



SUNNINGDALE VILLAGE HALL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 20th June 2024 at 6.30pm
in the Small Hall, Sunningdale Village Hall

MINUTES

Attendees:

Shazia Khawaja – Chair of the Trustee Board	Christine Gadd – Resident
Julia Chester – Secretary to the Trustee Board	Sharon Thompson – Sunningdale Pre-School
Lee Harrison – Trustee	Ann Offield – Sunningdale Pre-School
Eric Nicoli – Trustee	Tamaryn Long – Chair of Sunningdale Pre-School Charity & Resident
Helen Whiteman – Trustee Candidate	Jo Hermon – Sunningdale Pre-School & Resident
	Reverend Jon Hutchinson- Vicar of Holy Trinity Church Sunningdale
	Robert Morgan – Chair of the Parish Council
	Anne-Catherine Buxton – Parish Councillor
	Margaret Morgan - Resident

1. Welcome & Introductions - Shazia Khawaja, Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Shazia Khawaja (SSK) welcomed all attending and introduced the Trustees, asking each person in turn to say a few words. SSK said that she had been a resident for more than 18 years, her children had attended the Pre-School and Holy Trinity School, and she understood the importance of the Village Hall to the community. Julia Chester (JC) said she had been a resident for 15 years, moving to the village post-retirement and getting involved in a number of volunteering opportunities. Lee Harrison (LH) explained that his two boys had attended the pre-School and were now at Holy Trinity School. LH said he was new to the charity world and the Village Hall but wanted to use his corporate background and broad business experience to help the Village Hall thrive in the future. Eric Nicoli (EN) said he had been living in the area for over 27 years and had been resident in the centre of Sunningdale for 22 years. EN also had a corporate background and extensive business experience and was very happy to be a Trustee and to be able to do all he could to help the local community.

SSK explained that the context for this AGM was unusual: as a consequence of the Parish Council, as Managing Trustee, having handed over responsibility for the charity to the new Trustee Board at the start of the year, there were a number of routine business matters that had been initiated by the previous management team and now had to be concluded. SSK

noted that although it was early days for the new Board there would be time later in the meeting for a status report on progress to date and to outline future plans.

2. To note apologies for absence.

JC reported that the following apologies had been received:

- Jane O'Kill – resident and former Secretary to the Board of Trustees
- Suzie Parker - Parish Council Administrative Officer
- Oliver Huish - Sunningdale Village Hall volunteer

3. To approve the Minutes of the previous AGM held on 5 September 2023.

SSK noted that the Unapproved Minutes of the previous AGM, held on 5 September 2023 had been produced by the Managing Trustee, and that as none of the current Trustees had been present at the meeting, they were not in a position to comment on the accuracy or completeness of the Minutes. SSK asked if any of those present had attended the meeting, and if so, if they had any comments.

There were no comments. The Minutes of the AGM held on 5 September 2023 were APPROVED as an accurate record.

4. To receive and approve the Trustee Annual Report and Accounts for 2023.

Lee Harrison introduced the Trustee Annual Report (TAR) and Accounts 2023. LH explained that, as had been previously mentioned, the current Trustees had not been involved with the charity in 2023 and were not in a position to comment on the accounts other than to say that there had been independent scrutiny of the final accounts by the charity bookkeepers Tax Assist and that the Independent Authoriser, Auditing Solutions Ltd, had signed them off without comment. LH referred to page 4 of the accounts and noted that the charity income in 2023 had shown an increase over the previous year and been sufficient to cover outgoings. LH said that Tax Assist continued to provide bookkeeping services to the charity and Management Reports were being provided to the Trustees on a regular basis. LH said that therefore the Trustees recommended the Trustee Annual Report (TAR) and Accounts 2023 for approval and submission to the Charity Commission.

There were no comments. The Trustee Annual Report (TAR) and Accounts 2023 was ACCEPTED.

5. To note the changes to the Constitution of Sunningdale Village Hall Charity, Charity Scheme Number 299966 - Resolution 298.

JC outlined the context for the changes that had been made to the Constitution. Over the years the amendments that had been made were relatively minor. The Constitution inherited by the new Board was substantially the same as it had been in 2009 and some of the key elements were no longer accurate. In 2009 the 4 Trustees of the Sunningdale Village Hall

charity were appointed by the Sunningdale Parish Council and the Parochial Church Council who each nominated two Trustees. This was no longer the case and consequently the Constitution needed to be updated. JC noted that it was also an opportunity for the new Trustees to incorporate recent changes in charity governance into the governing document such as greater clarity about the powers of the Trustees, conflicts of interest, and meeting management e.g. to take account of virtual meetings and the adoption of electronic record keeping. The changes the Trustees wished to make were primarily about how the charity Trustees operate and not about what the charity does i.e. the charitable purposes. JC said that the charitable purposes or objects of the charity contained in section 3 of the Constitution are exactly the same as they have always been i.e. the provision of a village hall for use by the residents of Sunningdale for all types of meetings, recreation and leisure activities, and that the land and the building are held in Trust for the purposes of a village hall. JC noted that the new governing document incorporated the proposed changes and re-ordered the content more logically. Charity Resolution 298 listing all the changes was formally adopted by the Trustees at a Trustee Board meeting in March 2024, submitted to the Charity Commission, and approved by them on 15 April 2024. The revisions are now noted on the Charity Commission website.

JC asked if there were any comments or questions and Anne-Catherine Buxton (A-CB) asked if the Charity Commission had queried any of the proposed changes. JC confirmed that the changes had been accepted by the Charity Commission without comment, and AC-B said that in her experience the Charity Commission were often difficult to deal with so the Trustees had done well. There were no other comments or questions about the changes that had been made to the governing document.

6. To appoint a candidate standing for Co-Option as a Trustee.

SSK introduced this section by referring to clause 5 in the governing document which states that: "The Trustees may appoint if they see fit not more than two Co-opted trustees. Each appointment of a Co-opted Trustee shall be made by a resolution passed at a duly constituted meeting of the Committee by the votes of not less than three-quarters of the Trustees for the time being to take effect from the date of that meeting. The authority, powers and responsibilities of Co-opted Trustees are in all respects identical to those of Trustees."

SSK said that a candidate for the role of Trustee/Treasurer had come recently forward. This was Helen Whiteman who was present at the meeting, is a resident of Sunningdale, and fully met all the selection criteria. SSK noted that as the AGM was the first suitable opportunity for the Trustees to formalise her appointment it was proposed to put it to the vote at the AGM. The appointment of Helen Whiteman as Trustee/Treasurer for Sunningdale Village Hall charity was proposed by SSK and seconded by JC. Helen Whiteman was unanimously appointed as Trustee/Treasurer by the 4 Trustees present.

SSK congratulated Helen on her appointment.

7. To receive a report from Sunningdale Pre-School.

SSK introduced Sharon Thompson and invited her to deliver her report which is recorded verbatim below.

“Good evening; for those that don’t know who I am, my name is Sharon Thompson and I am manager of Sunningdale Pre-school & Afterschool Club. The village hall has been home to Pre-school since 1969, first of all starting in the big hall, then when the small hall was built, moving into the small hall. There have been many changes to early years education over the years, and the small hall facilities have changed to meet the needs of the Pre-school and all those that attend. For the past 13 years we have also run wraparound care for the children who attend Holy Trinity School; this has gone from strength to strength resulting in us having to hire the big hall for our Afterschool Club.

The children that attend preschool live in the local parishes, and beyond. We are unique in that we are now the only term time community Pre-school setting in the immediate area. There have been many changes to the early years funding that Pre-schools and nurseries receive from the government, and this has impacted on many settings across the country, resulting in some community preschools closing because of financial strains. Over the past few years, as with many charities, we have also felt these strains, and continue to navigate through them. Rent increases, made by the previous VH Trustees, have impacted on the Pre-school finances, as well as rising everyday costs, inflation rates and the national minimum wage increases.

We are very fortunate at Pre-school to have long standing staff members; myself and 2 other staff members have been here for more than 20 years, and other staff have been here for 10 years or more. So, you could say that the small hall is our second home. Our staff are our most important asset and their dedication and hard work make Pre-school what it is today. We all take a lot of pride in the small hall and garden and over the years have ensured that they have been maintained to the highest standard, in order that we can continue to provide the outstanding quality of early years education to all our local families.

We would like to thank the new VH Trustees for their time and efforts over the past few months as they have settled into their new roles. We are very much looking forward to working with the new trustees; we share the same vision of Sunningdale Village Hall of being at the heart of our community and being an affordable and accessible space for Sunningdale Pre-school to continue for many years to come.”

8. To receive an overview of the current position of the charity and future plans.

SSK provided an overview of the current position of the charity.

SSK opened by saying that in January 2024 when the new Board was formally appointed the charity had no staff, no office space, the office equipment consisted of a temperamental desktop computer running Sage accounting software, a laminating machine, and a huge

printer/scanner that was mainly an office trip hazard. The Trustees were enthusiastic but lacking the detailed level of insight into running a Village Hall that they urgently needed. SSK felt that the Trustees weren't completely clueless but there was a great deal they really wish they had known in advance. SSK made reference to the difficulties experienced in trying to change the bank mandate.

SSK went on to note that the Trustees had benefitted greatly from the support and guidance of Ruth Davies, the former Parish Clerk and Alex Orchard, the Operations & Marketing Manager for the Village Hall employed by the Parish Council. SSK noted that the other Parish Council Officers – Nikki Tomlinson, Suzie Parker and John Rose – had all chipped in to help the Trustees when needed. SSK said it was also important to name and thank a number of other people from the Sunningdale community who had provided much needed advice and assistance – Aileen Boaler, Carole Elsasser, the Reverend Jon Hutchinson, Amanda Carter, amongst many others. SSK also mentioned the loyal regular hirers who had put up with the hiccups and teething troubles as the Trustees got to grips with the booking's spreadsheet. SSK said that the Trustees are extremely grateful of to all them.

SSK went on to say that the new Trustees took on 2 main tasks – setting in motion all the administrative actions required to establish the charity as a fully functioning separate entity that meets Charity Commission governance requirements, and also starting to understand and implement all the many and varied operational activities required to run a busy Village Hall - from cleaning, to Health & Safety, updating the website, taking bookings and billing hirers. There was a lot to do – but somehow it got done.

SSK noted that those attending were already aware that changes had been made to the Constitution, but in addition to this the Trustees had developed all the necessary policy and procedural documents required to operate as a charity, as well as the huge number of HR policies required before staff could be recruited. SSK confirmed that there was now a formal agreement with the Vicar, the Reverend Jon Hutchinson, to share office space at Holy Trinity Church. The 2 new charity employees - Chelsea Willetts the Operations & Bookings Manager and Rachel Aujla the Marketing Assistant - started work in May 2024 and are both very enthusiastic about being part of the Sunningdale community.

Amongst a number of activities the charity has acquired office equipment, applied for and been awarded free charity licenses for some essential office software – and ported the old landline number across from the Parish Council phone system. SSK noted that best of all a new charity bank account had been set up. SSK admitted that this might not sound like much - but it has all taken a great deal of time and effort. It was only recently that the Trustees felt they were getting to a steady state and could start to think about future plans and ways of operating as they became more familiar with the way the Village Hall works. Traditionally Village Hall staff worked school term-times but staff working hours have recently been increased to meet the actual workload across the whole year. SSK explained to attendees that the Trustees are looking at a new cloud-based booking system so potential hirers can book

online which will be a big step forward especially for last minute weekend bookings. SSK noted that increasing weekend bookings is a big opportunity for the Village Hall – but not without some challenges. SSK noted that while scheduling 4 children’s parties over a weekend is good business the cost of extra cleaning time also has to be factored in.

SSK turned her attention to the future and said that right from the point at which the new Trustees were appointed they have had a very clear idea about what they wanted to achieve and that it was very simple. Firstly to endorse and honour the original Vision for the charity established by the Parish Council and the Parochial Church Council so long ago, and secondly to do all that they can to ensure that the Village Hall continues to be well-used by a wide variety of community groups, offering a range of leisure and recreational activities and social events, which are easily accessible and affordable to all members of the community.

SSK noted that in particular the Trustees place a great deal of value on the long-standing relationship between Sunningdale Village Hall and Sunningdale Pre-School and will do all that they can to ensure that this grows and strengthens. This relationship and its importance to Sunningdale over many years is something that the Trustees understand very well – and SSK made it clear that she felt this very strongly at an emotional level. Sunningdale Pre-School has been an integral part of the village for generations of children and together with the Parish Council, Holy Trinity Church, Holy Trinity School and the Village Hall, provides much of the essential infrastructure that holds the village together as a community.

SSK said that some attendees would be aware that the current lease between the Parish Council and Sunningdale Village Hall expires in November 2024 and she was clear that this was not a matter for discussion at this meeting. SSK went on to say that many attendees would also be aware that the Village Hall – built in 1909 – requires regular investment in the structure and facilities. SSK noted that lots of little things break or go wrong all the time and there are some bigger problems that the Trustees will have to deal with. SSK made it clear that this too, was not a matter for discussion at this meeting as any substantive work to the building is contingent on the terms of the Lease.

In conclusion – and as she had said at the start - SSK noted that there is a great deal that the Trustees wish they had known in advance as it might have made things a little bit easier for the new Board. The Trustees had a crash course in learning how to be Trustees and how to run a Village Hall. Overall the Trustees felt they were getting there, taking small steps forward every week. The Trustees are still very enthusiastic, and looking forward to meeting more residents at the Charters Summer Fair on 29 June.

Finally SSK confirmed that the Trustees don’t have any regrets about the task they have taken on, but that they don’t have any illusions either about how much work it takes and above all, how worthwhile it is.

SSK thanked the attendees for their attention.

9. AOB.

SSK opened up the meeting for attendees to ask questions or to comment.

A-CB asked whether any regular hirers had dropped out since the Trustees took over the running of the Village Hall. SSK asked JC to respond on behalf of the Trustees. JC explained that the only drop-out was Izzy Vialla who had been running puppy training and socialisation classes. JC commented that it was very disappointing as Izzy was enthusiastic and had put a great deal of effort into marketing her classes but there just had not been enough people or puppies booking regularly to make it worth her while. JC noted that in theory only guide dogs were permitted to enter the Village Hall under the Terms & Conditions of Hire but that permission had been granted for the class by the Managing Trustee in 2023 and that in practice there had never been any issues with Izzy's classes so the Trustees would not rule it out if she or another hirer wanted to try again in the future.

A-CB went on to ask about the capacity available at the Village Hall for new hirers. JC responded that there were limited opportunities for additional weekly classes e.g. most free slots are in the evenings and that the main opportunities for increased bookings were at weekends. JC went on to mention an opportunity that one of the regular hirers was interested in exploring. MAD Academy provides music and dance classes for babies and young children and the organiser would like to open up the opportunity to parents who can't afford to pay for classes by making a joint application together with the Village Hall for grant funding to cover the costs. JC apologised to the Trustees as she had not mentioned this idea to them before the AGM, and said that she felt that working with hirers on schemes like this is something that the Village Hall could and should do. The attendees expressed approval for the idea.

There were no other questions.

SSK thanked the attendees and declared the meeting closed at 7.15pm.