

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SATURDAY 8th June 2019 AT 10.00 AT THE MEMORIAL CENTRE

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

6 Trustees were present

Mike Hayday (Chairman), and John Herrett both Parish Council nominated. Maggie Davis elected (indoor users), Darryl Parsons elected (outdoor users), Richard Burr (Treasurer) co-opted.

Apology received from Berny Higgins, elected (outdoor users) and Julie Bell, Parish Council nominated.

10 members of the public present.

2. Declarations of interest:

No declarations of interest.

3. Approval of Minutes of the Memorial Trust EGM, 9th June 2019.

The approval of the minutes was proposed by John Herrett and seconded by Darryl Parsons. The Minutes were formally accepted by the meeting with a unanimous vote and duly signed.

4. Matters arising.

The chairman reported on those matters arising from minutes from the EGM of 9th June 2018 not covered in the Chairman's/Treasurers reports:

Discussions at the AGM in 2018 and at the EGM in June 2018 regarding the possibility of an early autumn village event have not been progressed. Whilst some ideas had been discussed at the EGM no further ideas have been suggested to the Trustees. Trustee workload had meant that this has not been progressed.

5. Chairman's Annual Report for the Memorial Trust.

The Chairman delivered his annual report. Copy attached as appendix 1.

6. Treasurer's Report and presentation of accounts for the year ending 30 April 2019.

Richard Burr delivered the annual report, explaining that following our change of reporting year, these accounts cover the 17 month period from 1st December 2017 to 30 April 2019. Overall the Trust financial position is good with a surplus of £8,000 for the period. Hire Fees from the Centre increased by about 11% on an annualised basis due in particular to more hiring by the Bowls teams and the various exercise classes.

Copy attached as appendix 2.

7. Approval of Accounts for year ending 30 April 2019.

Approval of the 2019 accounts was proposed by Richard Burr and seconded by Maggie Davis, all in favour and accounts accepted.

8. Discussion on the management of the MUGA.

The Chairman introduced the background for this topic.

Whiteparish Memorial Ground Trustees have explored various options over the years to encourage and manage use of the MUGA, including membership card schemes, designated key holders, booking systems and the current pay-per-use scheme.

The income from MUGA hire fees is significantly less than the costs incurred each year for maintaining the facility, however Trustees have been reluctant to increase hire fees as the MUGA is seen as an asset to the village and we would like to encourage as much use as possible.

Currently use of the MUGA is pre-booked via the village store and a key for the gate padlock collected from the village store in return for a deposit plus the hiring fee.

In the past 18 months, the padlock and keys have been replaced on FOUR occasions, due to vandalism of the locks or loss of keys by hirers. In the most recent incident (April), a hammer was used to break off the padlock chain with such force that the hammer head broke off and was discarded inside the MUGA. This requires a replacement padlock and chain and duplicate keys each time.

Trustees are aware that potential MUGA users are unable to make a last minute decision to use the MUGA at times when the shop is closed. The Trust is also concerned that children are climbing over a broken section of the fence to use the MUGA, creating the possibility of injury or further vandalism.

Trustees have re-evaluated the use of the MUGA, considered various options, and now recommend that we move to a no-fee hiring system where all use of the MUGA is free for villagers and gates will remain unlocked.

There could still be a facility to book the MUGA via the village store and anyone who has done so will take priority over ad hoc users. Signage on the MUGA will reflect this policy. Clearly, this decision, if ratified by the AGM, invests in the responsibility of the local Whiteparish community to take care of the facility, respect other users and report any concerns to Trustees.

Trustees have spoken to Nomansland Sports club, who keep their courts unlocked and, whilst they cannot confirm that the courts are more heavily used, they have not suffered from any increased vandalism. Darryl Parsons reminded the meeting that our facility was different in that Nomansland is a tennis only hardcourt with fixed posts, whilst we have a Multi-use sports area with removable nets. This may be less vandal resistant.

Maggie Davis affirmed the Trustees desire to see the MUGA used more widely especially by local children and teenagers. She also asked the meeting to consider the refurbishment of the basketball hoops in the MUGA

The chairman asked for comments from the floor.

Mrs Sue King asked how the Trust would finance any running repairs and longer term refurbishment of the MUGA without any contribution from hire fees.

The Treasurer pointed out that hire fees, whilst a contributor to overall income, at £300-£320 per year, did not cover day to day maintenance. Maggie Davis explained that the Trust would look to hold specific fund raising events for the MUGA as required.

Darryl Parsons confirmed that the current surface has a life span of 2-3 years after which time the Trust will need to actively consider how to proceed and how to raise monies required. It was agreed that this would need to involve grant applications as well as fundraising.

Mrs Linda Palmer asked if the intention was to leave one net up permanently. The chairman stated that the Trust has only one net at the moment and would ask non tennis users to replace the nets.

Judy Nunn stated that the nets were difficult to replace, especially by children as it needed at least two able bodied persons to put the post up and tension the net.

She also referenced the difficulty in closing the gates properly. Trustees will look at ways to ease this issue.

Mrs Sarah Skeates supported the proposal and said that many teenage boys visited the recreation ground from outside Whiteparish to use the football facilities and the Skate Park and would also use the MUGA. She suggested that notifying the village through the school via the regular parent's newsletter and Facebook page as well as the Steeple & Street.

Villagers also pointed out that if the hoops were repaired it may be possible to attract netball players.

Questions were raised by several villagers as to how a booking system would work, use of the shop as before, would a web based booking system be better? Would it be better to make the facility bookable only in shop hours and free to use on weekday evenings, Saturday afternoons and Sunday afternoons?

Summarising the discussion, the chairman asked that the meeting vote on 2 issues.

- That the MUGA move away from a locked facility and charging by the hour to an unlocked facility.
- If in favour of that proposal, on whether to retain a shop based booking system with the finer details decided by the Trustees.

On the first question the vote was unanimous, to have the facility free to use and unlocked.

On the second point, members of the public were divided evenly for and against booking, Trustees voted 3 for keeping booking and 2 against.

The MUGA will therefore move to being a free to use, unlocked facility with booking via the shop taking priority over casual users.

9. Questions from the floor.

Mrs Linda Palmer supported comments in the chairman's reports on dogs being taken onto the MUGA, she observed that some dog owners became aggressive when challenged. Mrs Palmer also noted that there was both ferret racing and a small animal petting attraction advertised as present on the Memorial Ground during the fete, she asked if this was potentially diluting the no dogs' policy. A representative of the fete committee, Mrs Jane Legat, confirmed that there would not be any dogs present on the Memorial Ground and that the advertising posters stated that dogs were not allowed. This message will be reinforced to the volunteers manning the entrance gates. The chairman confirmed that the fete committee had requested permission to have both attractions and this had been granted by the Trustees with a no dogs stipulation.

Several members of the public commented on the state of the car park. This amounted to complaints that the bottom part was potholed and that the both parts became muddy and wet during inclement weather. The chairman reminded the meeting that the Trust leases the lower end of the car park to the Surgery. The surgery are responsible for the maintenance of this section of the car park with a financial contribution from the Trust.

The Trust is currently working with the surgery to carry out running repairs to the surface. Any comments or suggests for resurfacing of this area of the car park should be directed to the surgery, not to the Trust.

With regard to the top part of the car park, this has not significantly deteriorated but some areas get muddy when it is wet. The surface matches the lower car park. This type of surface is similar to that used around the New Forest for car parks. It is not as durable as hard surfaces such as concrete or tarmac. However it is in keeping with the rural nature of its surroundings and is affordable. The Trust have no immediate plans to resurface the car park.

Jane Legat asked if there were any plans to provide additional wall cupboards in the kitchen. The chairman responded that this had been discussed at the EGM and Trustees had undertaken to review storage space after we moved to our new key entry process. Trustees had considered additional storage and agreed that clubs wanting additional private kitchen storage could be provided with lockable wall cupboards at cost. (This was published in the minutes of the Trust meeting of 25th October 2018)

10. Public vote on any resolutions from the floor. No resolutions proposed

11. The nomination and election of Trustees.

The chairman confirmed that the Parish Council nominated Trustees had all agreed to serve another year as had the three elected and one co-opted Trustee. However he gave notice that Berny Higgins, an elected Trustee who has served for over 5 years, will stand down in June 2020. He further informed the meeting that he will resign as chairman in June 2020, although is prepared to remain a Trustee until June 2021, if nominated. The chairman asked for any other nominations for Trustee. There were none so that all elected members are to serve a further period.

12. Any other business.

Mrs Jackie Hawker asked if there was any interest in her 2018 suggestion for an early autumn Pie making family festival. Other villagers present suggested that a Halloween event, maybe a pumpkin competition, or pumpkin carving completion or a fund raising quiz event could be combined with this idea. Some Garden Club members recalled that this had once been a club event and it may be that the club could coordinate an autumn festival.

Maggie Davis responding for the Trust, stated that there was not enough capacity amongst the committee, who are already running two events at this time of year, to manage another event. However the Trust would support any proposals from villagers or village clubs who wished to run an event.

A short discussion took place and members of the public prepared to support such an event, coordinated by Mrs Hawker, will report back to the August 8th Trustee management meeting.

Mr Trevor King, Chairman of the Parish Council, thanked the Trustees on behalf of the village for the hard work they put in to the benefit of villagers

The AGM was closed and immediately followed by the 100+ Club AGM

Appendix 1

Chairman's Report AGM 8th June 2019

This has been a successful period for the Trust, including the first 12 months under our new reporting timetable. Our Treasurer will give the financial details in a few minutes. He will confirm that overall booking for the centre is up on last year although the sports grounds income is lower. We do, like most village halls have spare daytime capacity and we would like to see the MUGA used more widely. On behalf of the Trustees I thank all those villagers who have used the centre or the outside sports facilities, either by supporting a local club or society, playing football, cricket or tennis or holding your family celebrations in the centre.

We have this year completed a number of key projects and hosted some new events.

- Replacement of the fencing on the Romsey road boundary of the Memorial Ground.
- Improvements to the kitchen by installing a hot water heater and a commercial dishwasher. These have proved their worth, particularly at the annual fete.
- Completion of the required electrical circuit safety inspection to conform to BS7671 IET Wiring Regulation.
- The addition of blinds in the Cowesfield room. It is hoped that this will improve the hire experience for organisations using projectors for presentations and lectures in the daylight hours and perhaps increase such hires,
- We purchased a new chair trolley to supplement existing trollies and assist hirers in moving small numbers of chairs.
- We obtained a licence for the Memorial Centre allowing the sale of alcohol with certain restrictions. This allows us to host more than the 15 events a year afforded by the use of Temporary Event Notices. It also allows us to reduce the licencing cost of selling alcohol for potential hirers.

Improving the Centre and Grounds requires a constant funding stream and this year we have again been active in generating funding for future projects with fund raising events. The Trustees again supported a Winter Ball to raise funds this year. It was a great evening and raised a large amount of money, over £2,000 to help with 2019 projects.

The 100+ club also raised over £2,000 with an additional £500 raised at our successful Christmas Party. We plan a big recruitment drive to increase membership in 2019.

We also bade a very fond farewell in September to Sid and Hazel Twine, who have been managing caretaker and booking clerk respectively since the centre opened in 2014. We wish them a happy retirement.

Ian O'Neill volunteered to take over the bulk of Sid's duties and we have also added extra cleaning resource by employing a professional cleaning company. Bookings are being managed by our Treasurer, Richard Burr, who continues this task even when out of the country on holiday, we thank him for volunteering to manage this aspect along with his financial duties.

As discussed at the EGM in 2018, the change of caretaker and the increase in hire levels led us into moving to a key holder access system instead of requiring each hire to be

opened and closed by a volunteer caretaker or Trustee. Each regular hiring group now have their own key and a number of Trustees are acting as key holders for infrequent hirers. This has been well accepted by hirers.

Since the new Whiteparish Memorial Centre opened in 2014 hire charges have been stable at £10 per hour. Trustees have continually endeavoured to provide a hire charge that is competitive with other local venues whilst also providing the high level of service and facility that Whiteparish villagers have become accustomed to.

However, the costs of utilities, essential maintenance and services have all increased during that time. We have reached a position where we needed to apply a small increase to indoor user groups for the hire of the Centre facilities.

Trustees therefore decided to increase the hire charges for the Main Hall and Cowesfield Room to £12 per hour, with effect from 1st January 2019. Early indications are that bookings have remained stable.

The centre hosted a wedding for the very first time this year with two winter weddings one in January and one in February.

We welcomed Parish Pictures, a village cinema club, which has been very well patronised and filled the centre on many spring, autumn and winter Saturday evenings. We also have a return of the Watermill Theatre Tour on 12th July and we are in discussion with Forest Forge Theatre Company regarding a bringing pantomime back to Whiteparish in January 2020.

The main planned spends for 2019-2020 include decoration of the centre and improvements to the ambient lighting in the main hall to make it more suitable for weddings, parties and other social events. We will also be replacing fencing around the pond area. The play area will also need further maintenance. The Trust is also collaborating with Whiteparish Surgery on the maintenance of the lower part of the car park, which will require attention.

The Memorial Ground has again looked at its finest this year thanks to the efforts of our ground maintenance team, Richie Hamblin and Ben Armstrong of H A Ground Care. Trustees were dismayed by some reports from sports users of Whiteparish residents bringing dogs onto the Memorial Ground. We have placed reminder notices in the Steeple and Street and would ask all villagers to assist in keeping the area free of dog mess by reminding anyone you see with a dog that we do not allow them on the Memorial Ground.

We have re-seeded the worn areas of the football pitch which was generously financed by the Parish Council who, as in previous years, have been very supportive of the Trust. We thank them for their continued support.

Finally, I thank all my fellow Trustees for all the work they put in and the excellent advice they give the chairman.