

## SAMPFORD BRETT VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held on 27th November 2019 in the Village Hall

### Minutes

The meeting was opened at 19:30 by the chair Andy Busby. A total of 22 residents attended.

- (1) **Apologies.** Apologies were received from Clive Brooks, Chris Martin, Kate McCrimmon, Angela Berners-Lee, Sue Biggs and Jane Busby.
- (2) **Minutes of the last meeting (28th November 2018)** were read and proposed by Margie Smith and Seconded by Leslie Proctor as a true record of that meeting. APPROVED and signed by Andy Busby.
- (3) **Matters Arising** - None that were not covered by the agenda.
- (4) **Chair's report (Andy Busby)** - see previously published report [here](#).

In summary, the chair reported a 'quiet' but busy year which has seen a continued loss of bookings. We need to tackle this issue in the coming year with some creative reaching out to the community.

- (5) **Treasurer's Report (Vere Kennett)** - see previously published report [here](#).

Vere prefaced her report with a statement that she intended to make the finances of the hall simple and easy to understand for everyone.

A net deficit of income compared to spend was the key feature of the report, but this needed to be seen in the context of considerable spend in equipping the hall both for Health and Safety and Usability requirements (eg extra fire protection equipment, Audio/visual equipment improvements).

As in previous years, we have benefitted from a considerable donation from Sampford Brett Activities Group (SBAG) for which we are grateful. This money is divided between the General fund (routine spend, regular maintenance) and the Hall Refurbishment fund (capital projects as agreed by the committee to enhance the hall / finance any eventual replacement). At the date of the report, their donation for this year had not been accounted and will thus appear in next year's figures.

Martin Blazey questioned the electricity costs compared to income and Vere explained that this is an ongoing discussion, having recently completed a rather painful transfer to a new Supplier. We will review electricity charges in the new year with a view to reducing the deficit.

Jan Swan suggested that we might employ motion sensors in key locations to reduce wastage and thus control costs better. There was also a discussion about the use of more energy efficient lighting; though we need to factor replacement costs into this discussion. The committee will explore options next year.

The chair thanked Phil Swan for again conducting the Independent Examiner's report. He also thanked Vere for her hard work and tenacity this year in taking over the Treasurer's role and getting to grips with some complicated legacy documentation and processing.

(6) **Lettings Secretary's Report** - see previously published report [here](#).

The committee feel that it is somewhat disturbing to see the gradual decline of bookings for the hall over a number of years. Currently, the Gardening and Soup Clubs are the only true village groups that hire the hall, the rest being made up by individuals/groups from outside the village. We had a broad discussion about the possible reasons for this decline (changing User tastes/requirements, not reaching new villagers, poor advertising and communication/appropriate channels for such, the split between SBAG activities and VHMC activities, the hall facilities, event 'fatigue' from a small group of active people etc) and clearly there is no single answer.

Some ideas were also discussed about what sort of activities might be promoted; for example, a more frequent opening of the Pop Up Pub, Bingo, day time exercise classes, resurrection of the History Society, weekly coffee mornings, childrens' parties etc. Clearly the VHMC has to balance any greater 'commercial' use of the hall (short-term and longer-term if the hall is rebuilt) with its constitutional requirement to run the hall for the community in 'the area of benefit'; this will be factored into the ongoing discussions around the conundrum that is the village hall future. At this point, it was clear the meeting was discussing the next agenda item (Item 7 below) and so we moved on.

(7) **A Hall make-over in 2020** - see previously published report [here](#)

The aim of this initiative in 2020 is to bring the village hall back into community focus by planning and implementing agreed 'quick fixes' that will both make the hall a better place to socialise/hire and make it the object of Community volunteering throughout the year. The act of redecorating and improving the hall will be a community activity in it's own right and hopefully strengthen community bonds.

There was much enthusiasm from the meeting for an early planning session in 2020, leading to some hands-on work throughout the year; this will be a major programme for the VHMC in 2020.

(8) **Election of the Committee**

The following members were proposed (Martin Blazey), seconded (Margie Smith) and elected (unanimously) en bloc:

Andy Busby - Chair  
Vere Kennett - Treasurer  
Dave Smith - Secretary  
Charles Cadby - Lettings and maintenance secretary  
Richard Currie - Gardening Club  
Liz Blazey - Parochial Church Council  
Brenda Payne

(9) **Any other business**

Stephen Pearce reported a broken down-pipe to the rear of the hall; this would be fixed. Martin Blazey reported the failed light in the car park; this would be fixed.

Andy Busby closed the meeting after expressing his thanks to all the Committee for their efforts over the last year.