

HOTV public Management Committee meeting (Zoom) minutes | draft

1 February 2021, 7:00pm

Present: Graham Gleed (Chair), Mike Blair (Vice-Chair), David Crabbe (Treasurer), Nick Sloan (Secretary), John Davison, Chris Reah, Carolyn Dauncey, Jo Bown and 11 others. (More joined the meeting at 7:30 since there was a mix-up about the start time.)

- 2.1 The minutes of the last meeting were unanimously agreed to be accurate. GG explains the reasons for reluctantly rejecting the proposal to run a gym in the function room and runs through some of the other items covered.

Members feedback

- 3.1 GG invites non-committee members to raise any issues they would like to discuss. Ian Upshall says that parking outside the shop, especially with the scaffolding in place, is dangerous for pedestrians. Can we persuade people to park in the car park, and could the pull-in be set aside for disabled parking? [Agreed, practical measures to be discussed](#). Paul Fielding asks if deliveries too might be diverted to the car park.
- 3.2 Susan Crabbe asks if the light switching arrangements could be changed so as to make it easier for volunteers and others when leaving the building in the dark. JD offers to set the emergency lighting in the corridor to be on permanently. NS mentions that the location of several light switches is about to be changed in any case. Marilyn Clarke suggests that the café lighting is too dim.

Shop operations

- 4.1 CD: trading continues good. A leaflet drop has brought in new customers. Feedback suggests that customers like variety and range of stock. CD and JB are looking into providing some form of takeaway when the stock move to the skittle alley frees up the kitchen. A big thank you to the volunteers who are doing many useful jobs and are much appreciated. Stock is on order now for Valentine's Day, Mother's Day and Easter. Sourdough and pastries on Saturdays are very popular and coffee sales are improving. Covid restrictions mean that customers are not allowed to sit together on benches so these are being moved out of the way. Very happy to be short-listed for shop-of-the-year award, and thanks to Tim for entering us. J and C are catching up on making sure all the stock is clearly priced, and there is a fruit and veg price list in the café. Liz Bennett commends Jo and Carolyn for the quality of their stock and thanks them.
- 4.2 GG asks Marilyn Clarke if she has anything to add about volunteers. MC: not much, a few adjustments to shifts seem to be working ok. Thank you very much for all those who have signed up for shifts, including one or two new people. GG highlights the significant amount of work that is being undertaken by volunteers and adds his thanks and those of the rest of the MC.

Financial headlines

- 5.1 DC: shop sales were just shy of £29K for the four weeks in January. This is an excellent result, on a par with Christmas sales, and reflects the hard work of Jo and Carolyn. We are breaking even as a business despite some unanticipated running costs. We have paid about £14K in planned capital expenditure in January, bringing our balance down to about £89K.

DC thanks Paul Fielding for responding to the request for ideas on creating further revenue, and for his help in clearing the skittle alley for stock.

Work groups

- 6.1 JD: the front windows have all been replaced and look magnificent. Dave Dyer has covered a lot of ground on door widening in the bar and most of the major work should be completed by the end of next week. We still aim to have the pub *available* for opening at the end of March, though we are unlikely to be able to trade then.
- 6.2 NS: repointing is progressing with help from Robbie and Olivia. We aim to have the scaffolding down by the end of February. JD mentions that Jo Williams, who has already done some excellent brick repairs, has injured his finger badly. We all send him commiserations and best wishes for a rapid recovery. Dave Dyer has removed the concrete lintel from the front and could complete the repairs if necessary. Tom Stobie asks about decorating. JD replies that there will be decoration to be done, but the timing is uncertain and covid limits us to a maximum of two people at a time. JD will be circulating an email to operations volunteers.
- 6.3 JD: part of the LH skittle alley will be walled off, cleaned and decorated, hopefully by the end of next week, to receive the excess shop stock currently stored in the kitchen. We then aim to upgrade the kitchen in order to prepare it for takeaways. Susan Crabbe asks about the leak in the kitchen roof. JD replies that it will be fixed next week. Marilyn Clarke asks about the status of the kitchen equipment. NS replies that it is being surveyed as part of the refurbishment, and will be cleaned, upgraded or replaced as necessary. MB says that some of the kitchen will need to be professionally cleaned, especially the extraction unit. Gas appliances will also need checking.
- 6.4 JD says that whatever else may need attention, we know that the pizza oven is working, and we aim to start producing pizzas. Olivia Sanders points out that there are two competing pizza providers.
- 6.5 Liz Bennett: where are we with kitchen renovation as a separate project? NS replies that it is still the intention to assess exactly what is needed in terms of both refurbishment and equipment and then to prepare a grant application to cover it.
- 6.6 Ian Upshall asks about food hygiene regs. MB says that the authorities have been notified and that we are liable to be inspected. NS adds that it is because we are aware of our food hygiene obligations that we are prioritising work on the kitchen.
- 6.7 MB: we are not yet clear exactly how the relationship between the shop, the café and takeaways is going to work in terms of staffing and stock and cost transfers, but this is being worked on. Any input would be welcome. DC: we need to keep the system as simple as possible.
- 6.8 JD and NS: some aspects of work on the accommodation will be unclear until we know whether or not it will be occupied by the pub manager, but there are things that will have to be done in any case and we are proceeding with those.
- 6.9 MB: we are working on a contingency plan to keep the shop open if Jo and Carolyn were to have to self-isolate. Five people including DC have volunteered to be trained to serve behind the counter. Simplification of processes is also an aim.

- 6.10 GG asks if there has been any progress on deciding about a shop name. CR has received no further comments. GG asks if we are still proposing to record votes from shop visitors. CD says that it was unclear whether the shop was supposed to be taking the initiative. GG says that we need to have a clear proposal in place before the next meeting. MC liked the naming used on the shop flyers [Village Shop (Stoke St Gregory Community Shop & Café)], and there has been no adverse comment on this. She recommends that we adopt this.

Personnel

- 7.1 GG: not much to report about the appointment of a landlord. There is strong interest from a local couple but it is not yet clear how that might play out. There is also still an earlier application on the table. Talks are ongoing, but there is no time pressure until pub trading is viable.
- 7.2 GG: we are investigating the Government Kickstart programme which pays the first six months wages of new jobs for those between the ages of 16 and 24. We have to guarantee employment beyond 6 months for at least the minimum wage. GG suggests that there may be jobs available in the shop once the café is in full operation. CR and JD support the idea. NS has concerns that we would find ourselves having to pay for work that could otherwise be done by volunteers. **GG to follow up and bring a specific proposal back to the group.**

Shop short-listing and publicity

- 8.1 GG: we owe a debt of gratitude to Tim Slattery for getting the shop entered and short-listed in the Shop of the Year competition. This has generated a lot of good publicity. There are some unanswered questions about how the result is determined. TS says this has been welcomed as a good news story at a time when the press is preoccupied with covid, and there is more potential press interest in the pipeline. GG says that the later any judges visit us the better, since things will be more impressive when the scaffolding is down, the outside looks neater and there is more opportunity for people to gather drinking coffee etc. Any information on the process and timescale would be helpful. Olivia suggests that it would be a good idea to have some display about HDTV in the shop to help visitors from outside understand about the project, and see what future plans are. TS mentions an article on the Royal Oak the Somerset Gazette this week.
- 8.2 Olivia asks Graham about potential SW&T grants. Graham says that he has been trying to make an application, but the website keeps blocking it. He has discussed this with the Village Agent, who has promised to nudge SW&T. **GG to follow up.**
- 8.3 The PC has recently set up a Forward Strategy: Climate Action group, and one of their key themes is food miles. Using the shop is being cited as a good way to reduce food miles. TS asks if there are any plans to tie up with the allotments. GG: confirms that there are plans to make any surplus veg available in the shop.

Meeting closes 8:04 pm (60 m)

The next scheduled meeting is the public HDTV meeting on Monday 1 March, at [7:00 pm](#).