

Minutes of the Woodhall Farm Community Association Committee Meeting 23 February 2004

1. A welcome to the totally new Committee.

All the new Committee members were present at this first meeting: Arno Steen Andreasen (Chair), Tony Bolt (Vice Chair), Marcela Sheward Cortez, Carol Garrett, Geraldine Lander, Lars Stegemann, Cllr. Colette Wyatt-Lowe, Cllr. Stephen Holmes and Lillian Andreasen. Also present were Matt Chattfield (DBC) and Nicola Molloy (DBC)

Apologies from Fiona Guest (County Councillor)

Sarah McKenzie who also stood for the Committee has been withdrawn because of other commitments.

2. Viewing the whole Centre.

The Committee walked around the Centre and the general response afterwards was the amazing potential, and that the Centre is much bigger than people knew. There is a need for tidying up and decorating, especially upstairs.

- Matt Chattfield informed us that the DBC own the Building and lease it to the Association for a peppercorn rent.
- The DBC maintain the building, floors and boiler - we will find out later what this includes.
- There is an annual inspection of the building, where wishes can be given in.
- We need to ask permission from DBC before decorating - they are our Landlords.
- The DBC run the payroll for us and invoice the Association.
- Matt is here to give us advice, when requested. Unfortunately he will be Seconded to a different post for the next 3 months, Dave Gill will help us with any queries.
- When the new Committee find their feet we will work on a partnership agreement with the DBC.
- Matt offered the committee a training session in how to run a community centre.

We need to get keys back from former chair, if he has any. Normal procedure would also be to change code on the alarm system.

3. Financial Situation:

From The Charity Commission's Website we found that no accounts have been submitted for the years 1999/2000, 2000/2001, 2002/2003.

We have been informed by Yorkshire Bank that a cheque for £3,081. 73 to DBC to cover salaries has been rejected.

The Playgroup have informed us that they have not yet been given around £3,000 out of a donation from the New Initiatives Fund. This money was received for running Holiday Schemes 9 weeks within

a year.

We are at the moment trying to assess the financial situation, but this is a confusing process as there are no accounts and no access to the computer, etc.

DBC have over the last month sent 2 different people into the office to try to sort out the financial situation, both have given up.

Arno has talked to the Charity Commission and was assured that the new Committee is not liable for old debt. We do need to minute the size of the debt ASAP.

The Caretaker, Martin, has started sending out invoices to users.

4. Bookings

Ruth Clinch has kindly put together a summary of the weekly use of the centre.

Geraldine has given in a request for booking rooms in the Centre for the Koinonia Playgroup.

- It was decided that she can in principle book Pleydell when available, and Holtsmer and Revel at other times, for the Summer term. We will negotiate a possible continuation on a later date.
- The rooms have to be approved by Offsted without changes that would limit other use of the rooms.
- The rooms have to be cleared after use. For now the Kitchen can be used as storage of equipment.
- Fees will be decided at the next Committee meeting.
- Arno will negotiate with the Friday users of the Pleydell room, to see if they would be prepared to move to an upstairs room. (They have decided not to move)
- The Committee thought it helpful that the Chair or Vice Chair is present at the time of the Offsted Inspection.

Geraldine was not part of the decisionmaking.

The 418 Project asked if they could rent the Eleanor room on the same terms as DBC.

- This was agreed on the terms that they decorate the room themselves.
- A monthly fee of £75 a month.
- This was also agreed for the Summer term, and a possible continuation will be negotiated on a later date.
- The room will be available for other users occasionally.

Arno, Carol, Lars, Marcela and Lillian left the room during the decisionmaking.

The Monday night Healing group presently used three rooms and paid for two. They will be informed that the Eleanor room is now rented out. They will continue to use the two rooms they are paying for.

There has been a request from Africans Together for booking The Pleydell 10 Fridays. There was concern about them not having paid on previous occasions and staying longer than 10pm. It was decided that Arno would look into it. (The booking would be on behalf of DCVS. They can rent rooms

for £7.50 in Bennetts End community centre and found our prices very high).

5. Bank Signatures

We decided to open 2 new Bank Accounts, one for the Centre and one for the Playgroup. From the new financial year the Playgroup and the centre will have separate accounts and budgets.

Arno, Tony, Geraldine and Carol will be the signateurs.

6. Paul Henson and his involvement in the committee.

After the AGM there was some confusion about the role of the previous Chair of the Committee, Paul Hinson. After the AGM a nomination form, for a place on the Committee with his name on, was found in the room. It was found under some papers left on the table after the previous Chair and Secretary had left the room at the AGM, verbally stating that they were not prepared to stand for office again. The nomination form was not passed on Matt Chatfield who was chairing this part of the meeting. Paul Henson, the Proposor nor the Seconder attended this part of the meeting to let the AGM know the the nomination was hidden under other papers. Paul Hinson was therefore not mentioned nor elected. Matt Chatfield asked the attendees if there were any other nominations and Paul Henson was not mentioned.

The new Committee felt it very unfair to the attendees of the AGM that a person could elected to the Committee without standing at the AGM. The Committee decided that a hidden piece of paper in the room of the AGM is not a valid and fair way of standing. Had his name been mentioned the AGM could have responded and voted for or against.

Paul Hinson came and wanted to attend this Committee meeting, but was asked to leave again.

It was decided that Colette will set up a meeting between herself, Arno and Chief Financial Officer Richard Micklewright to find out where we stand concerning complaints from Paul Hinson to the Charity Commission and to make an agreement about the current debt to the DBC.

7. AreaWorking Grant.

Arno will ask Areaworking Committee to change grant applied for by The 418 Project to a grant for the Community Centre toward decorating some of the run down rooms. (We will receive £500 from DBC very soon).

8. Staff situation:

The Manager - Barbara - is long term ill. She is on statutory sick pay - the Centre does no longer pay. The Playgroup have been given back the 5 hours admin-hours Barbara was doing for them, since she was injured.

The cleaner - Jan - works 2 1\2 hours a day, 5 days a week.

The Caretakers - Martin and Frances Ellis - the latter has no contract and gets no holiday pay. This needs to be sorted.

There are 4 Playgroup workers managed by Audrey and Sally. The Playgroup is now fully subscribed with 30 children.

We will look into contracts and job-descriptions.

9. Marketing the Centre.

As a start Steve offered to look at setting up a Web-site to advertise the Centre.

We heard that Fiona Guest is presently working at getting a sign up at the entry to Arkley Road for the Community Centre.

10. AOB

- At the next meeting we need to sign agreements with the Constitution of the Committee.
- We need to send a letter to the Holding Trustees Val Wood and Anne ? to let them know of the changed Committee.
- The Playgroup gave in letter just before this meeting asking for the Pleydell Room to cater for more children on the waiting list. The DBC will not allow putting anyone new staff members onto the payroll because of the outstanding debt. It was decided that this would therefore not be possible.
- The previous Secretary Margareth Storey has asked for a letter of recognition for her years of service to the Centre. We will send a letter with Thank you for the contribution of time and effort to the work.
- Nicola Molloy is presently working to increase the use of the Centre, she is presently planning a Murder Mystery Evening - Humpty Dumpty's Mansion. The plan is to invite lots of families to take part, which should rise the awareness of the Centre. Would like the whole Centre on April 2nd. for free, as it is for the Centre. Beforehand she would like to hire the Pleydell to get people involved in making costumes and decor for the event.
- The Playgroup have asked for possibilities of putting things onto the walls, to apply with an Offsted demand. Different ideas were discussed and we decided to look more into possibilities of reversible pin boards. We felt we had to be wise in making the Hall look attractive for other users as well as the Playgroup.
- It was decided that all members of the Committee need to go through the Chair to book the Centre.
- It was decided that only the Chair can talk/negotiate with the staff.
- We talked about the possible conflict in interest for Geraldine in dealing with the Playgroup run by the Community Centre - and Geraldine agreed to not be part of talks about the daily running of the Playgroup.
- We talked about the possibility of having Volunteers in the Office to answer calls and take bookings.