

HOTV Management Committee meeting (Zoom) minutes

23-6-20, 7:30pm

Present: Graham Gleed (confirmed as Chair during the course of the meeting), Mike Blair, David Crabbe, John Davison, Dave Evans, Nick Sloan, Heather Venn.

Minutes unanimously agreed to be accurate at following meeting: 29-6-20

- 1.1 Apologies received from David Crabbe who is unavoidably detained, but joins the meeting six minutes in.
- 2.1 GG requests that each committee member sign a confirmation of their acceptance of the MC Code of Conduct. The Code itself is available to view on the Documents page of the HOTV web pages. **NS agrees to circulate a form and collect signatures.**

Election of Officers

- 3.1 **NS proposes GG for chair, seconded by JD and agreed by all present.**
- 3.2 **GG proposes DC for Treasurer, seconded by JD, agreed by all present.**
- 3.3 **GG proposes NS as Secretary, seconded by JD, agreed by MB, DE and HV.**
HV raises the question of whether the post just agreed was for “company secretary” or clerk (responsible for minutes etc.). GG says that this is due to be clarified later, but in fact the discussion ensues here. DE feels that the role is too important to be split. NS suggests that the statutory role was for company secretary, but that he is happy to take on both roles until it might be decided otherwise. **NS to write these minutes.**

[DC joins meeting]

- 3.4 **GG proposes MB for Vice-Chair, seconded by NS, agreed by all.**
- 4.1 GG summarises responses to his request to prioritise items under agenda item 4. Agreed that the purchase of the Royal Oak is the most urgent and should be discussed first.

Next steps the Royal Oak

- 4.2 GG asks for comments on the document “The Case for the RO”, and the note from the mortgage holders, circulated to MC members before the meeting.
DC: the note from Horizon makes further negotiation on price pointless; we simply have to make a decision on whether to proceed at the agreed price.
HV: price a long-standing bone of contention; a full structural survey has not been done; serious reservations about whether enough has been allocated in the budget for the amount of work that may need to be done.
DE agrees, has known the building for 40 years and says there have always been problems with damp. Previous HOTV minutes have led people to believe that a *full* structural survey has been conducted when in fact it has not. Why?
GG accepts that the use of the term “Full structural survey” was a mis-statement.
HV: we need to look more critically at the building, but we are “over a barrel” in terms of price; we need to make a decision about whether we can afford to proceed.

JD: accepts DE's point about the description of the survey, but refutes the concerns about structural problems and the cost of repairs. He cites 30 years experience in the business of damp prevention. We have a lot of work to do and need to get on with it.

DC: we are six weeks away from a deadline and need to make a decision very soon.

NS: there are bound to be problems with the building, but they will be soluble.

HV suggests that we have not budgeted for the latest standards of fire safety and disabled access: this refuted by NS and GG.

DE thinks the Royal Oak should be knocked down, and that there is no proven market for the community pub project.

- 4.3 GG: the whole HOTV project is based on the purchase of the Oak; if we do not buy it, we lose all our grants and loans. Given all the evidence to suggest that the price is fair and non-negotiable, **GG proposes that we go ahead with the purchase of the Royal Oak on the 31st July. Seconded by JD. Supported by MB, NS, DC; DE and HV abstain.**

DC: both DE and HV raise reasonable points, but there should be enough in the budget to cover unanticipated problems in the building.

JD: as soon as we own the building, we become eligible for more grants.

GG to circulate a slightly amended copy of "The Case for the RO" to Members, together with a preamble explaining what we have decided.

Work groups

- 4.4 GG emphasises importance of having work groups to cover operational matters outside the MC, particularly relating to financial planning/forecasting and to the running of the shop.

DE: such groups would have to be sub-committees by the terms of our Rules (NS refutes this), but proposes JD as project manager to oversee the immediate work required on the pub, initially to accommodate the shop. GG and DC support this proposal.

JD: happy to accept position; feels that we need a short (6 month) and long-term plan for the pub, shop and café, but confident that we can "make them fly" despite the uncertainties of Covid-19 and the pub trade in general.

NS proposes JD as building operations manager, seconded by GG, agreed by all.

JD to prepare a project report listing the work required.

- 4.5 HV concerned that a lot of information is not being circulated within the group, and that it is important for all MC members to be better informed.

NS agrees that we need to improve our information exchange and offers to work on it.

DC: an organisation like HOTV needs to back up information so that substitutes can step in and take over. A collective archive is also necessary..

MB: we need to put out more information, partly so as to displace misinformation.

NS: the HOTV News page a good forum. GG: more frequent updates needed.

DC: Carolyn and Jo have done an amazing job in the shop, and should be closely involved in our forward planning. All agreed.

GG proposes Heather to continue to lead the Shop Group, seconded by DE, all agree.

DE: HV, Jo and Carolyn should set out what they need from the MC, and the MC should appoint members to the Shop Group accordingly.

DC: we need somebody to take responsibility for HR, particularly in connection with

the extension of contracts, recruitment of the pub manager and TUPE issues. A diversion ensues, revisiting the question of working groups vs sub-committees. GG suggests that **JD and HV should define their own terms of reference in order to clarify the division of responsibilities. DC will do the same in relation to his role as Treasurer.**

NS: in principle, every responsibility should be traceable back to one individual. MB points out that there are only seven on the MC, and that we should not neglect volunteers. NS agrees that much of the work (and many of the responsibilities) will lie outside the MC, whose main role is to plot the course. JD and HV agree that you don't have to be on the MC to be involved; each group needs a range of people to share the work. **HV agrees to approach Sara Sollis to ask if she would be prepared to share her HR skills.**

GG: the two most pressing HR issues are pensions and recruiting pub manager. HV suggests contacting accountant at AC Mole re pensions. **GG will ask Sarah Twist at AC Mole about pension funds as well as SITR.**

4.6 DE suggests two further potential sub-groups: one working on an archive of HOTV information and the other on stakeholder involvement. **DE to circulate proposal.**

4.7 **Extension of shop manager contracts**

HV: Jo and Carolyn both happy to stay on as joint managers, but their hours need tweaking in the light of experience. (Contracts are not hour-specific).

JD: What about when volunteers return? Both HV and JD support keeping Jo and Carolyn on as we progress to the Oak and open the café. All present very appreciative of their value to the business, past and future.

GG proposes that we offer to extend existing contracts for six months, seconded by Heather, all agreed. Heather to inform Jo and Carolyn, and modify contracts accordingly.

Book-keeping

4.8 GG: at a meeting of the Shop Group last Monday, it was agreed that Sally Taylor would take over day-to-day operational book-keeping for the shop.

HV proposes that Sally takes over the book-keeping role in order to allow DC to concentrate on higher level treasurer functions. DC would like to discuss this further; **HV will provide him with Sally's contact details.** Formal decision deferred.

Quarterly Trading Statement

4.9 GG: QTS due at the end of June, and necessary to obtain SITR Form 3 from HMRC.

DC suggests external stock-take at end of June to clarify trading position, since the shop was acquired with very low stocks, and these have necessarily risen in response to rise in demand. **HV to communicate this to Jo and Carolyn. DC to liaise with Heather and Carrs, who will perform the stock-take.**

Bank Account

4.10 GG: HSBC have repeatedly failed to provide a new trading account or payment cards; GG has approached Triodos Bank and has set in motion the process of opening business accounts with them. They will also supply payment cards and paying-in via the Post Office in North Curry will be enabled. **GG to complete the process.**

EPOS

- 4.11 MB explained the practice of Mike Hensman, the treasurer at Broughton in relation to EPOS. **MB to put DC in touch with Mike Hensman.**
HV: Jo and Carolyn getting on well with EPOS. DC: works fine for inputting items and prices, but not necessarily for stock level. Details of EPOS practices to be explored further.
- 4.12 DC: lockdown is continuing for some time; do we have any plans for either the shop or the pub to say we are here? **Defer to next meeting.**
- 4.13 DE: if social distancing is officially reduced to one metre, that may put Jo and Carolyn at increased risk. All agreed that the shop can continue to set its own policy on this, and that this should be made clear to customers.
- 4.14 The Village Hall may start to be used again before long, which would be a problem for the shop since it is currently using the kitchen for storage. If completion on the Oak purchase takes place by the end of July, this problem may be of short duration.
- 4.15 MB: Broughton are applying for grants to cover loss of income due to Covid. GG: we have applied but were refused because our revenue has risen rather than dropped.

Next meeting

- 5 GG suggests meeting more often in view of the amount to do at present.
DE: what has happened to regular Monday meetings? Should we have both public and closed meetings? NS: it would be helpful if Dave circulated his thoughts on this so that a policy could be decided at the next meeting. HV feels that the regular first Monday of the month public meetings should continue.
Agreed to hold the next MC meeting on 29 June and the next open meeting on 6 July.

Meeting closes 9:20 pm.