



Minutes of the quarterly meeting of HVC Management Committee held on 17th October 2023 at 11:00 am in the Council Chamber St. Ives Town Hall.

Present. Mike Baker, Jenny Clarke, Chris Myles, Steve Burdett, Tripti Woolf, Emma Cameron, Marie Webb, Bob Young, Kirsty Fletcher, Shona Martin, Anthony Clarke, Debbie Windsor. Richard Brown and Dennis Camilleri connected via Zoom.

Apologies., Cllr Riddell, and Cllr Cole.

Minutes from meeting 18th July 2023. Minutes were approved, proposed by Bob Young and seconded by Chris Myles.

Matters arising from the Minutes. Bob Young (Treasurer) informed the meeting that the rent-free option of premises in the old Waitrose building was not a viable option for an office for Tripti. It was too large a space and was unsuitable as an office.

Chairman's report. Mike Baker reported to the meeting that HVC had been subjected to a scurrilous attack from a member of the public which had resulted in a number of Trustees, all volunteers, having to spend a lot of time over the summer dealing with the accusations. This time could have been better spent on other tasks. He and Bob had been singled out for criticism and he was very upset and angry about the attack on Bob Young who has worked tirelessly for the charity for many years and the attack was not justified. It had been suggested that maybe Mike Baker had been gaining financially from the provision of gardening services. Mike explained how this was not and never had been the case. Many years ago he arranged for students from Hinchbrook School to cut people's lawns as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award, they never received payment for this. They used to cut 76 lawns a year. This has changed over time and he now arranges for approximately 20 lawns to be cut each year. HVC received £1,000 two years ago when a local charity closed down and the money has been used to service the lawn mowers and strimmer. There is no complex audit trail; Tripti, Huntingdon Area Manager, tells Mike if she gets a request for a lawn to be cut and Mike arranges for it to be cut.

Mike thanked all the Trustees for their support over the summer especially Anthony Clarke, Dennis Camilleri and Steve Burdett.

Treasurer's report. Bob had already issued a financial report so did not repeat the contents but highlighted some of the main points. There is an overall balance of almost £100,000 in the bank accounts. This includes almost £8,000 from the car scheme in the first two quarters, the amount of money from donations has increased and expenditure is largely in line with the budget. The shop income is good. He informed the meeting that he has decided to change the card machine. The current one is costing HVC about £80 per month but Lloyds bank have a different pricing system and the overall costs for the Lloyds card machine will work out at approximately 40% less than the current machine. There are still some issues with the utilities' bills because when HVC changed suppliers the old supplier used the wrong estimated reading. HVC will hopefully receive a refund soon.

Dennis Camilleri suggested that a cash flow forecast would be useful and he offered to help Bob with that. There was a discussion about opening a Savings Account and getting some interest from that, it could be as much as 5% over a two-year period.

Reports from General Manager and Area Managers. (see Managers' reports)

St. Neots. There has been increased interest in volunteering, both as drivers and office administrators. There is a delay now, about one month, with DBS checks. Mike congratulated Shona re the increased number of volunteers.

One of the drivers donates all his mileage money to HVC but was expecting it all to go to the St. Neots office. Bob suggested that Shona asks him how he would like it to be spent.

St. Ives. The Car Scheme has been very busy, vaccinations have increased the demand for drives. Arrangements for the Christmas Lunch have also added to the workload. Kirsty, Debbie and Anthony made a presentation to St. Ives Council asking for funding. They were surprised that the Councillors had not seen their grant application which had involved a lot of time collating the data etc.

Ramsey. Not a lot to add to the report but see what Steve Burdett has to report later re a change of office and potential funding from Ramsey Town Council. Bluntisham Beer festival are looking for charities to sponsor.

Huntingdon. The IT issues have been resolved and the new WiFi is working well. The Car Scheme has been busy and challenging at times when medical appointments have been cancelled or postponed at short notice. There has been an increase in social drives, e.g. drives to the Senior Citizen lunch at the

Coneygear Centre or the St. Ives Day Care Centre. Tripti is processing the details of three new drivers, recruited from one of Steve's posters (she thanked Steve) one person came via from the Citizen Advice Bureau and one from a poster in the shop window.

Shop. WiFi issues have affected book sales but sales on eBay have shown an improvement. There has also been some money from Gift Aid.

General Manager's report. Not a lot to add to her report but Marie has spent a lot of time working on increasing publicity on social media and has a lot of suggestions to make re the new HVC Website.

Updated report on the new website. Dennis Camilleri reported that Websanity had decided not to proceed with construction of a new website for HVC and had returned the £1,000 that we had already paid them. Keith Woodward has donated £1,000 to HVC, this had originally been a contribution to a new website designed by Websanity, but Keith was happy for it to be used anyway.

HVC has employed a different company, Synapture, to design the website. The price will be £2,700 and this includes a donate page and a full day's training for staff.

Debbie showed the website to the Trustees, its almost ready to go live at the end of October.

The new website was very favourably received by the Trustees and all the Managers were congratulated and thanked for their hard work and efforts.

Marcomms group. Dennis Camilleri explained the reasoning behind the suggestions for the various meetings as outlined in the paper that was circulated prior to this meeting. Meetings could be differentiated into internal and external meetings. Internal meetings would be for staff and Trustees only; external meetings could include Council representatives, volunteers, and Members. The committee suggested the following types of internal meetings :-

- Trustees-only meetings where the Trustees act as a Board of Directors and make decisions which could impact on the charity as a whole.
- Trustees and Staff meetings – similar to the current quarterly meetings where the staff report to the Trustees and there can be an exchange of ideas etc.
- Staff-only meetings, as they are held now.
- Small committee meetings, e.g. a Marcomms committee, a finance committee, a funding committee.

External meetings would include the following: -

- An AGM

- Small informal meetings (possibly during evenings) between the local council representative, the Area and General Manager and a small group of Trustees (to include the Trustees from that area) This could act as a way of informing the local councils about the work of HVC in a less formal relaxed setting.

The Trustees and Staff at the meeting were largely in agreement with these suggestions. The Trustees will meet to discuss issues like dates, whether minutes or informal notes would be taken at the meeting and who would have access to these.

Policies. Debbie has spent a lot of time reviewing the policies and the next step is to approve them. It was suggested that Trustees work in small groups and check through the policies for any glaring errors and they will need to decide how often each policy should be reviewed. A schedule for this will be decided at the Trustees-only meeting in 2 weeks' time.

Ramsey Town Council. Marie Webb, Steve Burdett and Mike Baker went to a meeting of Ramsey Town Council in August and made a presentation asking for £5,000 and an office in the newly refurbished building (formerly a bank) that will be operated by the council. In recent conversations with the Town Clerk, it has been suggested that we can have either an office or a grant but not both. Having visited the premises, the office space is smaller than Steve and Marie had anticipated but has its own bathroom and kitchen. The building will be open to the public on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. The council have some items of office furniture that HVC could have. The rent for the room is £6,000 per annum and Bob pointed out that we currently pay the Methodist Church £500 per annum. Mike asked Steve if he could try to negotiate a lower figure.

Date of Trustees-only Meeting. October 31st, 11:00 in the Council Chamber at St. Ives Town Hall.