

**THE MERRY BELLS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING  
ON THE 7<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2024  
HELD IN THE COFFEE ROOM**

**Present:** Mr T. Blightman                      Mrs F. Fox  
              Mrs J. Slade                         Mr J. Morrison  
              Mr I. McGregor

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Mr I. Germain   Mrs L. Tully   Dr J. Guy

**2. Agree the Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The Minutes were agreed as a true record

**3. Matters Arising from the Minutes**

The defibrillator sign outside the Merry Bells is still required.

**4. Treasurers Report**

IG and TB had met with Bob Minty who is examining the 2023 accounts and handed over the paperwork.

In the absence of IG, TB presented the monthly figures for February, which showed a small surplus. Hirings were good and together with some rental income produced total income of £3,321; cleaning expenditure was exactly the same as hirings for the month and this, together with other expenditure resulted in a surplus of £529.

Cumulatively in 2024, income of £9,365 is almost £1300 higher (16%) than last year, while expenditure of £6,067 is nearly £2,000 lower, mainly due to fewer repairs and the cost of a delivery of Temperance Ale last year, resulting in a surplus for the first 2 months of £3,298, compared to just about breakeven last year.

SODC have written to confirm there will be 100% relief on business rates for the hall again for 2024/25.

**5. Maintenance Report**

The Boiler in Identity Hair has broken which means no hot water. A family member was able to do a temporary fix but a new one is now essential and it was therefore agreed to go ahead with a new one. A family quote was given of £2,850 which was agreed.

The three radiators in the Main Hall are being replaced on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024 to give extra heating capacity which will be beneficial to all hirers.

A quote for the Car Park wall on the Church Road side was received. Price given was £2,200 which was deemed too high, another quote awaiting **(TB)**

Still awaiting work to be done on the slates on the roof. Brambles need to be cut back. The resident of the house adjoining the car park has agreed to this.

The urn in the kitchen has been removed and it was decided not to replace it unless we subsequently had complaints, as other means of hot water are available in the kitchen.

No progress on the tables.

Unfortunately the steps that have just been painted were not very successful. The contractor is aware of this and is dealing with the issue via the paint manufacturers and will be re-doing them.

The Smoke Detector to be fitted in the Library has been agreed and Churches Fire have been informed. A quote of £1,000 was agreed

Once again the post in the Car Park was discussed. Going forward it would seem that an overhanging lockable gantry is the only solution. The price would be in the region of £2,044 to £2,400 excluding installation. **(TB)** to make further inquiries .

**(IMcG)** has taken various measurement and suggestions. He also pointed out that Planning Permission would be required. **(TB)** to speak to the Planning Committee.

One or two bolts need to be tightened on the benches/chairs on the forecourt.

**(IMcG)** believes they will all last hopefully another year.

## **6. Correspondence**

An invite to the Volunteers Fair in Oxford on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024 was received. **(TB)** possibly to attend.

## **7. Bookings Update**

We are still in a very healthy position.

A deposit regarding late evening bookings was discussed but no decision made.

**(IMcG)** investigating a camera for the Hallway and also the Back Entrance.

## **8. Monthly Calendar**

An Email has been sent to O.C.C. regarding the Library. **(TB)** waiting for a reply with some dates to meet the estates manager.

The question of Rent/ Lease Renewals was discussed at length.

A decision was taken regarding the Parish Office of a 12% increase. All the committee agreed.

With regard to Identity Hair an increase of 20% was agreed by the majority of the committee. One committee member voted against the decision as he thought a higher increase was needed to bring the rental closer to market rates.

**(TB)** to inquire whether Churches Fire provide Fire Risk Assessments.

An Insurance quote required ready for renewal in July.

The review of policies was held over until the next meeting to give everybody an opportunity to read and comment on them. All to provide **(TB)** with comments in time for him to draft updated versions for the meeting. The consultation on a possible Terrorism Bill (Martyn's Law) was noted but no response to be given at this time.

## **9. Any Other Business**

The date of the of the A.G.M. was agreed for the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 6.30 p.m. in the Coffee Room

A No Dogs Sign except guide dogs is required in a more prominent position.

**(IG)** will draft an article for the April/May newsletter referencing some of the repairs that have been required already this year.

## **10. Date of the Next Meeting**

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 5.00pm in the Coffee Room