

HOTV Management Committee meeting minutes

The Royal Oak, 5 July 2021, 7:00pm

Present: Graham Gleed (Chair), Mike Blair (Vice-Chair), Nick Sloan (Secretary), Chris Reah, Jo Bown, Carolyn Dauncey, Phil Evans and 10 others. Apologies from David Crabbe, John Davison and Kathy Davidson.

Minutes of the last meeting

- 1.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed to be accurate. NS undertakes to post minutes sooner after meetings in future.

Members feedback

- 2.1 Ann Woods asks if there are plans to tidy up around the pavement and railings at the side entrance. NS explains that this is part of a series of interconnected improvements which are planned, and acknowledged as important.
GG reports a posting on FaceBook about people falling over at the entrance to the car park. The circumstances are unclear, but GG undertakes to investigate and if necessary to ask Alan Beaugie about repairs to the tarmac.
GG relays thanks to Roger Brown for putting up a handrail beside the garden steps.
- 2.2 NS shows a drawn proposal for new signs on the front of the building. This has been published as an HOTV News item on the website, together with drawings for signs to the Royal Oak to be placed at road junctions. Comments are invited. No further action will be taken for a week.

Shop Operation

- 3.1 New customers are still coming in and the café is doing well. Thanks to Ann Woods the café is now listed on cycle apps. The band of volunteer cake bakers is expanding, and for the last two weekends the ladies from Keep Somerset Blooming have been selling plants. It is planned to make this a regular event from next spring. Bread is now being sourced from a baker in Williton. Jo is putting out a request on Nextdoor for a cook/chef, to work variable hours. Anyone can register an interest with either shop or pub.
- 3.2 Liz Bennett says what an amazing job Jo and Carolyn are doing with the shop, and appreciates in particular their willingness to stock things on request.
GG mentions that the results of the Grocer Awards were due to be released today. Carolyn says that sadly the shop did not receive an award, but all agreed that nomination in itself is an achievement for such a young business.

Pub operations

- 4.1 PE: sales have amounted to about £1K a week, which is pretty good considering the restricted opening. From Wednesday 13 July he will be trialling outdoor pizza nights, which will be independent of the kitchen. It is proposed to have a TV in the pub to show the UEFA Euro 2021 semi-final this Wednesday evening and the final on Sunday. Space may be limited, so first come first served.
- 4.2 GG raises the question of the acoustic in the bar, and [proposes the allocation of £1K to the pub for the purchase of sound-deadening furniture. All agreed.](#)

Financial Headlines

- 5.1 GG, on behalf of DC, reports that in Q1 (to end of June) the shop took £84K, the café £3K and the pub £10K. Revenue is progressing well. Our capex spend so far is £85K, with some more to spend, currently on the flats. We have received the first part of our solar panels grant, and we have submitted a planning application for these. People are still buying shares, and we had a substantial donation last week. We have a reasonably comfortable cushion of £58K in the bank.
- 5.2 Our bank lenders and grantees are very happy with the feedback they are receiving, to the extent that the Somerset Social Enterprise Fund is using us as a good example to other applicants.

Kitchen

- 6.1 MB: the kit is in place, the plumbing is completed and the pizza oven is repaired. An electrical point is needed for the grill, some repositioning of units is required. Once a few places have been made good and the floor and walls have been cleaned, we should be ready to go. MB thanks the volunteers for their great work on the kitchen.

Flats

- 7.1 GG: PE will be moving into the top flat as soon as it is ready to receive him, and Emma Simons and her family into the first floor flat from 1 August. New showers are being installed in both flats. Much of the work is being done by the volunteers, project-managed by Phil.

Skittle alley

- 8.1 GG reports the intention to have one skittle alley available for use by September at the latest. Paul Fielding asks whether redecoration of the alley will be necessary. Likely to need a lick of paint, but nothing extensive. Ian Upshall asks if it is to be just one alley. NS says that the long-term plan is very definitely to have two available, but this depends on plans for the rejigging of the building that have yet to be drawn up.

Shop group

- 9.1 JB asks about new sockets needed for the café. NS replies that it is proving difficult to get hold of electricians, but he is working on it.
- 9.2 NS reports that the replacement café/garden door is on order. It will not have a step but will have a shallow ramp to the outside level.
- 9.3 GG acknowledges our thanks to John Attwood for undertaking the maintenance of the garden and car park. This is very much appreciated.

Recruiting a cook/chef

- 10.1 GG: has tried to meet Papou twice without success. He has spoken to Ate Lewis, who had some helpful suggestions. The District Council has a scheme for matching vacancies to job applicants. Various other people are putting out the word, and GG enjoins everyone to ask around. The recruitment of a chef is the most significant problem we have to solve at present.

Newsletter

- 11.1 GG says that the response to the first edition of our newsletter has been disappointingly tepid. Liz Bennett is unclear who the target audience is. GG explains that the newsletter was the response to complaints in previous meetings that information (particularly financial information) should be more accessible, and not just online. LB felt that the level of financial information was not appropriate for a

newsletter in general circulation. Paul points out that it is new and not widely known about. GG wonders whether it is worth the effort put into it. Paul thinks it could be useful for publicising special events. PE is also surprised by the level of financial detail. Ian thinks that shareholders have the right to know how their money is being used. John Hembrow agrees, but suggests that the place for this is the website, not a general newsletter. Liz adds that information on the website can be signposted from the newsletter. John Attwood thinks that it is important to keep providing printed, as well as online information. GG suggests that we let it run and continue to gather feedback.

- 11.2 GG: at the request of the BBC we provided some video clips for Spotlight SW, and Carolyn did an interview but we do not know if or when this material is to be aired.

Date of Annual Members' Meeting

- 12-1 Monday 27 September, at 7pm in the Village Hall is agreed.

Frequency of meetings

- 13.1 GG says that HOTV is unusual among community benefit societies in holding monthly meetings: quarterly or annually is the norm. There is a general feeling that at this stage in the evolution of HOTV, monthly or bi-monthly meetings are worthwhile. Ian suggests that the frequency of meetings could be reduced if the general level of communication was improved. It is agreed that we will continue to meet monthly until the AMM, and discuss the matter further then.

Meeting closes 8:02 pm (1h 2m)

The next scheduled meeting is the public HOTV meeting on Monday 2 August, at 7:00 pm in the Royal Oak.