**Minutes of Levens Institute Committee Meeting Wednesday 14 November 2018**

**Present:** Stephen Read, Alan Miller, Sheila Watson, Hugh Connor, Frank Routledge, Mary Orr, Chris Riley, Wendy Mobbs.

**Apologies:** Helen Miller, John Wood, Susie Bagot

**Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting of 19 September 2018 were approved as drafted, save that the date of the previous minutes should read 11 July 2018 (not 16 May 2018).

**Matters Arising** None, all matters are on the agenda.

**Chair’s report**

This is dealt with in Joint Venture Agreement and Post Box below.

**Secretary’s report**

The Kendal and District Philatelic Society has a full programme of events booked for 2019 and the Yoga class (Jenny Brindle), has asked to reduce hours to 1 ¼, which was approved. The pop group (Tina Foxwell) has booked Friday morning for four months. This was welcomed but Alan must remind the group about noise levels. This booking clashes with the Institute draw on the second Friday of the month, but it was agreed this will now be held in the downstairs room. The Kent Estuary Young Farmers has booked one meeting. The Castle Fire representative had been on Tue 6 Nov and had serviced and checked all appliances.

SR will ask Kendal Philately Society if they wish to appoint a representative for the committee.

**Treasurers Report.**

Account balances at 30 October 2018:

Barclays current account £7111.34

Barclays monthly draw account £1191.00

Teachers Building Society £5000.00 (90-day notice account paying 1.2%)

COIF Charities Deposit Fund £34,036.86 (at 30 September 2018)

Banking matters

Online banking facilities for our accounts are being set up and the process of adding Peter Smith as a signatory for the Monthly Draw Account is underway

New account

Following a meeting between John, Stephen and Hugh, it is proposed that we withdraw £30,000 from the COIF account and deposit this in the Cambridge & Counties Bank 2 Year Fixed Rate Business, Trust and Charity Bond, which pays a rate of 2.00%.  Cambridge & Counties Bank is a challenger bank which was set up as a joint venture between Trinity Hall, Cambridge & Cambridgeshire Local Government Pension Fund.  The account is operated by post and our funds would be protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. So far this year our income is £6766, and our expenditure is £5523.  The only large item of expenditure to pay is the annual hall insurance (£500-ish) and there will be further room hire income and the annual transfer from the Monthly Draw Account to come. We will again have a comfortable surplus despite our building maintenance costs being nearly £1000 more than in 2017.  I trust that this will give the Committee confidence to agree this transfer of funds. The new account was agreed.

Electricity Contract

A new 2 year fixed price contract with Eon from 19 January 2019 has been agreed.  This is at a rate of 17.32p per kWh plus 27p per day standing charge (before VAT).  We then get a 7% discount for paying by direct debit.  Our current charges are 16.77p per kWh and 27p per day (both before VAT and 7% discount), so the new contract is an increase of 3.3%.  This is a good deal and fixes our costs for two years.  (Cf. a one-year fixed deal was more expensive at 18.2p per kWh.)

**Joint Venture Agreement and Levens Community Project**

At the Parish Council on Tuesday 13 November the agreement was on the agenda, but the P.C. is now seeking further clarification from its solicitor. An appointment has been made to see our solicitor on Friday 23 November at 11.00, but in view of the P.C.’s issue it may be that this will have to be delayed. Our solicitor has been advised to await the outcome of the P.C.’s further advice and our further instructions, before incurring any costs.

**P.A. System.**

Stephen had emailed Paul Jones and asked him to source a suitable system as discussed, but had no reply, and so will send him a reminder.

**Maintenance**

Stephen has spoken to Andrew Kitchen who has not given a fixed quote for the work. Stephen felt that the quote from Andrew Mallinson should be taken. A discussion followed about expenditure on the Institute in the light of the progress about the new village hall. It was agreed that the cost of the repair should not be allowed to escalate if the initial repair revealed more problems. While these considerations were noted it was felt that the committee’s responsibility to keep the building must be honoured. Hugh confirmed he will check the gutters for leaves and clear any blockage if possible. Stephen will assist him with the ladder. The seating of the downspout to the road has been damaged. It was agreed that Stephen will ask Andrew Mallinson to remedy this when he was working at Institute.

Unfortunately, the clock gifted by Allan Stewart has fallen off the wall due to an insecure screw, John Watson has offered to put up a new secure fitting and the old clock will be re-hung.

**Post-box**

This matter has arisen again because a new post person delivered a letter addressed to the Institute to a neighbour’s house, who has made a complaint about this through the P.C. This would not have occurred with the regular post man, who delivers mail for the Institute to Grey Mists. Very few letters are addressed to the Institute, say 3 per year, so ut was not felt a post box was needed, as had been agreed a few years ago.

**Rules for users**

During the weekend WW1 exhibition posters had been white-tacked to the wall, which is against Institute rules. Stephen agreed that if any damage is found when the posters are taken down on Thursday, the history group would put the matter right, but noted that there was already damage to the walls that had not been caused at the weekend.

**A.O.B.**

A] A Christmas tree was to be used on 21 Dec for the St. John lessons and carols event, which used to be held at Heaves Hotel. The committee welcomed the offer to keep it on display for any other group to enjoy through the holiday period, so long as it does not block the fire escape routes and it is removed once the festivities are over.

B] We need to make room to store the new P.A System, so help with clearing cupboards to make more storage space is essential. A note for volunteers to assist will be circulated.

Stephen thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting closed at 19.40.

**Next meeting: Wednesday 12 December at 6.30 at the Village Institute, however if there is nothing to report upon the Joint Venture Agreement this will be cancelled.**