

**PETT VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING AND AGM 7 SEPTEMBER 2020**

The Pett Village Hall Management Committee met at the Village Hall on Monday 7 September 2020 for a regular meeting and for the delayed AGM.

The following Committee members and office holders were re-elected:

Terry Cornish
Carol Glasson
Carol Pecorini
Fran Pitts (Secretary)
Tim Rothwell (Chair and Bookings Manager)
Richard Smith (Treasurer)

The main points to emerge from the two meetings are as follows. The minutes of both meetings can be found here <https://www.pettnet.org.uk/pett-village-hall-management-committee-agendas-and-minutes>

Finance

Despite a significant loss of income this year from bookings that were cancelled because of the Covid pandemic, and £10,000 worth of improvements being made to the hall in the past year, the hall's finances are in a comparatively healthy state. At present the hall has assets of over £32,000. This includes the Covid-related grant of £10,000 which the Committee received from Rother District Council in April and which has helped enormously. The significant increase in bookings over the past 12 months or so has also been a major factor.

Hall maintenance

Compared to previous years, 2019/20 saw relatively few maintenance issues arising, apart from the need to spend £4,000 on repairs to the sewage system and sump. This is very much a one-off payment and there should be no need for further expenditure on this for several years to come.

The Committee expressed their grateful thanks to Lue and Richard Cooke, along with Terry Cornish, for all the hard work they undertook during lock-down to keep the hall in a serviceable state for re-opening. This included redecorating parts of the hall, necessary repairs and installing hand sanitisers etc so that the hall complied with legal requirements.

The Committee are also grateful to Philippa Strickland and Carol Pecorini for their hard work in running the 500 Club, which makes a valuable financial addition to the finances of the hall, and to Robin and Chris Hutt and Tim and Anne Jury for their generous monetary contributions.

Parking at the Hall

Whilst recognising that residents and their visitors, and those using local businesses, cannot be forced to use the village hall car park rather than parking on the roads, verges and pavements, the Committee believe that more should be done to raise awareness of the facility.

They have therefore agreed to replace the village hall sign at the end of the drive with one making it clear that free parking is available at the hall, apart from those relatively few occasions when the whole car park is required for events. They will also produce a leaflet explaining that free parking is usually available at the village hall for residents and businesses in the village.

Appointment of Administrative Officer

Because of the growing popularity of the hall as a venue, the workload of the Bookings Manager, Chair and Treasurer has increased significantly over the last two years. For example, the Chair and Bookings Manager estimates that he often spends some 15-20 hours a week working on issues relating to the hall. This position is unsustainable, and unless steps are taken to alleviate the pressure there is a risk that some members of the Committee and office holders may no longer be able to find the time to undertake essential duties and the hall may possibly close as a result.

The Committee have therefore agreed in principle to appoint a paid Administrative Officer to undertake much of the work of the Bookings Manager and other duties connected with the running of the hall. A job specification, rate of pay and further details need to be agreed by the Committee. Once there is agreement on these, the role will be advertised. The postholder will not be a trustee or a Committee member, but will be asked to attend Committee meetings.

There may be a need to increase the rates charged to hirers to meet the cost of the post, but it must be stressed that without proper paid help (which a number of other halls in Sussex already have in place), there is a danger that the hall may have to close or offer a much reduced service to its users.

Committee Members

The current members of the Committee are all of a certain age! In order to ensure the continuation of the hall as a going concern in the future, the Committee consider that their numbers should be strengthened and in particular by younger members of the community who could bring a fresh approach and new ideas. Under the constitution there is space for four additional members/trustees. But volunteers could be co-opted to help the Committee in its work without necessarily becoming trustees.

The Committee will launch a recruiting campaign for new members in due course, but in the meantime if anyone would be interested in joining the Committee or helping with its work please contact me.

The coming year

Everyone in the country has had a difficult past few months or so and the Village Hall Committee is no different. But the Committee hope that the coming year will see a return to relative normality. It is certainly encouraging that bookings for 2021 are coming in thick and fast. In the meantime, a big thank you to all those who have used and supported the hall over the past year.

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Chair, Pett Village Hall Management Committee

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