

HADLOW DOWN COMMUNITY CENTRE

Minutes of Committee Meeting held on Friday, 22nd April at Gill Hope Farm, Wilderness Lane, Hadlow Down 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Bob Lake (BL), Sarah Prall (SP), John Thompson (JohnT), Janet Tourell (JT), Rachel Lewis (Parish Council)

1. APOLOGIES: Fiona Shafer, Sara Braker

2. MINUTES OF MEETING ON 11.03.22

These were agreed as a true record and duly signed.

3. MATTERS ARISING:

None

4. TREASURER'S REPORT:

JohnT reported that the Race Night had made £2,043.36. The Committee agreed that the evening had been a huge success.

JohnT reported that the current a/c on 22.04.22 was £11,812.07 - cash in hand £149.00

SP asked JohnT if he had received her 'test' donation of £5 from the Just Giving page – she was testing to see if the newly set-up Gift Aid scheme worked. JohnT said that he hadn't received it.

ACTION: SP to investigate this and to send JohnT the Just giving log-in

Gift Aid on Lottery wins was discussed once again and it was queried how Gift Aid forms would be processed. JohnT said that he would aim to process them in batches.

ACTION: BL to get more donors to complete the Gift aid forms

SP confirmed that Gift Aid can be claimed from Race Night donors such as those who bought horses and those who sponsored the races.

5. RACE NIGHT FEEDBACK:

BL reported back that Fiona Shafer had expressed her disappointment with the change to the setting up time as she felt that she hadn't been able to make a full contribution. She had arrived at the hall to set-up and found that most of the work had been done. When had the plans been changed? BL had replied to FS's email explaining that Julian and Sam (Michaelson-Yeates) had requested an earlier access time to the hall to begin the food preparation.

It was queried if perhaps we should have had more rigorous contingency plans because there were problems with personnel due to absences and unforeseen circumstances etc. BL thought not and that it simply illustrated our low number of volunteers. There were examples of how contingency plans had been put into place – Glenys and Elyse Lake stepping up to run the bar and BL/GC running the tote given the Covid imposed absence to two volunteers at the last moment.

On the whole BL thought that the presentation of the event in the Hall was very good and all the Committee agreed that Gwyn Carwardine was the 'right man for the job' on the Tote.

SP said that we would need to look at the method of payment in future and BL agreed that there were a lot of 'payments on the night' which wasn't ideal given that the bar staff were trying to do everything. All thought that the 'Covid absences' had been an issue here.

SP suggested using an app on the web site to pay for tickets in the future and maybe offering an 'early bird' deal to encourage earlier online payments – this was agreed by everyone. BL said that he would seek advice from the Chair of Uckfield RFC as it has a system of taking online bookings and issuing refunds when required.

ACTION: BL to consult with Gordon Buckland about setting up a booking system.

The Auction was discussed and BL said that he'd spoken to Jane Hissey about her generous donation of a picture; she was happy to defer using it until a later date when it should raise a more substantial amount of money.

JohnT reported that the bar had taken £704.83 but disappointingly had not made much of a profit. It was pointed out that we had a substantial reserve stock of wine to be sold at future events - 43 bottles of various wine and some lager. Having looked at the financial breakdown of the event, BL pointed out that there were several expenditure items charged to the bar when only one was actual bar expenditure – expenses with regard to printing (Tote ticket sheets), gifts for helpers, ice cream were charged to the bar.

It was agreed that in the future there was a need to be more meticulous over itemising all elements of income and expenditure.

SP suggested that as we were obviously pretty good at running Race Nights, perhaps we should be looking at running one at a larger venue. RL asked whether if it would be just 'village' or outside? BL thought that a larger venture might be something of a challenge at the moment given, in particular, our shortage of volunteers.

6. BOOT FAIR:

BL reported that Claude Jessett trustees had been approached about the HDCC holding a Boot Fair at Tinkers Park and they would be happy for it to be used. A date at the end of June/July was discussed.

SP said that she had been looking into arrangements and costings: A licence wouldn't be needed because it was a 'one-off' event. Pitches should be pre-booked – Tinkers Park is a large site and therefore, there was the potential for quite a large return, e.g. £10 per pitch would mean £1000. Also trading pitches could be sold to food vendors.

However, portable toilets and a skip would need to be hired and the cost of these could be approx. £350. Marshals would be needed for the management of parking and access/egress off and onto the A272. Therefore, SP said that she had concluded that financially it probably wouldn't be worth it and the committee agreed that it might be a lot of work for very little return. Maybe a Jumble Sale might be better.

RL suggested having a tabletop sale possibly on the Playing field, a 'Posh Nosh Tent' - this was discussed. BL thought that it wasn't viable for several reasons and SP suggested that perhaps we should be looking at something like this for next year. RL also suggested having a wine-tasting event, citing the success of one in at the church in a previous year.

Eventually the committee decided to have an Indoor Boot Fair in the Village Hall on Sunday July 3rd starting at 9.00 am

ACTION:

- JT to book the Village Hall for Sunday, 3rd July – set-up 7.30 am finish 1.00 pm
- BL to contact Nigel Hellewell to request use of the entrance to his field for parking.
- JT to ask about advertising the event in the Buxted Messenger.

RL suggested that entrance should be by donation.

It was decided that refreshments would be sold – tea/coffee, bacon sandwiches etc. served outside at the back of the hall to maximise space inside. The main hall, kitchen, stage, and the committee room will be used. Signs will be needed to direct cars to the field and stop them from going around the back of the hall.

7.ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

RL reported that Buxted PC had revived their interest in having a village hall which might impact on the HDCC's plans.

ACTION: BL to investigate this by contacting the chair of Buxted PC

SP reported that the fund-raising person she was in contact with was interested but currently very busy. However, he will arrange a meeting when free.

BL reported that:

[1] At a recent PC meeting with Wealden to discuss the Section 106 issue with the current village hall, he had asked Stacey Robins, Head of Planning and Environmental Services (WDC) about a possible extension of our planning consent. He pointed out that the pandemic had curtailed any fund-raising activity and two years had been lost trying to raise the significant sum of £1.7 million. Mr Robins agreed that many voluntary organisations had been faced with similar problems and invited BL to write to him personally, setting out the reasons why a reinstatement of the two years was required. A formal application would not be required and Mr Robins said that he could see no reason why our request wouldn't be granted.

[2] The Business Plan will need updating – SP agreed to help BL with this.

[3] He would contact both the Big Lottery and Sport England again about possible grant aid.

ACTION: BL to contact:

- the Big Lottery and Sport England mid to late April.
- the Veolia Environmental Trust to establish exactly what its criteria are with regard to proximity to landfill/recycling facility.
- MJB Architecture re. April deadline.

SP Said that now circumstances for building were changed it was important that we had new costings.

SP reminded everyone about the Village AGM at the end of April

SP said that Fiona had suggested getting a vinyl sticker printed to be attached to our banner at the Playing Field pavilion– SP will get printing quotes.

The Big Picnic on the Playing field on Saturday, 30th July was discussed – it was decided that the HDCC would have a stand. Display boards would be needed.

ACTION: RL suggested that BL look at the National Lottery Community Partnerships Fund. This is under-subscribed and we would appear to be eligible given that it is a partnership between HDCC and HDPFA.

Meeting closed at 9.20 pm

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 24.06.22 at Playing Field Pavilion, School Lane, Hadlow Down 7.30 pm