MINUTES
Hougham Village Hall Trust CIO
Management Committee Meeting
Thursday 23 May 2024
7:30pm at Hougham Village Hall

1. Present: CoC, AJ, CH, SG, DO (Treasurer), AB (Chair)
Also attending, Steve Oxenham (former Vice-Chair)

Apologies for absence: MP, OB, CC, CS

2. Declarations of interest
None

3. Minutes of Committee Meeting on 25.04.2024
Approved

4. Chair's Report (AB)
AB said that she is halfway through her 3-year role as Chair of the Committee. She will be standing down either at the end of her 3-year service, or possibly earlier due to personal reasons, so it is important for the Committee to begin the process of deciding who the next Chair should be. In the past, it has been difficult to persuade local people to serve on the Committee, so this task needs to begin. AB said it was also important to consider other options, such as the Chair role being shared, and that there needed to be a discussion about the expectations surrounding the position of Chair. AB provided a document for discussion. This involved a discussion by various people in CIO-related roles discussing this topic.

AB asked if there were any members of the Committee who were willing to take on the role of Chair and there were not. DO said it was her view that the role of the Chair should only be to co-ordinate. (The discussion then took a different direction, but this discussion will be resumed at the next meeting).

SO said he was attending the Committee Meeting because he felt that the Committee had been losing momentum and needed some assistance. SG said that the main issue for the Committee was not enough people. SO said that he'd been successful in recruiting people onto the Committee and at one stage there were 11 or 12. However, this followed the Hall being in crisis as the previous management of the Hall had not managed to generate enough activity to keep the Hall going. CH said SO & DO had inspired people to become involved to save the Hall. SO asked whether it was time to say there was a crisis so that people would be spurred into action. AB said that while it may have been true that the Committee was in crisis at the time, the Hall is no longer in a crisis as the new model of having a CIO set up and private hires to support the Hall's community activities was a model which was working. However, there is a lack of people supporting the activities of the Hall, including serving on the Committee or running/attending events. SO suggested that perhaps a rebranding of the Hall might work. SG said that there was a need for someone to take on the role of being a Child/Youth Co-ordinator on the Committee.

Action: SG/SO to seek to identify someone who could be asked to do this role.
Action: AB to add 'Rebranding' and 'Child/Youth' Co-ordinator as Agenda items for future meetings.

SG suggested that the best way to get people involved and take ownership of an event/activity was to find those who have a self- interest in being involved in Hall activities, e.g. a parent who wanted play space for their children. AB suggested that wherever possible, that person should be supported by a Committee member acting as a 'buddy', ensuring that they are facilitated to use the Hall. She noted that DO had been doing this role extensively since the CIO was set up. (added note: Others have also done this, including CC at the Coffee Morning and SG at the Fire Safety talk – there are many other examples. Apologies if your contribution has been omitted). If others on the Committee can find a way to be a buddy, this would be helpful. The dog training classes and Pilates classes currently running at the Hall are examples of this. It may entail unlocking the Hall and addressing any issues (e.g. ensuring the Hall floor was clean for the Pilates class). AB said discussion around the role of the Chair and Trustees would be continued at future meetings.

The dogtraining classes and the Pilates classes were each given a 4-week period of free hire to enable them to build their class numbers. It was felt that this had been helpful (DO/AB). SO pointed out that the Hall is not allowed under its constitution to give ‘freebies’. However, if the Committee agrees to this measure being taken to establish classes, the Committee agrees and the decision is minuted, this was an acceptable policy. The Committee agreed that this policy could be adopted to allow people to build class numbers in the future.

5. Treasurer’s Monthly Financial Report (DO)
DO provided an overall summary of the financial position. (Detailed financial report to follow on another occasion). The Hall presently has £4,938 in the deposit account and the turnover for the current year is presently £6,500k (approx.), an acceptable position at this point in the financial year. A two-year contract with British Gas is coming to an end and needs to be renegotiated. Business rates presently provide 80% relief to charities but it is hoped this will increase to 100%. There was a £70 increase in the cost of insurance at renewal, but this was acceptable. There are some good private hires approaching, including an 80th birthday party. DO circulated a flyer from Applause, a touring theatre company which will visit rural areas.

Action: CH offered to contact Applause to see whether their events are suitable for the Hall.

DO also reported on progress so far with preparations for the Hougham Party In the Park (13th July). 50 tickets have been sold so far. There needs to be at least 100 tickets sold to break even. DDC has required an Event Management Plan which DO is doing. Her Risk Assessment plan has been approved. SG asked how much parking might be available. DO said there would be parking for 18-20 vehicles. It was agreed there would need to be marshalls and signage etc. which would be organized nearer the time. CH suggested that St John’s Ambulance might provide first aid assistance at the event. DO was still requesting loaned generators. The event has been listed on White Cliffs marketing site and SO was organizing promotion on the Radio. The event has been publicized on the website, on Facebook and in the Hougham Herald.

There are two events approaching:
i) Pop Up Pub/Curry Night. DO said that she would be making several curries and had arranged other curry donations from supporters, including Sue Walker. AB volunteered to produce poster (sent since meeting). The event has been publicized in the usual ways.
ii) Quiz Night
The Quiz Night has been publicized in the usual ways and is anticipated to be well attended.

6. Hall repairs and maintenance (CoC/AJ)
i) Repair of the Village Hall outside wall
CO said that his intended way of repairing the wall was not practical, so he’s approached Don Taylor to ask him to use his JCB to remove the broken section of the wall and take the rubble away. The Committee confirmed its view from the previous meeting that the section of broken wall should be removed as it was always the intention to do this as part of the driveway works, so the cost of repairing the wall would not be worth it. However, it could be a while until grant funding is available for this purpose.

Action: CO requested to ask Don Taylor when he might be able to do this, and to confirm that this would be on a voluntary basis.

It was agreed that as there might be safety issues (e.g. children climbing on the wall) and the need to prevent the Hall from being unsightly for Hall users, we would need to have this reassurance soon or the Committee might need to agree alternative action at the next Committee meeting.

AJ showed pictures demonstrating that the grassed areas on the Village Green had been damaged by a vehicle/s. Other issues were raised with the PC's representative SG.

ii) Millstones
Once the Village Hall wall repairs have been resolved, Don Taylor will be asked to bring the millstones from his site to be placed outside the Village Hall. The ground needs to be prepared for this in advance.

7. 100 Club Report (CC)
No 100 Club report as CC not able to attend.

8. Representatives' Reports
i) PC Report (SG)
SG said that the Annual Parish Meeting would take place 6pm at the Village Hall on Thursday 30th May. He provided AB with a poster. (Following the meeting, AB put the information onto the VH website). SG urged everyone to attend so that they can hear about the wide range of measures the PC has taken and to raise their concerns and express their opinions.

ii) PCC Report (MP)
No PCC Report as MP not able to attend

9. Communications Report
i) Website (AB/DO)
AB said Chris Surrige from Whitefish Marketing had contacted her regarding two-factor authentication for Stripe. AB suggested he speak to DO, but she had not received a call, so DO said she would call him (which was done after the meeting). The online booking system is working for hires, but not yet for events.
ii) Advertising/Promotion/Noticeboards (DO/CC/Event organizer)
DO will fill the base of the large noticeboard which will go outside the Village Hall. A location will be found which doesn't interfere with grass-cutting outside the Hall.
iii) Hougham Herald (AB)
The June HH is on the website, AB confirmed.
iv) Facebook
AB said she was unable to get notifications from the Village Hall Facebook page. SO providing assistance.

10. Constitutional Issues
None

11. Health & Safety **(Standing item)**
Safeguarding & protecting people (standing item)
i) Replacement Fire Safety Officer
No replacement fire safety office has been appointed since RT's departure from the Committee. SG to ask Paul Martin, a former fire inspector who lives in the Village, if he would be willing to do this.

12. Any other business
i) Most AOB covered in main business
iv) Major Evanson's dedication of the Hall ongoing item. The plaque needs repairing and an agreed location confirmed. The Meeting Room still needs clearing. No date as yet.

13. Date for next meeting Proposed date Thursday 27 June