



**IVINGHOE OLD SCHOOL COMMUNITY HUB:
TRUSTEES MEETING to be held in the Old School,
Ivinghoe: Socially Distanced Meeting in Rear Garden
Area, 28th May 2020 at 3.00pm**



Registered Charity Number 1165850

NOTES TO TRUSTEES MEETING, 28th May 2020 at 3.00pm

Present: Carol Tarrant (Chair)
Bob Corn (Secretary/Treasurer)
John Wallis (Trustee)
Sylvia Simmonds (Trustee)
Russell Eyre (Trustee)

Carol welcomed everyone to the meeting, hoping that all were safe and well, and that everyone was negotiating the Covid-19 Restrictions happily, and felt comfortable in their socially distanced single table spots outside in the sunny Hub Garden for this meeting – she offered water for everyone but no one needed it!

1.0 Apologies – There were no apologies necessary as all were present.

2.0 Finance Update:

2.1 Bob reported that at this date, we hold Cash at Bank of £28,435.61 (Including Grants for £10,000 and £1,500 which had been received after applications to two separate Covid-19 Crisis Grant Funds – awarded by Buckinghamshire Council and the Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust, respectively – both applications made by Carol (Bucks Council) and Bob (VAHT) on the basis of our tenant's non-ability to pay rent due to Covid-19 Crisis, and no hiring receipts, again due to Covid-19 Crisis).

2.2 Currently owed £378.09 (NOTE: £100 has been received in respect of this since the meeting, thus the Hub is owed £278.09).

3.0 Covid-19 Ramifications

3.1 No Income from Café Rent or Hall Hiring since 1st March 2020, now until 4th July 2020; two Grants were applied for to cover Café Rent and Hall Hiring – both Grants received - £10,000 (Tenant Rent Replacement Grant) and £1,500 (Hall Hiring's and Tenant Rent Replacement Grant) (clearly significantly more than projected missing rent and hiring income for those first four months – specifically to cover loss of rental and hiring income occasioned by the Covid-19 Crisis, as our Government offered, and we applied for). Carol read out the five-part time-line of actions so as to give clear understanding of events fully, and Bob tabled the paper trail for each Grant, which detailed the basis of the initial enquiry of Community Impact Bucks, the recommendation from ACRE (the national 'umbrella' Community Advice Group) as to which Grants might be applied for to cover the loss of Café rent, and Hiring fees - and then the basis of our applications to each of the Grant awarding bodies – i.e. specifically to cover the loss of rent from the Café, and Hiring fees during the Covid-19 Crisis.

Timeline of conversations, email, and phone for the end of April Grant Hunting times – tabled by Carol:

- ▶ 1st March 2020 - Café losing business since 1st March as people stayed at home; we started discussing the Chancellor's expressed plans for keeping small businesses open.
- ▶ Mid-March 2020: the lack of customers / business meant the Café realised the lack of possibility to pay their rent.
- ▶ Carol started deeper research and sent links to Hayley to apply for own Grants in the way our Chancellor had indicated on two separate occasions, as the financial advice changed. (Hayley was in hospital at various times at this point for patches of several days leading up to her daughter Tilly's malignant tumour being operated on and emotions were high and time was pressing).
- ▶ St Patricks Day Lunch - 15th March 2020 - held quick Trustees meeting Russ/Carol/Bob in Town Hall, just before next day lock-down. We agreed that from 1st March 2020 to the end of April 2020, and probably May 2020, as a rent holiday for Café, as Government were now predicting. Continuing in the spirit of 'what was agreed between March and probably May', at this point Carol started thinking of a grant to cover this, to keep the Community Hub Project safe financially, and started some research.
- ▶ 30th April 2020 – Carol writes to Debi Game of Community Impact Bucks (Carol read out the email) as part of her research to ask how to apply for financial reimbursement during Corona Virus shutting of Village Halls and

Community Centres, Bob also writes to the Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust to enquire if a Grant was available; both Grants were sought in respect of Café Rent and Hall Hiring, which are our two primary sources of income.

► 13th May 2020, Bob had a discussion with Hayley and Sven to explain that we will need to continue a rent free period till 4th July 2020, the Government now having given a public edict that 4th July 2020 is the earliest date for Café's and similar businesses to re-open. Bob sent an email to explain what he had discussed with our café Tenants - although Russ reminded him at this meeting that Trustees had not yet confirmed themselves the recommended Chancellor's moves of 'rent holiday' plans.

► Carol read out the advice seeking email she had sent to Debi Game as part of her research to ask how to apply for financial reimbursement during Corona Virus shutting of Village Halls and Community Centres.

3.2 Carol read out Bob's notes that our costs in simply being in the Hub Building amount to approximately £300 per month – Building Insurance, BT Telecom, Security and Fire Alarms, Standing Charges for Gas, Electricity and Water. These were discussed:

Carol asked Sylvia if Item 3.1 - facts of timeline events list, email research and grant papers - had addressed concerns in Sylvia's email to us all, wherein she outlined the 'concerns she had heard within the community'. Sylvia felt that only in part had these issues been addressed so we continued to discuss them. Carol expressed a dislike of addressing 'anonymous feedback' on principal, but agreed it was important to hear serious community concerns.

The main concern seemed to be 'subsidising a commercial business with a grant received from public funds', which was difficult to understand given that this is the economic solution advised to us all as 'landlords', this advice given by our Government's Chancellor to keep businesses intact - it is neither 'charity' nor an 'unfair advantage'. Sylvia mentioned Ivinghoe PYO, the Golf Club and the Town Hall which were inferred to be 'unfairly disadvantaged' by our adherence to our Government's offer, but bewildering to the rest of the Trustees – one would expect that these businesses would themselves be researching their own grant support and following Government guidance for applying for, for example, 'loss of Town Hall hiring rentals' via this Government proposal, or applying for subsidising grants for loss of earnings in the other cases. None of the other village businesses have a similar business plan as ours, which involves being partly subsidised by tenant rents - which brings in the 'landlord grant' status.

Carol said it was unfortunate that this unjustly negative atmosphere superseded any of the more positive feedback for the quick 'repurposing of this project' during this Covid-19 period - into the CuriosiTEA Room's schoolchild Meal Deliveries initiative, then Breakfasts, then Hamper Teas, and our own time-consuming efforts forming and running of a community Covid-19 Ivinghoe Residents' texting support group of 26 volunteers called 'WhatsApp-ningin Ivinghoe?!' This is a group which is supporting our village community in clusters, supporting all our joined up neighbours' 'wellbeing' through shared grocery shopping, medicine delivery and phone calls to combat isolation via a Ivinghoe Community helpline.

(NOTE: This Helpline is by now added to our Ivinghoe Old School Community Hub's email and phone contacts booking address. This was a last minute measure after awaiting from the Parish Council a suggested village Helpline which didn't materialise, but still keeps us within the government streaming advice of 'Local Authority Umbrella' when we registered the group with Buckinghamshire Council.)

3.3 Future Room Hiring – Bob reported that everything has been cancelled except two bookings in August, and a bi-monthly Children's Clothing Event from September (NOTE: a further booking has been received for 22nd August 2020 for a 'socially distanced' Wedding Group), and noted that current U.K. Governmental advice is that Community Buildings such as ours should be able to open after 4th July 2020. Carol responded that she was hesitant to return until we were more sure of vaccines and helpful medication, as the Hub filling up was quite a challenge to we unpaid elderly volunteers at the moment, with all that could bring simply by touching surfaces and breathing!

The Trustees instructed Bob to write to our regular hirers to inform them that they should be able to hire space from 4th July 2020, provided that they keep to all 'social distancing' and safety guidance given out by U.K. Government, and Bob to arrange for the Cleaning Service provided by Karen Bailey to be asked to carry out a 'deep clean' prior to this first date of opening proposed by Government of 4th July 2020. (NOTE: as of 5th June 2020, the U.K. Minister for Health had indicated that the 4th July 2020 date should be kept firmly under review, as the 'R' rate of Covid-19 infection has seen an increase in certain parts of the country).

3.4 Our Approach to Café Rent from 4th July 2020 – the Trustees decided that Bob should prepare invoices for the Café apportioning their use of Utilities during the Covid-19 Lockdown period, wherein the Café has been trying spasmodically to provide a service to the Community in weekend Breakfast and Afternoon tea deliveries, but barely covering their ingredients and delivery costs. The majority of Trustees were of the view that we should decide in late June 2020 as to our approach to charging rent after the possible opening of the Café after 4th July 2020, while noting that the two Grants received were awarded specifically to cover Covid-19 Crisis loss of Café rent, and Hirings, as item

2.1 and 3.1 above; further, as item 3.3 above, U.K. Governmental advice may have changed as to any optional opening date, social distancing, etc.

John tabled a paragraph extract from the Charity Commission's Web Site which states that 'it is proper for them (i.e. the Café as tenants) to receive that benefit provided that it is incidental to carrying out the charity's purpose' – he stated his belief *'that by having tenants who provide a service to the community we are fulfilling the purpose of our charity. Therefore by changing the terms of our tenant's rent will be incidental to our carrying out our charity's purpose!'* (Italics and underlining by John). It was noted that the two Grants which we have received cover approximately one year's income from our primary sources of Café Rent and Hirings.

After discussion, the opinion was expressed that we should charge a proportion of rent based on the commercial activity which the Café found it practical and safe to run, as and when they are able to properly open (NOTE: is this legal or even ethical? Needs to be revisited in late June!) – although final decisions would be made at a meeting on 25th June 2020.

4.0 Building Upkeep

4.1 Internal Maintenance – Painting, IT Room Storage Unit, Rotten Doorpost – The meeting agreed to respect all U.K. Government advice as to arranging these matters; Painting (making good a number of scuffs and scrapes on internal paintwork through use) will be subject of a volunteer working party when this can be arranged - Carol said she was happy to support this type of isolating activity – probably from early August on and during the 2020/2021 Winter period; the IT Storage Unit, for which Bob had prepared a dimensioned drawing, will go ahead just as soon as Bob can obtain an acceptable quote and Covid-19 conditions allow – as will the replacement Doorpost in the Staff Room Toilet.

4.2 External Maintenance – Roof Tiles (some broken, some slippage) to be addressed as soon as Bob can obtain an acceptable quotation and Covid-19 conditions allow; Planter Restoration (meaning restoring plants which have suffered from lack of water and attention during the Covid-19 Lockdown) will be attended to just as soon as is practical and conditions allow – Carol to pursue; Weeding – volunteers welcome to assist Carol with removal of plastic bags of leaves to the now open dump, and donate/purchase any extra plants, when conditions allow; Furniture Storage – it was not clear what this item referred to, but the meeting noted that some of the external 2013 wooden bench seats and tables were in need of attention/possible replacement – to be kept under review.

4.3 Window Cleaning – due end of August – we have a rolling agreement with JP Window Cleaning of Berkhamsted.

4.4 Cleaner – when do we re-employ our Cleaner? As noted in item 3.3 above, Bob to arrange with Karen Bailey to re-commence her Cleaning Service with a 'deep clean' prior to any agreed opening date beyond 4th July 2020.

5.0 Any Other Business – Sylvia expressed her view that our Financial Reporting was not transparent, and that steps should be taken to make it so; Bob responded that he regretted any suggestion that the financial affairs of the Hub are covert in any way – and always makes an up to date financial statement on minutes (as item 2.1 above) which are published on the Hub's Web Site, and as 'hard copy' on notice boards in both the Entry/Cloakroom Area and in the IT Room – Russ supported this approach, as folk could always ask for deeper detail if they needed it. Further, Bob has been Treasurer since September 2019, since when he has kept detailed Income and Expenditure records, and indeed has prepared the April 2019 - March 2020 Figures for Inspection by the agreed Inspector Colin Arney – Bob will send out the full 'Uninspected Accounts' to all Trustees for their information (NOTE: these were emailed to all Trustees on 29th May 2020).

6.0 Date of Next Meeting – a 'socially distanced' meeting to be held on 25th June 2020 at 3.00pm – in the Back-Garden of the Hub if weather permits, or in the Main Hall if inclement – if neither option is possible due to 'Lockdown', then a 'virtual meeting' will be held at the same time.

