

Sudbrook and West Willoughby Village Hall (SWWVH) Committee Meeting 17th March 2025

1. Attendance

Present: John Somerville (JS), Louise Burn (LB), John Cairns (JC), Barbara Campbell (BC), Miranda Hickson (MH), Andy Newton (AN).

Apologies: Salena Leighton-Humphries (SLH), Rae Seng (RS), Tom Williams (TW).

2. Approval/ Amendments of the minutes of the previous Committee meeting

It was agreed that the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 11th November 2024 provided a good overall record. **JC** was to forward the minutes for inclusion on the APC website.

3. Christmas Sing-along 2024 debrief

The Christmas Sing-along on 13th December 2024 had been thoroughly enjoyed by all concerned and it was agreed that the latest format should be maintained. Sales of raffle tickets had been particularly good and the event raised £242.65 gross, including a donation of £20. The cost of the mulled wine and mince pies was £52.47 leaving a net profit of £190.18, up from £82.20 for the 2023 event (a 131% increase).

The amount of purchased mulled wine and mince pies (18 bottles of mulled wine and 8 boxes of mince pies (6 boxes of standard & 2 boxes of gluten free)), supplemented with donated sausage rolls, was deemed appropriate. It was noted that any surplus bottles in the future could always be stored for the following year if required. Problems logging onto the SumUp card reader app had been experienced, possibly due to a recent software update. It was thought that logging onto the app earlier on the day of the event could be beneficial. In addition, while the Sing-along was not a seated event, a few chairs should be made available for the elderly or infirm. Furthermore, the sound system's microphone had failed to operate. While those with a 'speaking part' coped, **JS** kindly offered to purchase a replacement. Finally, the cloakroom tickets purchased for the raffle were flimsy and difficult to separate without tearing. Higher quality tickets would be sought for subsequent events.

4. Microsoft Nonprofit Software and Services

SLH's ongoing efforts to provide the Committee with a centralized data system were greatly appreciated, and all but two trustees had been logged onto the associated software. However, it was thought that a dedicated hands-on group training session would help trustees in their transition to Microsoft Teams. The timing of such a training period would depend on **SLH's** availability once the remaining trustees had been logged onto the new system.

5. VH Site Insurance

TW had explored alternative Land Liability insurance policies for the VH site following potential concerns about the extant company's non-UK status. However, the premiums of policies offered by UK-based companies had proved to be prohibitive so the current policy had been renewed for £207.81.

6. Venue Rota

A proposal to introduce a Venue Rota for forthcoming meetings was deemed impractical due to trustees' varying availability. However, greater effort would be made to agree to the next venue at the end of each meeting.

7. Committee Aims.

Clarification was sought as to whether the Committee's main aim should be for raising funds for a fixed structure or for encouraging more residents to use the site on a regular basis. It was acknowledged that raising funds would always be required to some degree. However, obtaining sufficient funding for a fixed structure was likely to be only feasible through a 100% grant which, in turn, could only be justified by encouraging a greater 'sense of ownership' within the community. To that end, it was suggested that new picnic tables of durable quality should be purchased. **AN** suggested the 'Pub Table Company' as a potential source. An additional used picnic table similar to the existing one could suffice in the meantime. **TW** would be asked to clarify whether the existing insurance policy covered outdoor furniture and if an associated 'Asset Register' had been compiled.

In addition, leaving the main gate permanently open would make it more obvious to residents that they have daily access to the site. In addition, the mesh fencing used to protect the hedge saplings was no longer required and its removal should make the site appear more amenable. However, caution was expressed concerning an earlier proposal to provide a small amount of children's play equipment due to the costs of meeting health and safety requirements and potentially significant increases to the VH site's insurance premiums. Finally, **BC** suggested that the residents' sense of involvement in plans for the VH site could be facilitated by a periodic newsletter, and kindly offered to produce a draft. **BC** would also investigate the likely cost of publishing a newsletter in 'News and Views'.

8. Future Events.

A party to celebrate the 85th anniversary of VE Day had been suggested for Monday 5th May 2024. SKDC had invited applications for funding of up to £2000 (with up to £1000 being "favourable") for VE and VJ Day commemorations. However, it was felt that organizing a major event for VE Day in the limited time available was not viable, particularly if a 'ticketed' theme was envisaged. In addition, poor weather and/or low temperatures would be more likely if holding an outdoor party in early May. Consequently, it was decided to plan for two ticketed

events instead: a BBQ on 5th July 2025 and a 'Curry Night' on 15th August 2025. **AN** offered to draft a potential Indian menu for the latter with likely costs.

9. Date/Venue of Next Meeting.

The next meeting would be held at 7pm on 7th April 2025 at **BC's** home.