

Topcliffe and Asenby Village Hall Committee – Minutes of the Zoom online meeting – 1 October 2020

1. Attendance: Andrew Eckersley; Tony Bruce; Judith Lowe; Doug Allan; Peter Lowe; Karen Morley; Jenny Bumby; Malcolm Morley.

Apology: Emily Collard

AE welcomed everyone to the meeting of the committee being staged via Zoom. In particular, AE welcomed Malcolm Morley as the new Parish Council representative. DA agreed to prepare the minutes.

2. Minutes and matters arising from previous meeting – 25 August 2020 (and earlier meetings)

- Construction of Canopy (on hold until funds are available).
- Technical drawings of the Village Hall – PL has made a start on drawings.
- Request for a ballet bar to be installed in main hall. Awaiting formal request and further information.
- Purchase of Quiz Challenge trophy – DA will action when Quiz Night re-scheduled in New Year.
- Repairs to front door completed by AE.

3. The status of the Village Hall - Coronavirus

At its meeting on 25 August the committee agreed to keep the hall closed at least until the end of 2020, with a review at this meeting. This was conveyed to the hall's insurers and was publicised within the two villages.

Following discussion, it was concluded that nothing had substantially improved to alter the committee's concerns originally expressed about reopening. Indeed, we appear to be rapidly approaching a second spike in coronavirus infections and the Prime Minister has stated that restrictions may be in place for six months (to March 2021).

- The committee reaffirmed its 25 August resolution that the village hall should remain closed to all users for the remainder of 2020. This position should again be reviewed in December, or at any time the government guidelines are changed significantly to allow a re-opening with less complex and arduous requirements. AGREED
- The "closed building" monitoring and maintenance plan put in place to keep the building safe and help protect the internal and external fabric of the premises, including the specific requirements specified by the insurers, is working well and should continue for the duration of the closure. The committee noted the work that Tony Bruce has undertaken in this matter and expressed its thanks to Linda Bumby for her agreement to undertake most of the regular "closed building" checklist. AGREED
- Regular users of the hall are aware of the decision to remain closed until the New Year so the Chairman should only need to write to them again if the situation changes. AGREED

4. Treasurer's Report

- TB advised that the bank balance is almost £20k.
- The rate of spend continues to be minimum as a result of the ongoing closure, with just payments for gas, electricity, water, insurances, maintenance and cleaning.
- Given that, with increasing restrictions on human interaction it is likely that the hall will remain closed for some time the Treasurer recommended that:
 - The "Unoccupied Building Insurance Checklist" developed to meet the Insurer's requirements and to maintain property cover is diligently completed and recorded and stored off site. It has been agreed that Linda Bumby will normally undertake the checks in the time she would normally clean and leave completed checklists at the Chair's house. The requirement of the Insurers is for a weekly inspection plus after any adverse weather or other event. This has been actioned and the committee's endorsement is sought.
 - The main front door code is changed to enhance security. This has already been undertaken.
 - That the normal checklists are undertaken to the extent that they are relevant in a period of closure as some of these regular activities will need to continue; for example the fire equipment testing, gas servicing, PAT testing etc; and other inspections and testing. The committee should agree explicitly at each meeting who will undertake and document the relevant activities and where the records will be kept off site.
 - The committee exercises caution in committing any discretionary spending as the length of closure and recovery of users and income are uncertain; whilst a number of fixed costs will continue irrespective of whether the hall is used or not. ALL AGREED

5. Items for Consideration/Decision

- Bags2School event held 21 September 2020. Total of £319.20 was raised and will be shared equally between the Village Hall and Topcliffe scout troop.
- Electrical equipment brought into the hall by performers - a new clause pointing out that hirers bringing electrical equipment into the village hall must have had the equipment tested has been added to all appropriate policy documents.
- Indemnity insurance requirements for performers – a new clause pointing out that hirers performing for profit must have their own indemnity insurance has been added to all appropriate policy documents.
- This year's Christmas tree outside the Village Hall will be sponsored by Debbie Roberts co-owner of Milk Churn Farm Shop. It's understood the tree will arrive 7 December and committee members will need to be available to erect the tree. The tree will be bigger this year than last and will need additional lights and decorations. JB to organise a decoration donation scheme within the villages, making use of School PTA, Top Residents Facebook page and the Sunday Email. Arrangements for a 'switching on' ceremony will be made nearer the date.
- Committee members organising an event on behalf of the committee – it was agreed that it would be specifically noted in the Minutes when an event is being organised on behalf of the committee and as such no hire fees will be due.
- Polishing of the floor in the main hall – our normal contractor Steve Halliday is no longer undertaking this type of work so quotes have been sought from three other contractors. Only one quote received so far, which is from Floor Restore, Darlington. They recommend a full sanding and application of pre-sealer and 3 coats of HP Friction non-slip matt finish. They recommend a certain cleaning product and will supply 5lt in the price. They could undertake the work in November, and it will take three days to complete. The price was noted by committee members but is not included here as two quotations are still outstanding. It was AGREED that AE, TB and PL should consider the three quotations when they are all received and determine which supplier to go with, as long as the cost is below £2,500, in which case the matter will need to be referred back to committee.

6. Any Other Business

At the meeting of the AGM held immediately pre- this meeting, it had become clear that new members are not coming forward to join the committee and that will create difficulties as several members are over seventy and won't want to be undertaking their responsibilities indefinitely. AE pointed out that it was great to have several younger members on the committee but suggested that it is important to attract more younger participants and that a mini campaign ought to be launched to publicise the issue. It was AGREED that DA should prepare an article for a forthcoming Sunday Email and repeat it in the December issue of The Tattler.

7. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held online via Zoom at 7pm on Wednesday, 9 December 2020.