

Minutes of Management Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 23rd March 2016 at 7.30 pm in the Pavilion.

Present: John Borrill, Shirley Colenutt, Alan and Elaine Johnson, Cath Jones, Victoria McArthur, Malcolm Robertshaw, Pete Rushton, Roger Steel, Mary Trinder and Joan Woodroffe. (+ various winged unidentified flying objects)

Apologies for absence: None

Declarations of Interest: None.

Minutes of last meeting were read and signed as correct

Matters arising:

Managers will be asked to be alert for signs of hardship that might benefit from food vouchers and will inform designated person to sort voucher out - they will not need to be responsible for this.

After 2 unannounced visits from EHO we have been awarded a 5* Food Hygiene certificate. Congratulations to all concerned, especially volunteers who do majority of actual cleaning in cafe. Certificate has been displayed in cafe.

Finance

(i) Bank balances were presented by RS .

(ii) VM presented impressive spreadsheet with projected figures for next 5 years. It gave various options e.g. how things would look if wages are increased by 7% each year as we have done for past 2 years. Although forecast figures are estimated, it would appear that, by 2020, RCS would be running at a loss when current grant monies are exhausted unless profits increase significantly. BL grant application was based on figures at time so changes in government policy and guidelines about e.g. Living Wage have had an impact on our finances. There followed a lengthy discussion about possible ways of increasing profit margin (which seems to have dropped over last few months, in line with other retailers due to downturn of economy) but overheads have risen with another 20 hours wages each week.

It was agreed that a sub-committee is set up by MT (with members of her choice from the Big Wide World) to raise publicity for Promotions etc and increase trade/profit. Wines will be bought from other sources when on special offer and sold alongside Adnams (which give only very narrow profit margins, although products are on sale or return.) Care needs to be taken on choice of wines bought from other sources as we do not want to be left with 'dead stock' and surplus that cannot be sold. MT will consult managers and work with them on promotions.

(JW, having wrestled valiantly with a rogue milk bottle top, provided welcome hot drinks and even sampled one of the delicious savoury home-made palmiers and actually liked it, despite it being foreign, and even came back for more!)

(iii) After an alert from JB, it was discussed again whether or not we wanted to make provision for funds being just outside the FCA compensation scheme. Again it was decided that as this is likely to be for a short term only and it would be a long drawn out process to create a new bank account with another bank, we would stick with current situation. However, MR will investigate if there could be insurance cover at a reasonable cost, in the unlikely scenario that it all goes pear-shaped.

(iv) Total of 12 new members have now bought a share in new offer and monies have been passed to JB by CJ for banking into Share Account.

(v) JB has arranged for KO to do more Sage training with MT - at a mutually agreed time.

(vi) AR30 has been sent off to HMRC (thanks to PR for all hard work in completing this and jumping through necessary hoops). JB queried about timing of payment of Corporation Tax . There appears to have been a mis-communication between various parties involved and this will need to be resolved to avoid further confusion. Financial roles need to be very clearly defined especially as JB is standing down as Treasurer. He was asked to draw up a list of 'duties' so that his successor knows what is involved and, if necessary, tasks can be shared out.

(vii) No obvious candidate has stepped forward so a concerted effort will need to be made as soon as possible to find someone to step into John's boots - no easy task.

(viii) Managers have asked JB for permission to buy small items (nothing specified) without asking for approval. It was agreed that issuing debit/credit card to managers is unnecessary and it would be better if low cost things were ordered through suppliers and invoiced in usual way, or purchases made individually would be reimbursed immediately by treasurer when presented with receipt.

Management committee appointments

MT has agreed to take on Publicity as her remit. (Thanks Mary!) Other roles remain as before at present.

Staff

(In spite of a possible conflict of interests, it was agreed that on this occasion JB would stay for all discussion regarding staffing)

RS distributed a spreadsheet with various wage projections (thanks to SS for help in producing this).

There were several anomalies and unknowns because of changes regarding NI and new Pension rules. Some managers who were not expected to qualify for NI because of hours worked, are now liable because of covering AL so go over threshold. Current imminent and complex changes to eligibility for NI are difficult to forecast (PR will ask KO if she has any advice on this). Thanks to JB for covering many extra hours taken by other managers as AL in recent weeks and to PO volunteers who have also covered when nobody else available.

Wage increases were discussed and proposed and various options may be possible so JB will consult pensions advisor for independent advice for managers. It was agreed that we value our staff so need to give best option for them, within our means.

Retail sales and Wholesale suppliers

MR has arranged for Andrew White from ECR to come to shop on 24/03 to talk to all interested parties.

More discussion about suppliers. JB felt reducing number of suppliers would help but it was felt this would need careful consideration as we are getting good reputation for some specialist products from small suppliers e.g. Shire Foods. Other local retailers have said that P&H are not best but preliminary enquiries by NA have not come up with better option for us. EJ gave sound advice about pricing goods to make best profit, which she is willing to share if asked.

Repairs, renewals and maintenance.

A&E have oiled window frames - many thanks.

Safety barriers in forecourt are now in place (thanks to RS) and beautiful flower pots have been put in strategic positions (thanks to Good Fairy!)

Insectocutor is now top of RS' 'To Do' list and will be executed soon (purchase of Fly catcher, not Roger)

Chiller saga is ongoing. JB did battle with stockroom chiller yet again at w/e, so it was decided that as we have donation of £200 from EDP Community Chest towards cost of new one, we should go ahead and purchase one sourced by PR (and sent to all for comment/opinion) immediately. As it is primarily for surplus goods in stockroom, the cheaper version will be bought from CED who have been very good in past. Arrangements will be made for disposal of old chiller, if necessary.

MR will produce a list of important telephone numbers to be kept in strategic place in back office, to replace various numbers currently being kept in different places, so that it is accessible to whoever needs it in emergencies, without having to search or ask.

Stockroom clutter that is not needed regularly will be cleared by JB and taken away to a safe place by RS and PR on BH Monday. JW and CJ will make date for giving stockroom another good clear out when space is reclaimed. (PR and CJ will also vacuum bowels of all freezers and chillers if necessary, but this may have already been done by refrigeration engineer who checked them recently.)

Grants and donations (see VM's report)

Comments have been received from AJ (thanks for the Aardvark, Alan!), NA and CJ regarding grants, all of which are useful and will be taken notice of. JW is still keen to train in PO so this will be looked into now that JB and MB are fully trained (as far as is possible with PO!) JB complimented NA on her training skills but reiterated how much time and effort is necessary before competency is achieved - not for the faint-hearted!

Publicity (see VM's report)

BBC Radio for Schools broadcast interview with Joan Dove had not recorded properly and may have to be re-done with better equipment.

MT will be given finalised leaflet and business card prototypes when they are back from KR and will get them printed at Barkers.

Next newsletter will go out in April, after request for volunteer deliverers.

Volunteers (see report)

Refresher volunteer course held on 16/03 in shop from 7.30 - 11.00 (!!) was great success; almost all new volunteers had attended and completed tick lists when training confirmed. Several very useful suggestions have been made which will be implemented. Thanks to VM for organising and to Johnsons, Jan Swaddling, PR and CJ for their input. Atmosphere was excellent, helped by provision of wine and nibbles - thanks to all!

Events:

Easter Bunny event has been organised by MM on Good Friday with guest appearance by a glamorous Easter Bunny and various craft activities for children from 10-12.00. Thanks for all work that has gone into preparation!

There has been much interest in Boudicca 100 event on May 22nd and serious training is underway. Sponsorship this year will be in aid of Pancreatic Cancer UK and Mesothelioma research in memory of Robert Gray and Richard Smedley who both recently lost their battles with these diseases. Thanks to Simon Best for help in producing material for sponsorship forms.

Street Party is being organised for Queen's 90th Birthday Celebrations in June, with collaboration between Dave Howie (chair of PC) and MM. A sub-committee is being set up to organise it.

Website & IT:

Ongoing progress and updates from VM and SB - many thanks.

Correspondence

RS has received cheque for £200 from EDP as winners of Community Chest award, towards new chiller. Thanks to JW for galvanising support from villagers and beyond into collection of large numbers of vouchers and especially for counting them into bundles. Also thanks to PR for personally delivering our vouchers in middle of the night to ensure they arrived safely!

Letter from Pensions people - to be perused by RS and reported back next time.

Letter from a deceased shareholder's solicitor has been dealt with by CJ. (Copy on file)

Input from floor

Thanks to all who provided refreshments during evening.

AOB:

Street Party to celebrate Queen's 90th birthday

Staff wages

Grant recommendations

Date and venue for next meeting at 7.30pm on 6th April 2016 in Rocklands School (please note change of venue)

Meeting closed officially 10.03pm