

LITTLE CLIFTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 11th January 2017 at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillors Ian Elliott, Jean McCartney, Ken Stephenson, Brian Shaw and Roland Bell.
Village Hall Management Committee Members: Jennifer Symonds, Carol Wilson, Ellen, Lauren, Tina Croft, Keith Croft, and Lyn.
Judith Morgan (Parish Clerk) was also in attendance.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr John Dixon

Councillor Ian Elliott in the chair

119/16 Village Hall

i. Purpose of Meeting

The Parish Council, as Trustees of the Village Hall, had called this joint meeting with members of the Village Hall Management Committee to review progress made by the Committee, share communications received by the Parish Council concerning the Village Hall and adopt a way forward for effective management of the Village Hall.

ii. Progress Report since meeting held 26th October 2016

Mrs Jennifer Symonds wished to address the meeting and read a prepared statement to the effect that the ongoing difficulties and lack of support were badly affecting her health and she wished to resign both as chair of the committee and from the committee with immediate effect. Mrs Symonds then handed her keys and other items over to Mrs Carol Wilson and left the meeting.

It was confirmed that a plumber had looked at the sink in the kitchen and advised that the tap was leaking as the fittings were loose. Mr Keith Croft requested that new taps be fitted appropriate for disabled users of the hall.

Cllr Ian Elliott confirmed that the boiler had been serviced by local resident, Tony Turnbull, free of charge for the first year. This was warmly welcomed.

There is still no list of current key holders or list of which regular hall users have keys. No schedule of usage was on display on the notice board in the hall. Contact details had not been displayed outside the hall, as agreed in October. When asked, Mr Keith Croft replied that he had agreed to do this but didn't see why he should.

New signatories had been authorised on the "Little Clifton Parish Village Hall" current account with the Cumberland Building Society but, as Mrs Symonds had now resigned, this put things back to square one.

Mrs Carol Wilson handed a cheque for the cost of the new tables, ordered by the Parish Council on the management committee's behalf, to Mrs Judith Morgan, the Parish Clerk. Mr Keith Croft stated that it was a pity this cheque had been signed before Mrs Symonds had resigned.

The promised list of committee members with roles and responsibilities had not been issued to the Parish Council and no Vice Chairman had been appointed to the committee.

Overall, not much progress had been made since the October 2016 meeting.

iii. Correspondence to Parish Council

Two letters of complaint from local residents had been sent to the Parish Council and these were read to the meeting.

Mrs Carol Wilson confirmed that she issued receipts when cheques were received and that a newer, more reliable system, had recently been implemented which was proving satisfactory. This was welcomed.

Lynn stated that she had taken the tea towels from the hall home to wash over the Christmas break and confirmed that the green box in the cupboard beneath the microwave contains a fresh supply of both tea towels and dishcloths.

Copies of minutes of the Management Committee meetings had not been furnished to the Parish Council since October, although it had been agreed that this would be done. Miss Tina Croft explained that this was because she had not purchased ink for her printer until January 2017.

It was confirmed that the Parish Council had received a copy of the last financial statement - another is pending once details were available to the treasurer to update the information. It was noted that the Hall had been closed for two weeks over the festive period.

iv. Communication of Village Hall Events

It was reported that some residents had not been aware of, and had therefore missed out on, the Christmas Party. Mr Keith Croft stated that the event had been advertised on the Great Clifton and Little Clifton post offices and in the village shop. Residents of Chapel Brow had not known about the event, which is open to any resident over the age of 59 years.

A small, handwritten notice on a scrap of cardboard was presented to the meeting. This had been the advertisement for the Pea and Pie Supper on 30th November. It was agreed that this was not of an appropriate size or quality to effectively advertise this event.

Mr Keith Croft stated that he hoped to have an artist produce new advertising boards for the Coffee Mornings shortly, free of charge.

There was confusion surrounding the patchworkers' bookings of the hall for alternate Thursday mornings and a conflict of dates with the Coffee mornings which is also held on alternate Thursday morning, on the weeks when the patchworkers do not meet. There was also confusion over when the Art Group was to use the hall. Mr Keith Croft (bookings secretary) said that he did not have contact numbers for either the patchworkers or the art group. It was agreed that communication is currently very poor.

v. Maintenance and Housekeeping

Cllr Roland Bell was thanked for supplying the chain for the outside padlock.

Mr Keith Croft explained that there was now a new lock which did not have a combination but was operated with a key only and that he kept the key in his pocket.

It was noted that cigarette ends were scattered outside the hall door and were never cleaned away. Similar problems were experienced with waste and recycling bins which were

seldom put out and, when they were, often were not put back. Councillors Brian Shaw and Jean McCartney had both returned the bins on more than one occasion. Dirty tea towels left on radiators to dry was also discussed. This was not acceptable.

Cllr Ian Elliott passed money from the Sequence Dancers to Mrs Carol Wilson. As the dancers still do not have a key to the building, Cllr Elliott has continued to open up for them. Mr Keith Croft explained that he had the key which was purchased for the dancers but hadn't managed to give it to them yet.

Cllr Ian Elliott passed a United Utilities Bill for the Village Hall to Mrs Carol Wilson, the bill had been erroneously sent to Cllr Elliott's address. Mrs Wilson said she was having difficulties with UU and had recently had a number of lengthy telephone conversations with them to resolve admin issues.

vi. The Way Forward.

Cllr Ian Elliott explained that the Parish Council, as Trustees, had taken legal advice and it had been discovered that as Trustee, it is the council's legal obligation to ensure that the management committee can run the hall to a reasonable standard including the maintenance of bookings, cleaning, proper handling of money, access arrangements and a committee which understands its role and whose members work together. Failure in any of these areas could mean that the Parish Council is held responsible. In such circumstances the Trustees are within their rights to order the management committee to stand down and to reappoint a committee of their choosing. The Parish Council had subsequently taken a vote of no confidence in the current committee and required them to stand down with immediate effect.

Mr Keith Croft, Miss Tina Croft and Ellen left the meeting at this point. Mr Croft later returned to hand in his keys and paperwork relating to the hall bookings.

The Parish Council will take over the running of the hall with all bookings being organised through the Parish Clerk. The weekly Bingo and fortnightly Coffee Mornings could continue, if there were people willing to organise these events, and there would be no charge for the use of the hall for either.

Mrs Carol Wilson was asked to continue as Treasurer and it was recognised that the financial records had been kept in very good order. Mrs Wilson said that she would consider this.

Lauren asked that a poster be produced to ask for a volunteer bingo caller for the Monday evenings Bingo sessions. Rev'd Judith Morgan agreed to produce a poster to be emailed to Cllr Ian Elliott for display in the village notice boards and in the hall.

Cllr Brian Shaw presented a quote from Border Floors for £1,596.00 to sand and polish the village hall floor. It was agreed that this quote be accepted and that Cllr Shaw should organise dates with Border Flooring, possibly end of March, beginning of April.

It was agreed that there was insufficient time for Lauren to organise the Coffee Morning for 12th January and that this event would, therefore, be cancelled. Cllr Ian Elliott to produce a poster to this effect to be displayed on the door and to try to catch people on their way to the event in order to explain.

It was agreed that both the Bingo and the Coffee Mornings had been run well and were appreciated by many local residents. Lynn and Lauren agreed to continue with these events but help would be appreciated. Cllr Jean McCartney had the telephone number of one lady who had offered to help with the coffee mornings - this to be passed to Lauren.

It was noted that Mrs Jennifer Symonds has the Bookers' cash and carry card for the Village Hall Committee. Lynn to contact her about this.

Cllr Ian Elliott to pass a list of keyholders (possibly now out of date) to Rev'd Judith Morgan, as a starting point.

Money held in the premises was passed to the Treasurer to bank.

Cllr Brian Shaw agreed to take a look at what could be done to fix the leaking sink.

On the proposal of Mrs Carol Wilson, seconded by Cllr Brian Shaw, it was agreed that Mr Brian Shaw, Mrs Jean McCartney and Mr Ian Elliott be added as signatories to the "Little Clifton Parish Village Hall" current account with the Cumberland Building Society.

Mrs Carol Wilson stated that two accounts needed to be paid shortly, one to Gunsons' electricians and the other to United Utilities. All other accounts had been paid in full.

There was some discussion of the possibility of Lauren being employed as a part time caretaker for the village hall.

The meeting closed at 8.31pm.

Signed..... Chairman