

**Minutes of Management Committee Meeting** held on Wednesday 24th February 2016 at 7.30 pm in the Pavilion.

Present: John Borrill (from 7.55pm), Shirley Colenutt, Alan and Elaine Johnson, Cath Jones, Victoria McArthur (from 8.30), Malcolm Robertshaw, Pete Rushton, Roger Steel and Mary Trinder. (*+ One huge dozy fly who graced us with his presence, enticed by the biscuits and gooey Zeb creation but was thwarted in his manoeuvres to desecrate the food by a pincer movement from MR and MT with expert use of a plastic folder.*)

Apologies for absence: Victoria McArthur (late), Joan Woodroffe

RS welcomed Mary to her first RCS meeting (*but failed to warn her that matchsticks may be needed fortnightly in order to stay awake to end of meetings. Maybe this is an indication that meetings will become a more manageable length in future?*)

Declarations of Interest: None, apart from JB who is on paid staff and therefore absented himself from relevant items, where appropriate

## Election of officers 2016-7

The following were elected uncontested and all were agreed unanimously.

Chairperson: Roger Steel (Proposed by PR, seconded by MR) RS announced his intention to stand for one more year only.

Vice-Chair: Victoria McArthur (Proposed by CJ, seconded by PR)

Treasurer: As this position needs careful training in order to follow on from JB, it was agreed that the position would be passed on over a period of about 3 months. JB has kindly offered to complete the current VAT return and to assist his successor in learning the ropes. For this we are very grateful, and all agreed to think about their aptitude for this crucial post. Some of the jobs could possibly be delegated, as has the book-keeping side by PR for the past year. RS will get advice from KO also.

PR was ratified as Company Secretary unanimously.

RS explained that we still have option to co-opt 2-3 further committee members to make the workload more evenly spread.

Other roles in the committee will be listed by RS, who will speak with MT about her possible future responsibilities.

Minutes of last meeting were read and signed as correct (*NB For first time since June 2013, RS had his own pen with which to sign - possibly a sign of maturity that should not go un-minuted!*)

## Matters arising:

AMM had taken place on 19/02/16 and had been well attended. A new committee had been elected uncontested and new members were voted on for three years according to rules. There had been a very positive attitude from all members and supporters present.

MR passed copies of Utilities listings compiled by himself and RG but with gaps that needed filling with details. RS, JB and PR took copies and promised to complete details as necessary and pass back to MR asap.

## Finance

(i) Bank balances were presented by JB and RS as a double act, but JB had the 'winning trump' as he was only one who could reveal monies held in petty cash.

(ii) JB and PR have been for Sage upgrade training with KO. JB explained that payroll fee will increase by £5 a month and that there is an additional annual Sage licence fee of £180 to cover cost to KO for payroll to facilitate auto enrolment for pensions. There will be no extra charge to RCS for Sage upgrade.

(iii) JB explained that he has put approx. £12k into reserve since August for wages to cover the gradual decrease in grant money. However, he estimates that this will not cover the cost of wage bill including pension and NI contributions, with a shortfall of about £1.5k per month. The Business committee will meet in order to do some strategic longterm planning that is necessary for survival. We must remain positive but clearly we cannot sit back and wait for crisis in 5 years when current grant expires. There is always the possibility of applying for further grant funding but that is not guaranteed and there must be contingency plans, if we wish to maintain staffing levels.

There was a long, long discussion about possible ways of increasing profits and decreasing wastage.....the managers are aware and are looking at ways of increasing GP.

## Membership

8 new members have bought a share since launch of open membership share offer, 5 from Rocklands and 3 from surrounding villages.

## Staff (JB left room for strategic comfort break)

MB's appraisal resulted in her passing her 6 month probationary period - well done, Marion! JB will go through similar process when he has completed 6 months as manager.

## Retail sales and Wholesale suppliers

SC agreed to put wastage figures on a spreadsheet and pass to JB for managers to examine in detail. Wastage sheets from black folder need to go straight to SC regularly and not put in JB's folder first as this delays the process. Thanks again to SC for all the work she does behind the scenes with bits of paper that somehow are changed from a chaotic heap into some sort of order!

In previous discussion about how to raise GP, percentage profit on items e.g. alcohol had been brought up. JB will speak to other managers about wine being bought from other sources which could run in tandem with Adnam's, but could be sold with far greater percentage profit and could make significant difference to wage deficit.

## Repairs, renewals and maintenance.

All in hand apart from replacement insectocutor and new water filter for café, which RS will action.

## Grants and donations (see VM's report)

## Publicity (see VM's report)

AAN has asked if two junior reporters can come and do video interview in shop as part of BBC Schools Radio News Project on Saturday 27th. VM agreed to be photographed and interviewed as she is now used to telling reporters her age and how many children she has! CJ will ask Joan Dove to come and talk about the shop as it used to be in comparison.

## Volunteers

After some discussion about dates, it was agreed to hold a volunteer refresher course on March 16th at 7.30 to update all volunteers (but especially newer ones) on various aspects of volunteering. Although the VH had been provisionally booked for 9th, it was agreed unanimously that the refresher would be far more useful in shop as things were immediately on hand if queries arose e.g. Lottery, card machine. H&S training including manual lifting, hygiene etc could be done in shop too. RS will get hold of relevant booklets. Advice will be given about handling awkward customers, or those who have been drinking heavily etc as well as reminders about sales of alcohol and tobacco. VM will circulate volunteers generally but concentrate on those who are new and haven't yet had group training.

## Events:

No information available about success of Valentine Events in café

## Website & IT:

EPOS system maintenance. MR has spoken with ARo and learned the background of EPOS as we know it. There followed another long discussion about the merits of trying to get it working efficiently (no easy feat as it would involve wiping whole system and starting all over again - a mammoth task) or starting again with a new, less complicated system. A recent major crash of EPOS has been sorted quickly and FOC by ECR after a cry of help from JB within a few minutes as they have the technology to access and troubleshoot remotely. It was agreed that we need some sort of maintenance agreement as without till, the shop cannot function. This would cost approx. £800p.a. which is a considerable cost for a system that is at present only being used to about 5% of its potential. There is anecdotal evidence that a simpler system that might meet our needs could be purchased for about £400-£500 but no proof that this is correct. It was agreed that MR with a sub-committee that includes NA and other relevant people would look at what other similar retail outfits use and how they work. AJ pointed out that his old till is still working.....

## Correspondence

Ongoing correspondence re:complaint is now in hands of PO complaints dept.

## Input from floor

None not minuted elsewhere, apart from usual thanks to EJ for refreshments and PR for sharing his delicious culinary confections, (even though he has obviously no consideration for our dental health or waistlines)

## AOB:

Street Party to celebrate Queen's 90th birthday

Representative from Thetford Food Bank, Ali James, will be in attendance on 9th to talk about her ideas and plans.

Date and venue for next meeting at 7.30pm on 9th March 2016 in pavilion.

Meeting closed officially 10.06pm