

Corfe Village Hall – Minutes Thursday 26th September, 2024

Newton Lane, Corfe, Taunton, Somerset, TA3 7AQ

1. Roll Call / Apologies

Attendees - Keith Gosling, Chris Brown, Nigel Furniss, Pip Hollins, Emma Bowers.

Apologies - Rob Hudson, Ruth Pickles

Did not attend – Rob Smith

The committee minute that Rob Hudson has joined the committee and that Keith Gosling and Emma Bowers continue to serve as acting co-chair whilst the position remains vacant.

2. Bookings

- Chris updated committee that event bookings for hall have been good, approx £360 in Sept and £360 in Oct.
- Emma shared a draft rota for the committee to cover the monthly Friday night pizza event for takeaway or dine in the hall. Rota covers the opening, set up and closing of the hall for the event. Last Friday of 2024 and the first Friday of every month in 2025 (attached to these minutes).
- Café dates have been booked for 2025.
- Dryad Inn Pop Up – Becky is asking if the village would like another pop up in March 2024. Emma will obtain possible dates and ask Rob Hudson if he would be willing to help lead the additional drinks options / hire of chilled keg solutions.

ACTION – EB to get possible Pop Up Dates & talk to RH

- Winter Market Saturday 9th November 11am – 3pm. Lesley Brown is leading.

3. Finances

Keith Gosling updated the committee that finances are strong. Electricity rates will be going up significantly in April with the new contract. Hall fee for the local clubs will go up to £20/hr for winter rate and will remain at that rate to help mitigate the electric increase. The '100' club ticket price for 2025 is also proposed to be increased to £15 per ticket to help mitigate the electric increase. KG reported we have approx £35,000 to spend on hall investments but the committee needs to prioritise what is done. Therefore, investments will be split into 2 categories: Scope A – ongoing improvements to hall that are 'affordable' and Scope B 'further major improvements' that we need to decide what to prioritise.

4. Scope A – Ongoing Hall Improvements (affordable options). Budget approx £3,000 - £3,500

- a) Internal Store Room Refit. KG & Tony Dewhurst have reviewed storage options to better utilise the storeroom space with new racking and a new configuration. Working group will be set up, aiming for half term break, but maybe December, as the final configuration will depend on whether Toddler Group will be continuing in 2025. This is because Karla has informed the Village Hall that they intend to stop in December unless another lead volunteer comes forward. If Toddlers stop then all of their toys, etc, will no longer be stored in the storeroom and therefore much more space will be available. Estimated budget / cost of works £1,000 to £1,500.
ACTION-KG to agree final layout and timings with Tony Dewhurst.
- b) Outside Storage. It is agreed that the shipping container will be removed in 2025. The Parish Council will organise removal. Provisional time will be May onwards – once the ground is dry enough for the big tractor/removal vehicles to be able to come onto Queens Acre without risk of damaging the grounds. Once the shipping container is removed then the Village Hall will purchase a smaller outside store. Storage solutions being explored but intend it to be a smaller metal shed that will fit alongside the hall (where shipping container is) but it will be lower and much smaller. It will store the marquee poles (with the sides expecting to fit in the storeroom), plastic chairs, and potentially a new outdoor spec freezer for the cafe). Final requirements will be decided once the storeroom refit is completed. Estimated budget/ cost of works £2,500
- c) Village Hall Furniture and Kitchen Items Upgrades. Village hall funds and café profits are being used to jointly invest to upgrade a number of items for the hall that need updating. A new set of crockery, plates, side plates & bowls have been purchased for 80 persons (which is what the hall is advertised it can cater for). Cost £750 split 50:50. Replacement white tables and more chairs are also planned from café profits. 10 additional blue chairs (same as current) £400 so that the indoor count will be 50 and 30 new plastic chairs will be purchased by the café to replace the old brown plastic and grey metal chairs. The church has agreed to store 20 of the new plastic chairs.
ACTION – EB to decide on furniture replacements (reviewed with café steering team) and agree funding with KG.

5. **Scope B - Future Hall Investments (a) and (b) will be done, but decision required over scope of (c) and (d)**

- a) Solar. PH has been leading this workstream. One quote has been obtained from SunGift (aprox £11,000 with a 12 yr payback). 2 other quotes need to be obtained from other companies and a number of grants are being explored, including Rural England. The village hall committee intend to invest in solar, so a decision will be taken once other quotes are received so that one can be submitted for grant consideration. PH will work with CB so that grants/funds applications are submitted for solar and loop (see below). KG and PH have also been doing an energy audit with Utility Aid to get an assessment for the village hall on possible improvements.

ACTION - PH to co-ordinate a proposal including preferred option and grant funding. RH will be asked to help with grant/funding applications.

ACTION KG and PH to follow up on the energy audit report

- b) Audio Visual / Acoustics. CB is leading this workstream. The village hall intends to invest in improvements for a Loop Hearing system, speakers and acoustic improvements (tbc). One quote has been obtained from Audio Visual Direct. £1,500 for a Loop System. £4,000 additional for a full audio/speaker system. The hall intends to proceed with Loop only at this time. Lottery Community Fund will be investigated to fund the Loop system. CB to check if Lottery Fund require 3 quotes.

ACTION- CB to progress with PH

- c) Inside Hall Improvements. A quote has been obtained for a project manager, Trevor Spurway, to make a number of cosmetic improvements to the hall so that the hall can continue to be maintained to a good standard and ensure Hall Bookings continue. These improvements include the option to cover over current internal breeze blocks with robust materials and also carry out a fire risk assessment and acoustic assessment. Budgeted works £10,000 + VAT for internal improvements and £4,000 + VAT for work coming out of the assessments.

- d) Outside Meeting Room. Several quotes for different types of external buildings have been obtained. 1 for a composite building 16ft x 18ft. Cost aprox £25,000. 1 for a metal framed unit 16ft x 18ft (but would require planning application) cost aprox £50,000.

Conclusion: The village hall committee have concluded that any investments for c) and d) will be put on hold until the above 'planned' investments in a) and b) are completed. However, it was agreed to proceed with the Fire Risk Assessment (£300 + VAT) and an Acoustic Onsite Survey (£580 + VAT) to understand what work is required – it may be that simple low cost solutions such as 'sound boards' and soft furnishings will form part of the solution. KG to book acoustic survey. A village consultation would be planned if item d) 'Outdoor Meeting Room' was restarted. There was a discussion on investing in a flexible outdoor awning system for the patio area as this might be a better investment to allow for different hall uses and year round expansion of the hall space for any village events.

ACTION - KG to book in the Acoustic assessments (booked for 15th October) and Fire Risk Assessment.

6. **Maintenance**

The following items still require attention and NF will action as soon as possible:

- a) Outside: patio latch broken off again
- b) Outside: benches preservative & plastic feet
- c) Inside: window latches
- d) Digitisation of old photos

ACTION – NF to carry out maintenance work

7. **AOB**

- a) Additional Parking area just beyond current parking (onto Barton Grange field) is being explored. Johnnie Halliday land agent has been chased for proposal.
- a) Charity Registration CIO vs current. KG & EB will meet with Helen Hinchliffe in November and also ask Andy Butler to join, to determine best route for the village hall charity set up.
- d) 100 Club. Will be drawn in October.

8. **Date of Next Meeting** – 14th November at 7pm.