

HOTV Management Committee meeting minutes | Draft

The Village Hall, Tuesday 17 January 2023, 6:00pm

Present: Mike Blair (chair), Jon Cochrane, Simon Dauncey, Paul Fielding, Martin Keswick, Nick Sloan, Ann Woods. Apologies from John Davison

Preliminaries

- 1.1 The minutes of the 6 December and 3 January meetings were agreed to be accurate.

Health & safety

- 2.1 PF draws attention to the danger of ice on the slope down from the car park.
NS to arrange for a couple of bags of salt grit to be made available.

Matters Arising

- 3.1 MB: a Member has asked that details of our bank loans be made available. JC says that he would prefer to answer questions at Members' meetings than to make sensitive information public. Members are fully entitled to the information, but it is best presented in context. **All agreed.**

Finances

- 4.1 JC: Despite alarming prognostications from our previous chairman in October we are still in business and expect to remain so, but we need to become more commercially astute and disciplined in planning expenses. We have just under £15K in the bank. Pub sales remain disappointing and much more needs to be done to generate more pub business. Shop margin trends are good, thanks in part to excellent work by JD [and others] in rationalising purchasing.

Shop management & reorganisation

- 5.1 MB and JD held a meeting with the shop managers to discuss the cap on hours and the way forward, making wider use of volunteers. The managers were tasked with coming up with a proposal for what needed to change to make this work.
- 5.2 MB JD and PF visited Bookers in Taunton to talk to the area manager. Although the Taunton branch is primarily for catering, they do carry the basic range of retail groceries, and if we register with them as a pub we can combine purchasing for both businesses and get free weekly delivery. Together with ordering online this would represent a great saving in time and money compared to the present system. Further efficiencies can be gained by tying up with PayPoint.
- 5.3 Bookers also have a lot to teach us about efficient retailing. It is planned to arrange a meeting between the shop managers and Bookers' Retail Development Manager to discuss potential improvements. They also have a Catering Development Manager who could advise Phil. It is suggested that sales could be improved by modifying the shop layout.
- 5.4 MK raises the issue of minimum card payments in the shop and asks why we set a minimum at all. It is believed that there is no transaction fee, just a small percentage of the purchase price going to the card company. If this is the case, all are agreed that the minimum payment limit should be removed. **JC to double-check card terms.**
- 5.5 MB: Another topic that came out of the shop meeting was the need for better training and organisation of the volunteers, also the need to make volunteering a more rewarding experience. It is agreed that AW needs to take control of the 3 Rings

rostering site, ensure that the schedules there are accurate and that all volunteers know how to access the site and book themselves in. Volunteer hours per week should be logged. It is thought that written training manuals for volunteers could be helpful.

- 5.6 MB: Whether we need to adjust opening hours is still an open question. MB has circulated graphs drawn from EPOS data which show trading frequency at different times of day. We need a much longer sample period to form a reliable picture of this but it is an informative exercise. SD says that the pub has access to similar EPOS data, but because people tend to settle their tabs on leaving it would give a skewed picture of when purchasing takes place.
- 5.7 SD: if the shop managers are being limited to 25 hours per week (from 1st Feb), why do they still need to fill in timesheets? JC replies that their contracts still class them as hourly paid, and in this case timesheets are required.
- 5.8 MB relays the suggestion that the reduction in hours might be balanced by increased (paid) holiday. JC points out that hours are not being cut, merely limited to the contractual minimum, and that we cannot afford not to enforce the contract as it stands. There may be room for negotiation over unused holiday entitlements. It is felt that there needs to be more clarity over sick pay and how we manage cover.

Pub

- 6.1 SD has contacted 7 colleges that do catering in search of students who might be interested in helping in the kitchen. He has also looked on the Indeed recruiting site which has a massive number of vacant posts for cooks (and chefs).. We have been looking locally, using word of mouth, but probably need to use social media again.
- 6.2 PF asks whether Jeannie Kenefick has been able to make any impact with publicising the pub on social media. She is reliant on being fed information, primarily by Phil, but if nothing is being planned or she is not informed, there is little that she can do. A magic show is still scheduled for the function room on 22 Feb. Also, the Langport Mummers are due to visit at noon on 23 April. Otherwise there appears to be no programme of events, though open mic nights continue as before.

Accommodation

- 7.1 MK has had a meeting with JD prior to taking over responsibility for liaising with the tenants in the flat. The cost of renovating the flat bathroom escalated hugely for various reasons, for some of which HOTV is liable. An agreement has nearly been reached on dividing these costs and payment terms. There is an outstanding issue with the boiler. A rent increase is scheduled to kick in once the bathroom costs have been settled, and a rent review is scheduled for January 2024.

Members' meeting

- 8.1 Several Members have asked for a meeting and it is agreed that it would be good to hold a meeting to inform Members of the current state of the business and to answer any questions. Monday 13 February is provisionally agreed.

SD: bar takings after the Stampede were about £1200, the barbecue about £400.

Thanks are due to Graham Glead and James Devine for their work on the barbecue.

Meeting closes at 7:46 pm

[The next MC meeting will be on Monday 6 February, at 6pm in the Village Hall.](#)

[There will be a Members' meeting on Monday 13 February, at 7pm in the Royal Oak.](#)