

CORFE MULLEN VILLAGE HALL

Registered Charity No. 286509

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**Minutes of the Meeting of the Sole Trustee (Corfe Mullen Town Council) of
Corfe Mullen Village Hall held on Tuesday 21 January 2025 in the Small Hall of the Village
Hall on the rising of the Meeting of the Sole Trustee (Corfe Mullen Town Council) of
Corfe Mullen Village Hall at 19:25**

Present:

Councillors

D Sowry-House (Chair)
J Bonham
A Craven
P Cuckston
S Florek
L Hardy
S Jefferies
A Joyce
J Lortie
V Papilio

In Attendance:

Catherine Horsley (Town Clerk & RFO) (minute taker)
Rachel Virrill (Senior Administrator)

1. To Note Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs A & P Holland due to personal circumstances and Cllr Neil due to prior work commitments.

Cllr Purvis was not present at the meeting; however, he had sent his apologies prior to the meeting due to a personal commitment.

2. Paper A - To Approve Minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2024 were **APPROVED**.

3. Paper B – General Update

The Senior Administrator presented the report, noting the following updates:

- Bookings: Increase in regular bookings from 8 to 15 each week, with a new martial arts group on Sunday mornings.
- Publicity: Village Hall Facebook page used to promote the facilities and events taking place with positive engagement, particularly for the recent Christmas Fair held in December 2024. The Facebook page is also shared on the Town Council Facebook page and within local community groups.
- Expenditure: Utilities usage continually monitored to ensure usage is kept minimal.
- Improvement Works: Dorset Council Building Regulations application is in progress, albeit slow. Once permission has been granted, a re-tender process will be carried out to appoint

a building contractor for the installation of the enclosed porch at the front of the Village Hall and Council Office along with the side extension to the small hall.

- General: Importance of maintaining the current facilities to the highest standard and providing the necessary facilities for hirers including baby changing facilities.
- Health & Safety: Office working with the Fire Safety Contractor to schedule in works to the emergency lighting and main fire board, whilst the complex is not in use, due to requiring downtime of up to 36 hours.

Members thanked all staff involved in arranging the Christmas Fair, which was a huge success in bringing the community together to support local crafters and organisations along with raising valuable funds for the Charity.

Discussion took place relating to the Charities finances, which were in a much better position, due to the increase in regular bookings. Cllr Hardy asked if the Charity was breaking even in terms of income and expenditure. The Senior Administrator confirmed in the 2023/24 financial year; the Charity was running at a loss. However, it was anticipated that this would not be the case in the current 2024/25 financial year.

The Clerk confirmed the independent examiner would be on site sometime during June-July 2025 to complete the annual inspection of the Charities accounts and governance. The report would be presented at a future meeting. It was agreed, that should members wish to view the Charities' financial accounts, they could do so by accessing Scribe software, where all members have read only access in the same way as the Town Council financial accounts or to make a request to the office.

Members also discussed the feasibility of installing energy saving measures, including solar panels similar to those at St Nicholas Church. The Clerk confirmed, Low Carbon Dorset had visited the site previously recommending solar panels on the main hall roof. However, there was no grant funding available at the time, albeit this could be re-visited.

The update was **NOTED**.

4. Paper C – Fundraising and Grant Funded Activities

The Senior Administrator presented the report, summarising the key points as follows:

- Community Fit & Fun Project: The Charity has been awarded a grant from Dorset Council of up to 80% of the costs to purchase sports equipment to provide affordable and accessible opportunities for residents to engage in recreational sports and socialise providing refreshments to support the Village Hall Charities fundraising efforts.

The Sole Trustee to consider funding the remaining 20% of costs to purchase sports equipment and storage cupboard along with recruiting a 6-month fixed term contract to an A Level sports student from a local school to assist with running the sessions commencing on Wednesday 29 January 2025 from 4.30 to 7pm in the main hall and lounge area. Based on the success of the sessions, additional sessions may be considered.

In terms of the logistics for running the sessions, the Handyman/Caretaker would be available to run the sessions alongside a student at no extra staffing costs. There may also be an option for a youth support worker to be available at the sessions to conduct outreach work with young people.

The Senior Administrator confirmed that she would be seeking donations for board games to be available in the lounge area of the main hall, as the costs to purchase board games was not included in the costings to purchase sports equipment.

Cllr Joyce proposed to proceed with the Community Fit & Fun Project on the basis discussed. This was seconded by Cllr Lortie, with all members voting in favour.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the following:

- To seek grant funding from Corfe Mullen Sports Association for the remaining 20% of purchasing costs for sports equipment up to the value of £494.80+VAT.
- Village Hall Charity to purchase storage cupboard for sports equipment up to the value of £260.65+VAT.
- To advertise a 6-month fixed term contract to an A Level sports student to assist with running sessions for 3 hours per week at an hourly rate of £8.06 per hour. Contract term to be kept under regular review.
- Activity fees and refundable damage deposits as described.
- To seek volunteers to assist with running sessions, particularly those students carrying out their Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) awards.
- Promote the Community Fit & Fun sessions on posters to be placed on Town Council and community notice boards and social media.

The Senior Administrator concluded, due to the success of the recent Christmas Fair, a Spring Fair was planned on Saturday 22 March 2025 from 10am-3pm. Following a recent Facebook post on the Village Hall Facebook page, the office had received a positive response, with 21 stalls out of a possible 27 already booked. Members to consider options for the Charities stall in terms of fundraising activities including an Easter bonnet parade and Easter egg hunt.

5. Paper D – Room Hire Charges and Conditions of Hire from 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026

The Senior Administrator presented the report, noting the recommendation was not to increase the current room hire charges to remain competitive with comparable local facilities and maintain regular hirers.

Cllr Craven proposed to support the recommendation to not increase room hire fees from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. This was seconded by Cllr Lortie with all members voting in favour.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the room hire charges and conditions of hire to remain unchanged for the period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

It was agreed to draft a positive communication to all regular hirers to confirm the Town Councils relationship with the Village Hall Charity in terms of being the Sole Trustee and their decision not to increase the current room hire charges.

6. Paper E – Salary Review

The Senior Administrator presented the report, noting the increase in the National Living Minimum Wage effective from 1 April 2025 and as a responsible employer, the Sole Trustee should regularly review staff salaries to remain competitive and maintain valued staff.

Members discussed the current staff roles and responsibilities and how the Village Hall complex could not function without their commitment and hard work and how they should be rewarded based on market value. The recommended salaries shown in Appendix 1 were discussed. However, members felt the salaries should align with the pay scales of Town Council employees in terms of scale points.

Members expressed their thanks to all Village Hall staff and agreed they should be remunerated for their hard work. The Chair proposed for salaries to be reviewed in line with Local Government employees pay scales in addition to a 6.7% increase. This was seconded by Cllr Hardy, with all members voting in favour.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** for the Clerk to review salaries in line with the 2024 Local Government pay scales with an additional 6.7% effective from 1 April 2025.

7. Matters for forthcoming agendas

There were no matters for forthcoming agendas.

8. To Agree a date and time for the next meeting – the date and time of the next meeting to be set as and when required.

9. Close of Meeting at 20:05.

Signed Date.....

DRAFT