

Minutes of the MSC Management Meeting held on Monday 5th October 2009.

Present: Patrick Colvill, Gladys Alexander, David Turner, Steve Taylor.
Apologies received from Margaret Colvill.

Minutes of the previous meeting and Matters Arising:

There were no Minutes available for the management meeting held on 3rd August 2009. No decisions are recorded or filed. The Chairman had some notes from which, and by referring to the previous agenda, it was possible to consider some of the matters arising from that meeting.

Matters Arising

- Building Alarm. Carried over
- Diseased ash tree. Carried over
- Weekend Hire fees. After discussion, it was proposed by Patrick, seconded by David and agreed unanimously that the hire fee for weekend events running from midday to midnight be increased from £123.80 to £140.00 with this proposed increase first being put to the Trustees for approval. This would be an appropriate item for the first Trustee meeting after the AGM.
- Football Club fees. The present circumstances of the Football Club and their likely use of the MSC facilities are not clear. After discussion it was agreed that no change be proposed in the current fee of £292.43 for the period 1/6/2009 to 31/5/2010, which is already a 50% reduction in the fee of £584.86 levied prior to June 2008.
- Main Hall floor cleaning. Carried over.
- Internet Access. The current contract is BT's "Option 1". This costs £12.50 for the internet access plus £15 per month for the line rental, totalling approximately £360 per year. Alternative options are being considered involving some negotiation/communication with BT. Meanwhile internet access from the hall and pavilion remains under password control. For internet access the MSC's premises could be 'Open Access' (freely available to anyone with the password) or 'Hot Spot' (available only to those who have bought the necessary access card/password). With recent cases of internet pornography being accessed, and paedophilia being promulgated, in and from public and commercial locations, there are serious concerns over allowing, whether intentionally or not, 'open public access', especially with the MSC's router able to provide excellent internet access from the car park. If the router is operated under BT's 'Hot Spot' arrangements, access is limited to those who have previously arranged with the MSC administration to have the necessary access codes. Those codes can be user-specific, to enable some auditing of the use if there were any questions raised, and can be changed as and when thought necessary. Also, under the 'Hot Spot' arrangements there are opportunities for an income to offset against the annual costs, but this would require additional administration resources which would need to be available 24/7. The scheme remains under development.
- Laptop Computer. A laptop computer is due to be provided via the Parish Council. A formal presentation will mark the hand-over. Patrick has a list of people interested in computer and internet training using the donated laptop and the new internet access facility, and has offered to provide that training as a free service to the community. A nominal charge could be levied for the training as an income to the MSC. Patrick stated that the laptop could not be kept on the MSC premises and that the MSC will need to find a 'keeper' of the laptop. He suggested that Gladys could be the keeper, and deliver it to, and collect it from, whoever needed to use it on the MSC's premises.
- Groundworks outside the kitchen door to address a noted safety hazard. Carried over.
- Plumbing problems. Some repair and corrective work has been done. The outstanding work is to be listed and completed.

- Bus Shelter. From the lack of feedback following Scene articles and meetings it was thought that there is little enthusiasm in the village, from the Parish Council, or within the MSC committees for a 'porch style' bus shelter. The proposal for a physical structure is dropped. Consideration of the provision of an external notice board remains.
- External notice board. Following the early thoughts about a bus shelter, there remains a case for providing an external notice board. It has been noted that Wickhambrook is the only village in this area not to have a public, or publicly accessible, notice board. An external notice board would probably be subject to some misuse, but being on MSC property it could be relatively easily managed on a day-to-day basis by the MSC management much as the internal notice boards have been managed and controlled over recent years. This is a new topic which would affect the hall's appearance, so the matter is to be put to the Trustees when costings have been ascertained
- Patio door fire damage. A new door-set has been installed. The total cost was £950. The hall's insurance cover will provide £850. The remainder will come from MSC assets. There will be an inevitable and permanent adverse effect on the hall's insurance premiums, and possibly a requirement for improved external security arrangements.
- CCTV. The new internet access could have a bearing on this topic. Carried over.
- It was reported that the MSC is now with British Gas for the electricity supply, with significant savings achieved.
- Heating oil. The MSC is classed as a business and may benefit from a substantially reduced cost per litre. Enquiries are ongoing.
- Trestle tables. These have been a well used and much appreciated part of the village scene for generations. Recently however they have been noted as an increasing safety hazard. Alternative lighter-weight tables have been proposed. Apart from the cost of any replacements, it is noted that the existing wooden trestle tables are not MSC property and are housed at no cost to the owners (believed to be the Horticultural Society). Who carries the authority for their use by the hall's hirers, the responsibility for their safety inspections, and would stand liable in case of personal injury remains in question. There have been two incidents of injury by splinters, only one of which was noted in the Accident Book. There are many aspects to this and, without unnecessarily changing time-honoured practices, but bearing in mind current increased and now regular usage in today's climate of claims, litigation and committee/Trustee awareness of responsibilities, the matter is carried over pending further facts being obtained. Meanwhile it is agreed that the facility provided by readily available tables for a variety of users, must be retained under any future arrangements..

Chairman's Report

A document has been received from an 'Evaluation Office' giving the rateable value for each separate part of the premises. However, as there is no requirement for the MSC to pay Council Tax the information serves no useful purpose.

Treasurer's Report

No report available

Booking Manager's Report

- The summer is a quiet period and there was nothing significant to report since the previous meeting. A final forwarding of received hire fees is to be given to the Treasurer in good time for the AGM annual financial statement.
- Forthcoming bookings for two events involving under-21's where a bar is being provided were discussed. Following the agreement of the Trustees, one is to be supervised by a responsible adult resident of Wickhambrook (an MSC Trustee acting as the 'Event Manager'). The other, if it goes ahead, is also to be supervised by an adult 'Event Manager' but in that case the full £500 Damages Bond has been required. At present that particular booking has not been confirmed. These are to be reviewed after the events.

Secretary's Report

- Correspondence. It had been noted that some important current certificates (Employers Liability, TV Licence), or copies of those certificates, were not on display on the premises in the allotted place on the foyer notice board. Enquiries about these certificates are to be made with the hall's insurers and with the football club. Also, with no Suffolk ACRE membership certificate on display it appeared that the hall was no longer a member of ACRE. From enquiries, it has been confirmed that the hall has had a paid-up membership of ACRE for some years, but the magazines and update material were not being received for dissemination. Consequently the MSC has missed important legal advice (seminars) regarding the protection of children on Play Areas where there is an adjacent ball-game facility, new sources of local grant-funding and other matters. The address for correspondence has now been given to Suffolk ACRE and they are sending us back copies of their magazine and news-sheets. From experience in other village forums, placing documents, (in this case the Suffolk ACRE Update magazine) on circulation was not thought to be practical. A trial method for disseminating extracts of selected significant information to the management committee and Trustees was approved.
- Steve stated that the roles of Booking Manager and Secretary were mutually compatible and, if no-one came forward at the AGM to take the Secretary's position, he could, if necessary, handle both for the year following the 2009 AGM, as had been the case as a temporary measure, for the past year. However, if the wider community were better informed about MSC matters, and the past achievements and informality of the MSC administration and management meetings was more widely understood, some 'committee' volunteers might be forthcoming in future. Talks were ongoing with various village activists to better define, to modernise, and to simplify and streamline the management committee posts and the conduct of committee meetings so as to make them more attractive to potential volunteers. If/when these ideas crystallise into something potentially useful, they will be presented to the Trustees for approval.

Weekend Hire Rates

The question of hire rates had already been dealt with.

Theatre Royal

The months of confusion within the Theatre Royal organisation has finally been sorted out and a correct final settlement figure has been arrived at, presumably likewise for the other tour venues. The event (*'Three Men in a Boat'*) had realised a profit for the MSC of £250. Under the auspices of the MSC Steve acts as an 'advocate' for the Theatre Royal (their word), promoting their activities within Wickhambrook. In that capacity, on behalf of the MSC, he will continue to promote and attend future ad hoc liaison meetings between West Suffolk village/community halls and the Theatre Royal to encourage continuing the Rural Tours and above all to work to achieve more flexible, adaptable and better understood commercial arrangements which can be handled by the various and differing village hall committees and the Theatre Royal's internal professional organisation so as to avoid the problems experienced this year. The Theatre Royal's Rural Tour next year will be in the Autumn instead of the Spring. The Treasurer had been requested to repay a sum of over £700 to the Theatre Royal which had been paid into an MSC bank account by the Theatre Royal, in error, for no known reason and without any authority or approval by the MSC management.

Environmental Health

There has been correspondence from the Environmental Health Dept to all village and community halls throughout the Borough. The Borough's intention is to change the inspection regimes more towards 'self assessment' based on clear and understood food safety requirements. Consequently the Borough has been invited to conduct an inspection of the MSC premises so that the management committee has an up to date list of any shortcomings or changes necessary to comply with the current regulations, before commencing any 'self assessments'. It is likely that the MSC will be visited for an inspection, possibly during the forthcoming Farmers Market (**Sunday 11th October**).

Projects

- Internet Access. Dealt with above
- Stage Lighting. The evaluation of the first tranche of equipment had proved successful. The second lighting controller, to provide full control of 16 lights, is available at a cost of £200. This is half the advertised cost. Lights and Sylvania light bulbs are currently available as complete sets at £40 each. 10 lights would be required to complete the high level installation. A quote of £400 had been received to undertake to supply and install all the necessary cabling. It was noted that over recent years hirer's events had either suffered due to lack of any stage lighting or had been obliged to make expensive, but always temporary arrangements for stage lighting. A great deal of money has been spent over the years, with no permanent benefit to the wider community. Four events are scheduled within the next 4 months which would use MSC stage lighting if it were available, saving several hundred pounds (possibly exceeding £1,000 for those 4 events alone) compared with using outside stage lighting contractors as previously. The provision of MSC-owned basic stage lighting has been approved by the Trustees. On a proposal by Steve, seconded by Patrick, it was agreed unanimously to take the project to a conclusion with the intention, with the School Christmas production in mind, of having the complete lighting setup available for early December 2009. The enthusiastic co-operation of, and keen pricing by, Richard and Craig (t/a 'World of Wiring') was brought to the committee's attention and is gratefully noted. The question of separating the stage from the Main Hall for the purposes of hiring, charging fees and controlling access to the stage itself (largely for safety reasons) was discussed. No conclusion was reached, but the matter will be reviewed when the new lighting is in place and there is some experience of its effectiveness and how it can be best used and made accessible. None of the above detracts from the excellent service given to the community by Peter Bayman over several decades. These days there are many, and an increasing number of, occasions where relatively low levels and short term of uses of the stage cannot warrant the full scale professional lighting set-ups as is required for the annual week-long pantomime productions.

Items for the AGM

- Patrick confirmed that he would not stand as Chairman at the AGM, although he would wish to take an ongoing active interest to support the MSC.
- It was confirmed that Margaret would not stand as Treasurer at the AGM, but would assist in a smooth hand-over.
- The AGM agenda is to be similar to that of previous years, with the minimum of management matters or new topics so as to ensure an early finish time.
- Local organisations are to be contacted and asked to either send a representative or to nominate a person to be a Trustee.

AOB

The boiler requires servicing. Gladys will arrange for this to be done.

<u>Next meetings</u>	Trustees.....	9th November (the AGM)
	Management committee.....	7th December 2009

Signed

Date