

Present: Mr T.Blightman Mr J. Morrison
Mr Ian Germain Mr. I McGregor
Dr J. Guy Mrs J. Stade
Mrs E. Fox

Mrs. L. Tully

The Minutes were agreed as a true record.

The notice for *No Dogs Allowed* has been bought. A letter was sent to the tenants of the flats above the Post Office from Wheatley Estates who manage them for the landlord, reminding them that The Merry Bells Car park is a short-term car park and not to leave cars there for long periods.

August delivered a loss of £537. This was mainly due to a low Hirings Income of £795, with the reason being the same as the previous two months (June & July), whereby we were 'out of sync' with our Invoicing. For June, we invoiced some bookings in July and for August, we invoiced early in July. So the best solution is to take an average of the monthly bookings for these three months , which is £1,209 against the monthly average of January - May of £1109

Our August Expense were £1,452, which compares favourably with other months, while our Exceptional Expenses were £660 for new Sensor Lights.

For the Year-to-Date (YTD), 2024 compares very favourably with the same period for 2023, with the Surplus of £10,811 for 2024 being £2,897 more than the £7,914 for 2023. This was achieved through an increase in Income of 3,566 from £29,093 (2023) to £32,659 (2024), while Expenses remained consistent from £21,179 (2023) to £21,847 (2024), an increase of £668.

This means that being two-thirds of the way through the Year projecting the current Surplus of £10,811 means a Forecast of £16,217 for 2024. Following this, there was a discussion about investing in future projects in addition to what had already been discussed and agreed. This then moved into a discussion about maintaining our Capital Reserves at c.£100,000 by using our surplus from 2023 and 2024 to pay for these Projects once a Budget has been agreed for each one. There was also a discussion about, whether £100,000 was too much to keep as the Capital Reserve and no conclusion was reached. A work in progress - to be continued.....

5. Maintenance Report

The repainting of the steps is on going. **TB** has contacted the contractor who has been off work for some time with a serious back issue. He will supply some new paint.

Potholes in the car park have been filled, the lights in the Hall fixed. No progress on the slates. Still waiting for Oxford AV to review the sound system – JG suggested an alternative and will pursue. The new noticeboard is still awaited. Churches Fire will be coming to carry out repairs and install new equipment on 13th September.

Planning Permission with regard to the Barrier is now with the planning office and a notice at the entrance of the car park. So far there have been no objections. A decision is due by 1st October. The car park will need to be closed to both vehicles and pedestrians on the day of installation.

Further to the discussion about reserves, a list of exceptional repairs and improvements is to be drawn up for fuller discussion with more information at the next meeting.

Suggestions include: Redecoration, a new floor for the entrance hall and corridors, refurbishing the kitchen, investing in a battery to store the energy generated by the pv panels which doesn't get immediately used, repairs to the window frames.

6. Correspondence

TB has sent a letter regarding the Terrorism Bill to the our local M.P. but to date has not received a reply.

7. Bookings Update

Our first £100 deposit has been implemented with no objections. Bookings were down in August but September is now better than last year.

8. Monthly Calendar

OCC have accepted our proposal about rent for the Library and their solicitors will be drawing up a draft agreement.

TB has submitted the Annual Report to the Charity Commission

A new contract with BT has been agreed for supply of broadband and phone line at a slightly lower price than before.

The new gas and electricity contract (with SSE) begins on 1st October

The gas equipment (boiler, cooker and wall heaters) need annual safety certificate.

9. Any Other Business

10. Ian G asked for suggestions for a topic for the Oct/Nov newsletter. It was suggested there be a brief summary of regular activities in The Merry Bells.

11. Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 3rd October at 5pm in the Coffee Room