

## HOTV Management Committee meeting minutes | Draft

The Village Hall, Tuesday 25 April 2023, 6:00pm

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

### Preliminaries

- 1.1 The minutes of the 11 April meeting were agreed to be accurate.

### Actions from previous meeting

- 2.1 MK has set up a Mailchimp email account and used it to send out a newsletter to Members. Some people did not receive it for reasons which are not yet clear, though in at least some cases it went to spam. Moving the message from your spam folder to inbox should prevent future messages from being rejected.

AW has been asked by a shop customer if they can be added to the email list. It is open to anyone who would like to be kept informed of shop or pub events and news. Email MK at [martin.keswick@btinternet.com](mailto:martin.keswick@btinternet.com) to be included.

**NS to make a poster to display in the pub and shop.**

Any information for inclusion in the newsletter should be passed to MK by the beginning of each month.

- 2.2 AW has laminated a couple of sheets on volunteering for the coronation fête oil-drum.  
**AW to contact Helen Gittins to co-ordinate a garden poster; NS to contact Phil re pub.**
- 2.3 MK and AW had a productive meeting with the managers to discuss operational concerns. It is intended to continue with these fortnightly. (Matters arising below.)
- 2.4 MB has replied to the letter from the chair of the Sedgemoor Skittle League to assure him of our continuing commitment to skittling. SD says that there have been complaints on social media and elsewhere that the MC is not taking skittling seriously enough. While the commissioning of a second alley will have to wait until plans for the remodelling of the building are clearer, there is a definite medium-term aspiration to provide two alleys and to upgrade the existing one.

### Finances

- 3.1 GG: there has been a slight post-Easter dip in shop trade but not as bad as last year and we are already recovering. Our trading performance is such that across both businesses we are just about keeping our head above water. Our bank balance is steady, but vulnerable to large debits.
- 3.2 GG has circulated a draft profit and loss account covering the period 2020 to 2024, also a cashflow forecast, and aims to produce monthly management accounts. PF asks if the P&L will be published. GG says no, but that it would be available on application from Members.
- 3.3 There is some discussion of the graphs (Gross Margin Trends) which GG has been producing weekly and sharing with the managers. Although regular expenses such as salaries, are not included in the weekly bars, they are included in the objective line which the weekly bars have to surpass in order to achieve profitability. It is agreed that there needs to be a clearer understanding of how to read the graphs.
- 3.4 GG: we are set to resume repaying our ICOF loan from the the middle of May, meaning a rise in payments of about £550 a month. The loan repayment holiday on

the SCF loan continues until November and the Triodos one is not so significant. ICOF have asked that the MC formally approve resumption of repayments. GG will ask ICOF if extending the pause would be an option, in which case we would prefer that. GG proposes however that should ICOF decline to extend the pause, we will resume payments. **All agreed. GG to clarify the position with ICOF.**

- 3.5 GG: when Jon Cochrane was Treasurer it was agreed to move from monthly accounting to four week periods. There are pros and cons to both systems, but GG would prefer to revert to months (with one five-week "month" per quarter). It is agreed that since GG is the one this most concerns, it should be his decision.
- 3.6 GG: Somerset Community Fund's grant fund has been over-subscribed, so having offered us a £10K grant + £10K loan, they have now reduced this to £3+3K. It is agreed that in the circumstances this is probably not something we should pursue.
- 3.7 MB asks what is happening about the plan to raise money to pay off loans. GG replies that there has not yet been much response, but any money received will be ring-fenced for this purpose in our reserve account. Loans can be paid down at any point, but it will be necessary to consider the most cost-effective way of doing this once we have a significant amount to work with.

#### **Matters arising from staff meeting**

- 4.1 AW says that the shop will be offering take-away cream teas on Coronation Saturday, pre-ordered to avoid wastage. There will also be a raffle, tickets available in the shop.
- 4.2 MK says that to start with the pub food offering will be limited to 25 covers a sitting and booking with Phil will be necessary. The number of covers will increase once Jenna is familiar with the kitchen and the procedure has been fully tested.
- 4.3 SD says that there will be a bean-to-coffee machine behind the bar by the time food restarts.
- 4.4 MK relays a suggestion from Phil that we move the big safe out of the kitchen and put the dishwasher into its place. It is agreed that the current safe is unnecessarily large. **MK to find a practical solution.**
- 4.5 MK was asked to ensure that the kitchen is kept off-limits to anyone who does not have a reason to be there. It is a working environment that has to be kept scrupulously clean. NS suggests that the door should be replaced with a swing door.
- 4.6 MK relays another suggestion from Phil that the hexagonal sign outside the pub door be moved to make room for a display board. Also to paint out two of the panels above the bar to act as blackboards. GG asks if a more permanent Post Office sign could be put up. AW asks if the old Community Shop sign is needed. **MK to move the pub hexagon, NS to replace the PO sign and remove the other.**
- 4.7 MK arranged for Chris Keirle to service the freezer and chillers in the shop, and has asked him for a quote for regularly maintaining all the commercial refrigeration. We need a review of our refrigeration capacity once the food offering is re-established.
- 4.8 MK suggest replacing the shop/café door with a secure wrought iron gate in order to improve ventilation in the shop at night. All agreed that this is an excellent idea. **MK to design and make.**
- 4.9 MK has arranged for Pete Withers to replace a faulty circuit breaker in the flat.

## **Grants**

- 5.1 NS reports that an application for a grant for more efficient kitchen equipment was submitted to Valencia on Monday afternoon.

## **Shop operations**

- 6.1 MB refers to a note from JD reporting on a meeting between a Bookers retail adviser and the shop managers. The main suggestion was that it could be advantageous to open a retail account as well as our existing catering account with Bookers. Although it would incur a delivery charge, this could be outweighed by access to a wider range of lines and suppliers. **JD to explore this further and make a recommendation.**

## **Volunteers**

- 7.1 We have three new volunteers, though only four existing ones are fully trained. Jenny and Ron Priddle have generously offered to volunteer with cleaning.
- 7.2 MK points out that we need to maximise the use of volunteers for relief work in the bar and help in the kitchen, especially once we start doing food. Two or three people have suggested that they might be available.

## **Publicity**

- 8.1 MK reports on a meeting with Graham Lofting, NS and PF about using the Mailchimp account and the launch of a regular newsletter. There has been talk of using a publicity co-ordinator, but the problem has always been providing the material for them to work with. Carolyn finds it simpler to post directly to social media on behalf of the shop.
- 8.2 SD suggests that we place flyers in holiday lets to make temporary visitors aware of the pub and shop. **NS to design a trifold flyer.**
- 8.3 MK says that there was a provisional agreement at an earlier marketing meeting to use the name Royal Oak Community Hub. Several people have objected to the use of "Hub", preferring "Pub and Shop". It is agreed to adopt Royal Oak Community Pub and Shop. We'll continue to use our old pub sign as a provisional logo.

## **Other**

- 9.1 AW relays a request from Jane White to supply a raffle prize for the coronation fête. **Agreed.**
- 9.2 PF says that further complaints have been received about parking in the road outside the shop. It has been suggested that this should be made a disabled parking bay, but GG says that this would require planning permission and cost at least £1000. It is agreed that if the PC would like to implement this we would have no objection.
- 9.3 MK says that with Tom Stobie he will be organising a car boot sale at the Village Hall in support of HOTV on 17th June. This is very much appreciated.

*Meeting closes at 8:10*

**The next MC meeting will be on Monday May 15th at 6pm in the Royal Oak.**