

MINUTES OF THE UMBORNE INSTITUTE TRUSTEES

Extraordinary General Meeting at the Hall

Wednesday 20 August 2008 at 7.30pm

Attended: Rob Summers (chairman), Geoff Elliott (secretary), Sue Gush (treasurer), Kimmo Evans, Peter Rugg, Chris Solway, Liz Gosling and Paul Forster.

Also attended: Rick Wood, Tony Gosling and Paul Galloway.

Apologies: Eleanor Wood

Absent, having resigned: John Pearce and Suzette Sprague

RS welcomed trustees and other members of the community to a special meeting, called to discuss and vote on a new constitution for the Institute. He explained that a revised constitution was needed because so many circumstances had changed since the earlier one had been adopted in 1949. We had to have a modern constitution by which we could govern our affairs and which would be acceptable to the Charities Commission and other bodies to whom we applied for grants. Its essential difference was that trustees would henceforward be elected by the community in the hall's area of benefit. There would be up to 12 elected members who would serve for three years each before retiring or seeking re-election.

Copies of the constitution were circulated and questions were asked. PR was told that if there were a sale of the Institute's assets the proceeds would benefit the local community in ways that the trustees would determine. GE asked if a clause of the new constitution meant that we had to have indemnity insurance. RS said that we could do so if we wished. CS wanted to know why we were an institute rather than a village hall association. He was told that we could change terminology if we wished. There was some preference expressed for 'community hall' and 'management committee', which were thought to be more up-to-date.

KE said that the new constitution would serve us better. He said that the responsibilities placed on us were set out so much more clearly than before. It would be a tool to work with.

RS said there had been two resignations, but only that of Suzette Sprague resulted from the proposed adoption of a new constitution.

He proposed the adoption and GE seconded the proposal. Unanimous support was expressed.

Rick Wood thanked trustees for what they had done to modernise the constitution.

The meeting was closed at 8.05pm.

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Meeting at the Hall

Wednesday 20 August 2008 at 8.10pm

Those in attendance were the same as those who had just attended the extraordinary meeting. The apology from Eleanor Wood was noted.

Minutes of the meeting on 18 June 2008 were approved and signed by the chairman.

Matters Arising: RS recalled that at the previous meeting membership of the Devon Association of Community Buildings had not been agreed. It had since been discovered that membership had not meant that we would be paying two subscriptions for the same purpose. The function of the new body had been split from others of the Community Council of Devon and so had the subscription. It was agreed that we should join the new association.

GE reported that Rosemary Hewson had agreed to take back the job of hall bookings secretary.

Correspondence: GE passed insurance offers to SG.

New Constitution: RS reported the outcome of the extraordinary general meeting and said that as a result we would now be working to the new constitution. He said that there were now two vacancies caused by resignations. John Pearce had resigned through pressure of work.

GE suggested there was no need to rush to appoint new co-opted members unless specialist skills were required. SG suggested Neil Shepherd as a new trustee. It was decided to talk to people privately rather than advertise for interested people since the latter might impose an obligation to appoint whomever applied.

Suzette Sprague had said she would be prepared to continue cooking for functions. John Pearce would be asked if he would continue to supply his specialist skills when they were needed. KE proposed that letters of thanks should be sent to both of them, and RS agreed to write and send them.

Sub-committee Reports:

Finance and General Purposes: SG reported that the Summer Barbecue had raised £707. GE was asked to write a letter of thanks to Andy and Ruhi Bowman whose wedding marquee had been used for the occasion. The Steam-Up had raised £528. SG said that remaining food had been lost because Rosemary Hewson's freezer had been accidentally turned off. Gift Aid after a private donation last year had brought in £190.

On 30 June the COIF account contained £36,277. The building account had £1,049 and the current account £675.

SG reported insurance quotes for indemnity cover. This would protect trustees from personal responsibility in matters such as unintended negligence. PF pointed out that the new trust deed required trustees to keep the hall in good order. What, he asked, would happen if an accident followed some failure of the hall's structure? The hall's condition was not good. He said we shouldn't bury our heads in the sand. The risk wasn't worth taking.

He proposed, with seconding from GE, that a report be commissioned from a structural engineer on the condition of the hall. This was agreed, and RS undertook to arrange one.

KE said that a decision on indemnity insurance should be delayed until after the report had been written. SG said she would get other quotes.

New Hall Development: PF said that quotes from building suppliers were in place. GE suggested seeking a variation on our planning permission because the proposed new building was now different from what had been envisaged. This was agreed, and PF undertook to make arrangements.

GE reported failure in seeking grant aid from Devon County Council through the local county councillor Douglas Hull. He had tried to secure some of the money from the sale of Exeter Airport, and had been encouraged to do so by the councillor. But it had all come to nought. No-one now seemed to know what would happen to the money. GE would now try for a grant from the Community Council of Devon. We should continue to monitor available grants, and KE said he would help. RS said the £35 subscription to the Devon Association of Community Buildings should be paid immediately, and SG agreed to have it paid.

Entertainments and Fund-Raising: Trustees were reminded that the next event was the Duck Races and then came the Autumn Supper. RS would seek permission to use the field for the Duck Races on Sunday 7 September. The Autumn Supper would be held on Saturday 11 October.

Hall Maintenance: CS said he had cut down weeds. He said a stage curtain had to be mended.

Task Allocation: A paper prepared by GE on a new allocation of tasks among trustees was discussed. The list was agreed except that SG would continue to seek licences for events. Tasks listed for John Pearce would be reallocated later. The list would be kept with minutes.

GE undertook to form a list of keyholders. On the list each would sign to say he or she had taken a key and their signatures would be counter-signed by the secretary. The list would include trustees and non-trustees who needed access to the hall frequently, such as a Stag Amateur Dramatic Society representative. CS expressed some concern about non-

trustees having keys but others said there had to be some trust in regular users because it would not be practicable to let in all users and lock up after them.

RS and KE undertook to clear out unwanted items from the hall.

Hall Bookings: GE reported that apart from regular local users only a band had booked the hall for practice.

Any Other Business: None

Next Meeting: This would take place in the hall at 7.30 on Tuesday 21 October.

The meeting was closed at 9.45pm.