

GRASSINGTON DEVONSHIRE INSTITUTE
(A Charitable Incorporated Organisation – Registered Charity no. 1185815)

TRUSTEES

NOTES OF A MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 1st JULY 2020

Participants: David Wood (in the Chair)
Hanne Barton Barrie Doyle
Marion Field Stephen Parry
Jean Slater

In attendance Penny Clover (Treasurer)

1. Notes of previous meetings

The notes of the meetings held on 17th June 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

2. Progress report - Repairs to/replacement of the fly gallery (Main Hall stage)

Work on the stage project continued at pace. The remaining parts of the gantries had been screened to ensure they would be accessible only for maintenance purposes. They would no longer be used to support lighting or backcloths/curtains. Work on the rear wall had now been completed, allowing new curtain tracks to be installed and pre-existing rails to be re-installed. Some of the old stage lights and shades had been sold and an application had been submitted (receipt acknowledged) to Linton Parish Council for funding to support the purchase of new 'reds'.

Stage lights would be sourced from Spot-On Theatre Services and the stage basic configuration would comprise mainly LED equipment with some tungsten lights being retained. Consultation had taken place with user groups but responses had not been sufficiently timely or consistent, hence making the project difficult to progress. Trustees supported 'Team M's' proposed timetable and asked that records of correspondence with user groups be retained for future reference.

Despite detailed consideration of the idea, it was noted that it would be impractical to incorporate an access ramp onto the stage as this would significantly affect stage movement.

A project to improve the sound systems in the main hall would get underway shortly and, again, there would be consultation with user groups before decisions were taken. Trustees expressed their wish to give every user group a reasonable opportunity to contribute ideas but confirmed that decisions would be taken according to a project timescale approved by the GDI. Trustees felt that each user group could be sent an update on the existing project (and/or a copy of the latest newsletter) along with some details of the new membership scheme. This would encourage user groups to become more involved in the ongoing work and the future development of the Town Hall. An update on the GDI's Facebook pages, to include photographs of the work done, should be prepared.

It was agreed that once the stage project had been completed, a detailed specification of the facilities and equipment available should be prepared and made available via the GDI website. Trustees would need to establish arrangements through which to monitor and approve any additional equipment brought to the stage area which would impact the power loading or weight limits on supporting structures.

Action – Mr Wood to prepare information to be submitted to user groups and to update Facebook as soon as possible.

3. Re-development of the Town Hall

A proposal, to re-develop the playschool area into a new Caretaker's flat, had been submitted to the Chair of Grassington Parish Council. The initial response had indicated no negative comments but suggested the need for some detailed discussion including on the subject of the lease. The Dales

Playschool had indicated that they may be able to provide vacant possession by the end of July and it was agreed to offer help to them to achieve this.

Action – Mr Wood to write to the Dales Playschool to seek confirmation of the date to vacate the space and to offer any assistance required.

It was noted that the decision to proceed with the development of a new Caretaker's flat would be a 'business decision' for the GDI. The views of the sitting tenant had been initially positive, but it appeared there may be concerns too. These would be taken into account in the design of the new flat where it was possible to do so.

Considerable discussion ensued regarding the lease position. Trustees felt that it would be very difficult to maintain an 'internal v external' separation of responsibilities and, given the positive work done to the stage and the asbestos report producing a good outcome, it may now be time to consider a full repairing lease ('FRL'). That said, there would need to be a number of elements and conditions included in the lease and any accompanying agreements, before a 'FRL' could be signed off. An analysis of expenditure, other than relating to maintenance, showed the GDI had spent £33,000 on the building since 2018, with commitment (via the stage and sound projects) for another £15,000.

Action – Mr Wood to contact Grassington Parish Council to seek an early discussion regarding the proposal to develop a new Caretaker's flat and to attempt to agree a new lease. A meeting to consider the GDI's 'red lines' for the lease discussion would be arranged for week commencing 8th July.

asbestos survey report had now been received and this had confirmed that no asbestos had been found. Whilst this was good news, a number of inaccessible areas and voids had not been inspected but as long as these areas are not disturbed in the future, no action will need to be taken.

Action – Mr Wood to inform Grassington Parish Council of the outcome of the survey.

4. Treatment of gifts and donations

The Treasurer reported on her findings from researching the arrangements for claiming gift aid from donations and, potentially, membership fees. Trustees agreed that any application which could be made, based on the existing rules, should be progressed.

Action – The Treasurer and Mr Wood to work on a submission to HMRC.

5. Recognition of voluntary contribution to the stage project

Consideration was given to the special circumstances which applied to the work undertaken on the stage project to date. Whilst Trustees did not wish to set a precedent in rewarding future voluntary effort, it was felt that two people (Mr J Harker and Mr D Lee) had contributed in such a way as to save the GDI thousands of pounds over the timescale of the stage project. A small 'token', comprising drink for the volunteers and flowers for their partners, was approved.

Action – Mr Doyle and Mrs Barton to make the necessary purchases and submit receipts to the Treasurer.

6. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting of Trustees will take place at 10am on Wednesday 8th July 2020, in the Games Room. This meeting will focus on the lease discussions and on the latest guidance for re-opening Village Halls.