

Minutes of HPFRGC Trustee's meeting 31.10.2022

Present

Nick Baker, Shirley Sainsbury, Jacky Middleton, Louise Chicken, Viv Tallowin, Claire Madden, Claire Mludginska, Matthew Hubbard, Tony Swain, Gemma Scarborough.

Apologies

Anne Holloway, Andrea Hillyer.

Introductions

Nick opened the introductions, and everyone present spoke briefly about themselves and their love of the village and village life. Nick gave a broad overview of the barn and its history.

Election of Chair

Nick thanked the Trustee's for their continued support and confidence in electing him in the position of Chairman for another year. Nick went on to say that this was a period of change with new trustee's coming on board and the transition period between Shirley and Jacky taking over the role of Secretary. Some of these changes were due to people moving on especially over the Covid shut down period.

Finances

Overview of how it works.

Louise spoke at length about the Barn finances and how it all works, that the accounts must be presented to the Charities Commission annually.

1. Reserves, based on approximately how much we need for a year, the current amount is £20,000.
2. Improvement Fund, financed by the Solar Panels, and the Ground Source Heat Pump as these monies will not last forever, and set aside for more significant work as may be required.
3. Some funds are ring fenced for the Community Garden, Gym and Short mat Bowls Club.
4. Another pot of money is for everyday spending.
5. Currently we are in a particularly advantageous position, although last year we posted a small loss, due to lack of income with Covid, and a problem with govt funding for the ground source which will be resolved.

Current Balances

Balances are as follows:

Total: £78,985 made up of,

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|-------------------|---------|
| Reserves. | £20,000 |
| Improvement Fund. | £32,050 |
| Protected Fund. | £3,220 |
| General Pot. | £23,715 |

Normal year turnover is around £20,000 with a surplus of approximately £8000.

Claire Mludzinska asked if reserves have ever been increased? Louise said no but should be looked at, but likely also that we would see some significant capital improvements this year.

To explain, whilst the Gym and Garden funds are held separately, it is better for them to be within the charity, especially when applying for grants.

On Current spend, the Barn needs some additional rectangular tables and the play area also needs some repair funding urgently, due to a breakage of two items within this area, notified recently and now made safe until repairs can be completed. NB will arrange.

Also to note, the fireworks at the annual bonfire event are purchased via the Parish Council, as a community event, so money collected on the night is passed to the PC to contribute.

Discussion

Trustees

With six new Trustees in the past year, it was agreed to have a wider discussion regarding bigger issues facing the Charity.

Across the Covid period, with the Barn functioning at a far lower level, some of the contact with volunteers has been lost and there has been a significant churn of people in the village and also a big change in Trustees, with now only three going back to the start of the Barn project.

With almost half of the Trustees now having been appointed within the past year, it was considered the right time for a review of what and how we do things, so the charity can move forward with a positive future. As well as the statutory obligations of Trustees, various roles are needed to make the facility "work" and historically, these have been shared amongst Trustees, with a range of volunteers helping out on a regular and occasional basis.

It always needed to be recognised that whilst there is expectation of the Trustee role being more than just attending meetings, everyone will have different availability, commitments and abilities in terms of helping out.

Bookings Secretary

The key issue at the moment is the role of bookings secretary, as Yvonne Pugh, who has done a brilliant job on this since the Barn opened, will be standing down from the role at the end of the year, but is willing to help in a transition period as a new person takes over.

Options for the post include a Trustee and or volunteer/s, or even a paid position. A paid position would need to be a contractor rather than someone employed. Yvonne has produced a job spec which would be circulated. Essentially this included being the first point of contact for booking enquiries and discussing with hirers what facilities we can offer against their request, through to showing prospective hirers around the Barn and ensuring hirers can then get in on the day.

A number of people have been approached informally with no success and one of the issues is that people believe that it might be too big or too complex. There may be changes that we could make to how the role works or could be split, but it is essential that we now move quickly to fill the post. All agreed to consider the job role and suggestions/options for filling it and discuss with anyone they felt may be able to help.

Volunteers

Clair Ml. suggested a panel for external events and another for inside events, with an events manager running them both, which led onto Gemma relating past events that were actioned in this way and how successful it used to be. Gemma went on to say that as a thankyou in the past a volunteer supper would happen which everyone enjoyed. It was thought that this helped people feel valued and "connected", and again was something that had been sadly lost during Covid. It had previously allowed us to better target requests for help to people with specific skills which was always helpful.

It was suggested that this was something we could now repeat, but as well as existing volunteers, to try and pull in some of the many new people to the village to help out. Shirley commented on the new volunteer chef, whose food was great, and his feedback on the facilities in the kitchen were good.

In addition, it was suggested that a Trustee with specific responsibility for volunteer co-ordination may be worth exploring.

Upcoming Events

Nick explained the current position with events and the discussions which had already taken place.

The idea of a paid Events Manager has been raised but needs to be carefully worked through in terms of cost, benefit and potential impacts of employing someone on our

volunteers, as well as the employment/contract issues. However, the importance of events cannot be understated in terms of both fundraising and delivering the community objectives.

Further discussion on looking at events that pay, and events that although don't make a lot of income, are wanted by the community. Matt suggested a year of community events to get more volunteers on board and also the idea of a team lead for bigger events supported by many underneath, but avoiding a single point of potential failure.

The cinema is slowly coming back post-Covid, although we will need to be able to call on more volunteers as two of the main people involved have/are stepping down.

The Race Night was a great success again this year and a big thank you to Brian Sainsbury for his efforts in organising.

The Firework night is all set with Gemma managing the event. Building (John Tallowin). lighting (Dave Skinner) the bonfire and Event Plan and grounds issues (Nick and Tony) is sorted. Shirley is looking after collection buckets and more volunteers are still needed for stewarding.

Trustee Communications

1. Our contact details and basic communications need to be updated
2. A WhatsApp group formed to quickly communicate with trustees and as a forum.