

HOTV interim Management Committee meeting minutes

29 March 2021, 7:00pm

Present: Graham Gleed (Chair), Mike Blair (Vice-Chair), David Crabbe (Treasurer), Nick Sloan (Secretary), John Davison, Chris Reah, Jo Bown, Carolyn Dauncey, Simon Dauncey

Sales and finances

- 1.1 DC: March is looking like sales of about £27½K giving a yearly total of c £268K, which is remarkably close to the forecast in our business plan despite the adaptations we have needed to make. We have £78K in the bank with about £4K in bills to pay.

Community Bond

- 2.1 GG has researched Paul Fielding's suggestion of setting up a community bond and finds that it involves a great deal of work. He feels that our energies would be better expended increasing trade revenue. He suggests that we should thank PF but keep the option in reserve. CR suggests we report back on this at the next public meeting. DC has reservations that existing investors could feel that they have taken a risk, in contrast to lenders to a community bond who would be receiving more favourable terms. A fresh share offer remains an alternative for consideration in the medium term. **DC to bring PF up to date on these discussions.**

Update on refurbishment

- 3.1 JD: lower bar decoration virtually complete, upper nearly so, floor and wood-burner installation in hand. The bar should be ready to serve from when the pub reopens outside, and all ready for inside reopening in May.
- 3.2 MB: kitchen progressing slowly, extractor to be cleaned on 8 April, the floor will be thoroughly cleaned and professionally repaired, and one wall, will be reclad as soon a labour is available. The whole kitchen has to be hygiene-compliant before any part of it can be used for food preparation. Until then it can be used for washing up only, and only cake and pre-packed snacks can be sold in the café. The formica-topped counter should be removed now in order to repair the floor.
- 3.3 MB: Richard Jones is preparing a provisional design for the kitchen using existing and/or new kit, hopefully by next week. [A grant application is being made to the PC to contribute to the cost of new equipment.] DC asks whether we would be able to buy kit before receiving payment from the PC. GG replies that first the PC would have to approve the grant, and then we would have to present invoices for the PC to pay direct. Not all of the CIL money is immediately available to the PC. The sequence of events should become clearer in April. DC raises the question of paying the extra if costs exceed the PC grant. GG says that this could be an ideal subject for the "Awards for All" Lottery fund, but that the application process is demanding and takes time. Agreed that we consider an Awards for All application for future projects.
- 3.4 MB says that we need to consider who takes responsibility for the kitchen and how it is shared between shop café and pub in the future. JB says that day-to-day responsibility for hygiene and safety checks is normally handled via checklists to which all users contribute. Agreed that one person (eventually the pub manager) must have overall administrative responsibility; further consideration needed.

3.5 GG asks where we are with external jobs requiring scaffolding. NS replies that the painting and the repointing are nearly finished, and the aim is to have all scaffolding-dependent work finished by end of week 5–9 April and scaffolding down 12–14 April. Quotes have been sought for the awning.

3.6 SD reports that the cellar has been painted and is in good condition. He is waiting for the bar to be ready to reinstall the pumps before he can clean the lines and get them working. SD is also on the trail of a beer gas supplier. Everything should be ready to serve beer from 12 April.

Bar Stock

4.1 SD recommends using St Austell Brewery as a convenient one-stop-shop for beer, spirits, (wines) and soft drinks. There is no tie or commitment involved. St Austell also owns Bath Ales, so SD recommends Tribute and Gem as a complementary pair of standard ales. If we also stock Carlsberg and St Miguel, Carlsberg becomes our “principal brewer” and will take care of all our chillers, lines and equipment for free.

4.2 GG asks about stock forecasting. This is primarily an issue with cask ales, which are now available in 4.5 as well as 9 gallons. Lagers have a much longer cellar-life. **Agreed that we open an account with St Austell. GG and DC to complete the paperwork. SD to draw up a proposed initial order, including basic spirits**

4.3 SD mentions that there would be the option in future to accept a degree of exclusivity with St Austell in exchange for much more support. We would also expect to sell guest beers once we are fully open. GG thanks SD for his research and advice.

Pub opening

6.1 Dates and times for initial pub opening in the garden are extensively discussed. The conclusion is that we open **between 6 and 9pm on specific evenings, starting with Friday and Saturday April 16/17 and Sunday lunchtime. Further dates to be decided.**

6.2 In order to maintain social distancing we will need to have a booking system and limit the number of customers. We first need to assess the number of tables we can safely fit in the garden and serve, and invite people to book a time slot.

6.3 CR runs through the requirements to comply with Covid rules: risk assessment, Track & Trace, adherence to social distancing, queueing and one-way systems.

6.4 What we can offer is very weather-dependent, though there is the possibility of borrowing more gazebos. JB raises the question of smoking/non-smoking areas. Agreed that smoking will only be permitted in the car park.

6.5 Booking will be via email or phone, the method to be publicised via Member update and Nextdoor/Facebook. **NS to set up a pub@hotvssg.org email address. GG and others to assess table numbers and establish ground rules and booking system.**

Volunteers

7.1 GG: there has been zero response to email requests for more volunteers. JD has drafted the text of a leaflet appeal. **NS to print leaflets, JD to organise delivery, shop to receive responses.**

7.2 Marilyn Clarke is happy to set pub volunteers up on 3Rings, these to be subsequently managed by someone else and eventually the bar manager.

- 7.3 GG asks if we should consider employing a young person to help with the café. JB says that are five or six young people who are already very keen on volunteering, but cannot start until they have been licensed by the Council. CD says that we need to think through the implications of employment very carefully. Agreed that we stick with volunteering in the short term.

Communication

- 8.1 GG suggests that a document on improving our communication, recently circulated by NS, be circulated more widely for comment by the membership.
NS to produce an edited version soon and GG to include in next Member update.

Miscellaneous

- 9.1 GG: there have been complaints that the car park is too full. Permission has been given for Willow Set staff to park there, and there are often up to six volunteer cars.
Assess the position in a few weeks time and see if we need to make any changes.
- 9.2 JB and CD: the official name of the shop will be Stoke St Gregory Village Shop, and the shop website address will be ssgvillageshop.com.
- 9.3 GG proposes mounting a noticeboard, for shop and customer notices, on the wall opposite the shop side door. **Shop managers to order and GG to mount.**
- 9.4 GG suggests inviting businesses to sponsor a bench. Agreed to be a good idea.
- 9.5 JD raises the question of how to handle burglar alarm events, which are irritating for neighbours and responders alike. **NS to ask Coomers to install a remote control unit.**
- 9.6 DC asks if we want an EPOS terminal for the pub. Probably yes. The processes in shop and pub need to be as compatible as possible for volunteers working in both places.

Meeting closes 8:36 pm (1h 36m)

The next scheduled meeting is the public HOTV meeting on Tuesday 13 April, at 7:00 pm.