

MINUTES OF LAVANT MEMORIAL HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
VIRTUAL ZOOM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
ON TUESDAY 1 DECEMBER 2020 AT 7.50pm.

PRESENT Mrs S Ings Mr D Kent
 Mr R Mayne Mr P Rivett
 Mr J Sharrod Mrs E Sheppard
 Mrs S Sims Mr R Wignall
 Mrs E Woodford

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies tendered and accepted from Mr P Winter and Mr Bleach, Caretaker.

2. MINUTES of the meeting held on 3 December 2019 having been previously circulated were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by Mr. Wignall.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr Wignall, Vice-chairman, produced a very comprehensive and informative report on the work of the committee and the effect of the Covid restrictions on the hall. A copy was distributed to all committee members prior to the meeting. There were no questions on the report.
See report attached **Appendix 1**

5. TREASURER'S REPORT AND ADOPTION OF ACCOUNTS

5.1 Adoption of accounts. The accounts for the year end August 2019 are to be prepared early in 2021 and will then be forwarded to the examiner.

An Extra-ordinary Meeting in the spring will be held for adoption of the accounts - date of meeting to be confirmed. **ACTION - CALL EXTRAORDINARY MEETING**

5.2 Examiner of Accounts - Mr Michael Merritt to be contacted in due course.

5.3 The Treasurer reported that at year end our financial position was close to that of the previous year mainly due to payment of an insurance claim for flooding, together with the grant of £10000 received from CDC to cover losses due to the Covid lockdown. This grant helped to cover the loss of income for the period the Hall was closed - five months.

5.3.1 200 Club. The income was down on the previous year some members have not renewed and there are still some payments to be recovered for that year.

6. SECRETARY'S REPORT

Mrs Sims, Secretary, distributed a copy of her report to all members prior to the meeting. See report attached **Appendix 2** There were no questions on the report.

7. APPOINTMENT OF ORGANISATIONS' REPRESENTATIVES

Lavant Horticultural Society	Mr J Sharrod*
Lavant Short Mat Bowls Club	Vacancy
Lavant Cricket Club	Mr R Wignall * until CC AGM in February 2021
Lavant Football Club	Mr D Kent *
Lavant PCC	Mrs C Evison
Lavant Parish Council	Mrs S Ings * until Annual PC meeting April 2021
Lavant Players	Dr P Rivett*
Lavant WI	Ms M O'Grady*
* re-elected members	

8. ELECTION OF OFFICER AND VILLAGE REPRESENTATIVES

Treasurer The nomination of Mr. Mayne for the position of Treasurer was unanimously agreed. There were no further nominations. Mr Mayne kindly agreed to accept the post.

Secretary The nomination of Mrs. Sims for the position of Secretary was unanimously agreed. There were no further nominations. Mrs. Sims kindly accepted the post.

Village Elected members

9.1 Mrs Elaine Sheppard was proposed by Mr Sharrod seconded by Mrs Ings and all present were in favour.

Mrs Elizabeth Woodford was proposed by Mr Sharrod and seconded by Mrs Ings and all present were in favour.

There were no further nominations therefore the Chairman declared the above persons duly appointed to the committee for the coming year.

9.2. There is one vacancy for a village representative and committee members were asked to try to find someone to fill this role.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Annual Report 2019/20

I suspect this year will long be remembered as one of the more challenging faced by the hall, almost entirely due to events beyond our control.

An exceptional spell of wet weather early in the new year overwhelmed the main drain in Pook Lane, which flooded the hall car park and backed up into the showers in the Sports Section. The flood water was contaminated by raw sewage and we were obliged to close the hall to hirers. Southern Water, whose responsibility this was, were unable to act until the water table had subsided. Meanwhile, as a precaution, we deployed the flood defences installed some years earlier in case the River Lavant broke its banks. After a tense few days, water levels dropped and, eventually, Southern Water were able to clear the drains and clean up, including disinfecting the showers. Overall, the closure lasted a month, but we were able to claim on our business interruption insurance for loss of income.

Meanwhile, Covid-19 was spreading and, just a week after we reopened, the pandemic lockdown forced us to close and to cancel all bookings on a rolling basis. We took the opportunity to get essential electrical work undertaken to bring the installation up to current standards and, mindful of the recent flooding, completed renovation of the last section of the hall's own drains. We are grateful to Robert Newman of the Lavant Volunteers, who helped to implement the necessary water flushing regime while the hall was closed.

Once the lockdown was eased, we consulted all our regular hirers as to their expectations and intentions. The majority expressed a wish to return to the hall in the autumn. A small working group was set up to put in place the necessary restrictions and processes to make the hall a "Covid Secure" venue and we were able to reopen on 1st September. We applied for and received funding under the government's Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant scheme, which broadly covered the lost income for the five months March to August, and obtained an additional small CDC grant to cover some of the costs of re-opening, mostly extra cleaning and sanitising.

Starting during the closure period Portsmouth Water undertook the replacement of the water main in Pook Lane, necessitating a road closure with one-way "residents only" access, which proved an additional challenge to returning hirers. To their credit Portsmouth Water were very accommodating and completed the work well ahead of schedule.

At the time of writing we are under a "second wave" pandemic lockdown. Throughout the pandemic we have taken the view that we should stay open, if at all possible, to support the local community with permissible activities in accordance with Covid-19 regulations, and that these objectives should override purely financial considerations, provided the future of the hall is not jeopardised. To this end the Management Committee approved a reduction in the minimum financial reserve the hall should hold to £15,000, approximately 7 months' revenue in normal circumstances, together with the imposition of a 5% supplement on hire charges to help defray additional cleaning costs.

The pandemic also proved the catalyst for some other changes – a complete update of our Hire Conditions, together with an on-line hire agreement process, and a more flexible cleaning regime using a combination of contract and local cleaners.

Redecoration work under the "rolling 3-year cycle" was suspended, although 100 chairs were professionally cleaned, and refurbishment of the Sports Section was kept on hold in view of the uncertain financial outlook. We have begun to consider proposals for the enhancement of the hall fire alarm system and have provided some additional sensors, lights and better exit security.

Further to the presentation at last year's Christmas Fayre to mark Tony Bleach's 50-year association with the hall, the Management Committee decided to rename the Committee Room the Bleaches

Room, recognising not only Tony's immense contribution, but those of his wife Hazel and other family members before them.

I should like to record my thanks to Tony and Booking Secretary, Jennie Lindfield, who have borne much of the brunt of the pandemic impact, particularly dealing with maintenance, access, cleaning and constantly changing bookings. I am also grateful to my fellow Covid Working Group members; Sue Ings, Paul Rivett, Sheila Sims and Bob Mayne, whose work has enabled us to open and has been well received by our hirers.

Peter Winter retires at the end of this year after 16 years as Chair and many years on the Management Committee before that. He has provided wise and effective leadership and overseen many major improvements to the Hall, including the suspended ceiling, solar electricity generation, installation of disabled facilities, flood defences and the modernisation and re-equipping of the kitchen and toilets. He has also run the 200 Club since inception. We owe him an enormous debt of gratitude and wish him well for the future.

Finally, I thank the Management Committee for their support and, particularly, Sheila Sims as Secretary for keeping the administration running smoothly and providing timely advice and guidance.

Richard Wignall

Vice Chair

December 2020