

MINUTES OF THE PARISH HALL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 9 MARCH 2021 via Zoom

PRESENT: C White, L White (Treasurer), A Daily (Secretary), S Dwyer, D Martin, M Stickland, S Woodford, and 5 members of the public.

1. APOLOGIES: received from P Crawford, V Hodder, N Hurrell, J Le Grice & P Macdonald

2. MINUTES OF THE 2020 AGM

Minutes of the previous year's AGM held on 10 March 2020 were posted on the Parish website and were taken as read. They will be signed when allowed

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

In the absence of a Chairmen, Chris White once again addressed the meeting.

It's been a very strange year with no events being held and no classes since last March so this is going to be more of a maintenance report. In July we received a large electricity bill and in spite of the hall being empty showed we were consuming a large amount. After lots of tests it was found the meter was not registering the amount of electricity the hall was generating. A new meter was installed to address this but caused a different problem as it seems to be double charging for everything else. EDF are installing another meter to check the one already installed which will hopefully be more accurate. There has been mention of compensation if it is found they are at fault.

We have taken advantage of the hall being empty to future proof it. An upgrade has been made to the audio system which will make it easier to cover the use of the plethora of different devices. The wall lights have been upgraded to LEDS which allows changes of colour and brightness. The entire stage lights have been replaced by an LED based system and also enable colour changes. These are safer as ladders do not have to be climbed.

We then came to the conclusion there were Covid 19 related problems with the heating system which has also proved to be inefficient. After much research and discussion, a new system has been found to heat the main hall which will hopefully prove to be more efficient and greener as it will not use fossil fuels.

The router was also replaced as it was not connecting and it is needed to work for the website and Village Voice. Thanks to grants received from SHDC we have managed to achieve all this without going into our reserves.

We do have some plans for future events when allowed, Tim Kliphaus is waiting in the wings and Festive Flutes who were supposed to play for us last year have offered to come back. There could possibly be a Cheese and Wine, Family Fun or Autumn Fair event.

I would like to thank the wonderful committee for keeping everything going via Zoom meetings and attending socially distanced meetings to complete the risk assessment, which was very chilly due to the windows having to be open. Succeeded in getting the hall Covid compliant then we went into the second lockdown.

Thank you to Alison for arranging meetings and keeping us in order. Also, to Diane for pouring over many government documents about Covid safety to ensure we are as Covid ready as we can possibly be.

Huge thanks to Paul Martin for all his help with the projects, including saving us from having to replace the whole of the front door when the mechanisms seized up due to corrosion. He managed to construct something to fix it.

Thanks also to Mike Bone who also helped with the projects, we are lucky to be able to call on practical, intelligent people with great ingenuity.

Paul Martin said could we also thank Alan Daily, Paul Dunne and Christian Woodford for their help in replacing the gravel in the car park.

Thank you to Pat Macdonald who is standing down from the committee, we can't complain as she is now 91 and served many years during which time she has been a stalwart of the committee as well as being brilliant at arranging countless events over the years and will be sorely missed and difficult to replace.

Vida Hodder, our representative for Keep Fit classes, has also offered her resignation, so thank you to her for her help and efforts over the last couple of years.

This means the committee are a chairman and 2 members down, so if anyone knows of anything we can do to attract people to replace these, please let us know. We desperately need new blood with fresh ideas to push us on into the future.

Alison thanked Chris for chairing the meeting and for all his time and effort in researching and ensuring the hall is as updated and safe as it can be.

5. ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDING 31.12.18

Well, this has been a very different year for everyone. The Parish Hall had to close at the beginning of the first lockdown on March 23rd 2020, but then South Hams District Council began to offer grants to cover our loss of income. We came under the category of leisure venues and on May 1st 2020, we received £10,000. Then during lockdown 2, we were offered a grant based on the rateable value of our property and on December 10th 2020, we received £1,334. Since then, we received a further £7,573 on February 17th this year and I am hopeful that another grant is about to be paid this week. In addition, we had a donation of £50 from Juliette Atkin.

The Solar Panels have continued to provide an excellent return on our initial investment back in 2011 and in 2020, we received a total of £2480.06 – the highest annual return that we have ever had. We just need the sun to keep shining.

The car parking permits for the holiday homes on Main Street generated a total of £495 – we now have 8 holiday homes and the Friends of Thurlestone School pay an annual fee of £75 towards the cost of the upkeep of the car park. The holiday homes now pay £65 per annum for their permit.

Our main source of income was generated in the first quarter of 2020 and since then, there has been very little apart from the grants. We were not able to hold any fund-raising events during the year and although the Hall was made Covid secure in October, having spent £371.50 on Covid supplies, the disruption caused by the lockdowns meant that the usual hirers were not able to return. The interest on our bank accounts is now woefully low but I think that most of us are suffering similarly.

The Parish Hall is now nearly 16 years old and inevitably, some items are coming to the end of their lives and need to be replaced. The Maintenance Committee have taken advantage of the lockdowns to update the lighting system. At the beginning of the year, we spent £419.53 on new LED Floodlights. In the past, ladders were used to access the lights – a rather precarious situation but now they can be accessed via a remote desk situated in the AV cupboard at a total cost of £11,054.92. The new lights gave a fine display during the Thurlestone Illuminations over the Christmas period. We are also about to update the heating system. Instead of blowing air around the Main Hall which is not Covid friendly, we are having infrared heaters installed. We also spent £1,978.80 on an upgrade to the AV system in the Yeo Room.

With regards to the utilities, I am on a monthly payment scheme for the electricity and telephone and internet. As ever, EDF collected far too much from us each month and in September, we received £731.61 back in overpayment. They don't learn because a bill received this week highlighted a very similar overpayment spanning the period from August 2020 to February 2021, but this time they are reducing our direct debit to £1 per month.

The main expenses on repairs included a fence repair, hedge cutting, car park chippings, Dart Fire Protection who check the Fire Alarms, Emergency Lighting and Smoke Detectors on an annual basis together with Oil Burner Service.

We no longer have a full-time caretaker. The front door operates on a remote locking device and users of the Hall have a code to use to gain access to the Hall. This saves the manual unlocking and locking that used to be done each day. Brenda Jones has been our regular cleaner for a number of years but she tendered her resignation for family reasons in April and Frith Chadwick took over doing a deep clean of the kitchen and cloakrooms. My husband is also able to operate the heating system remotely.

The uncategorised expense relates to the Smartlock Annual Charge and the monthly Zoom subscription which we share with Village Voice.

South Hams District Council are now automatically giving us the full 100% reduction on our Council Tax Bill without me having to fight for it. As a charity, we are entitled to an 80% reduction with the other 20% being at their discretion. Of course, in 2020, Covid meant that the Council Tax was waived.

Thurlestone Parish Hall remains a huge asset to the residents of Thurlestone, West Buckland and Bantham. Our hire rates are extremely competitive compared to other Parish/Village Halls in the area and I see no reason to increase them at this time. The whole Parish should be very proud of their Parish Hall. Let us hope that we will be able to get back to normal later in the year.

Finally, I would like to say a very big thank you to my Independent Examiner, Gavin Price.

6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS,

As none of the officers are standing down, there is no election unless anyone wants to remove them. There are vacancies for a Chairman or Vice-Chairman.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Diane provided us with an update on classes resuming, regulars were contacted and most have responded. Some want to start back in May and others in September. We have lost circuit training and Pilates but Diane is looking to replace these. The Police Commissioner election will still go ahead as long as the hall is Covid safe. We have also made a booking in July. A doctor from Chillington who wanted to hold monthly meetings hasn't replied yet. A wedding is booked for September and if all goes to plan, we will have local elections in May.
- Neill Irwin thanked us and said well done for keeping the ship in good order.
- Diane asked Chris to inform her when heating installation is finished so the risk assessment can be updated.
- Chris thanked everyone who attended, especially the members of the public who brightened up our AGM.
- Dave and Viv Gibby are happy to help with events, not sure if they could come up with new ideas but will see how it goes.

Meeting closed at 6.35pm

Signed:

Dated: