the previous booking, nor with cleaning.

In the case where the hirer has disagreed with the new regime, a discount was offered to allow the hirer to enter the Hall for 30 mins before their originally booked slot for £3.50 in order to setup the session, and to leave at 16:15 after clear up. The entry logs had shown that over half of the group was turning up 20 mins before the 2pm start time. The hirer was therefore in the habit of entering the hall 20 mins before that to set up. This clearly is abuse of the “grace period”. A 2 hour booking (£17.00) had extended to 2:57 hrs. In this case the hirer has now opted to stand outside with the group until 13:45 rather than pay the £3.50 – 22p per member. In January 2018, they will move to the new contract, if they renew.

For all other hirers, transitional discounts have been applied where necessary so that costs have not changed for classes with an annual membership. However, the bookings calendar will now be accurate and will allow us to slot in cleaning/maintenance being concerned about “bookings creep”.

This new approach has also allowed us to be more flexible with a new type of “ad hoc” hire for dance practice and for family events which don’t know exactly how long they will last. We reserve a reasonable time window, provided that it won’t interfere with other bookings, and then charge for actual usage.

The entry log has also allowed a more reasonable approach for civic hires like the Parish Council or ENC where meetings can be a variable length. There is no justification for the Parish Council paying for longer than the meeting lasts and indeed, now that we have a ballet booking which finishes and pays until 19:10, it is not reasonable to charge the Parish Council from 19:00-21:00.

2017.18 Purchase of a hand mower

Melvyn explained the need for a hand mower. The tractor could not be used on the new grass as it is currently too soft and it would be impossible to get around the trees near the gate. He would have liked the original grant application to the Wind Farm Trust to have included a hand mower as well as a strimmer. However, the Clerk

explained that this would have taken the application above the £5,000 level which would have involved additional levels of justification.

Melvyn recommended that a minimum of an 18" cut would be needed and that the mower should be self-propelled.

The other Trustees agree and, it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk be authorised to purchase a 45cm self propelled mower.

2017.19 To discuss and approve a Foundation Budget for 2017

The Clerk presented a [draft budget](#). This was clearly dependent on the outcome of the tenancy change and the outcome of the recruitment of a caretaker/cleaner. It would be discussed at the next meeting.

2017.20 End of term of office for Malcolm Russen

The Chairman noted that this would be Malcolm Russen's final meeting as a Resident Trustee after 7 years of service. He was thanked for his contribution during this period.

2017.21 Date of the next meeting

The next meeting would be held in 4-6 weeks once the outcome of the notice period for the tenancy was clear. The Clerk was asked to poll the Trustees for suitable dates.



Adrian Dale
Clerk to the Trustees
21 Water Lane
Chelveston
NN9 6AP



Martin Emerson
Chairman of the Trustees
Middle Farm House
The Green
Chelveston
NN9 6AJ