

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

**TRUSTEES**

**NOTES OF A MEETING HELD VIA ‘ZOOM’ ON MONDAY 1<sup>st</sup> FEBRUARY 2021**

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

**In attendance** Penny Clover (Treasurer)

The Trustees offered their best wishes to Dr Andrew Jackson, former GDI Trustee and former Chair of Grassington Hub and Community Library and Mr Rob Charlton, Chair of Grassington Parish Council, in their fight against ongoing illness.

**1. Notes of previous meeting**

The notes of the meetings held on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021 were confirmed as a correct record.

**2. Matters arising**

**i) Games Room Project**

The project had commenced in earnest with first fix wiring, screen delivery, ceiling works and lighting installation all scheduled for this week. A grant, of £4,094 towards the cost of the project, had been approved by Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority from its Sustainable Development Fund. New blinds would complete the new look of the room and it was agreed that they should be the same colour as those purchased for the Octagon. Trustees agreed to cover any shortfall in funding from current reserves.

*Action – Mr Doyle to oversee the work to complete the project.*

**ii) Caretaker’s Flat project**

Further work on this project now relied on contributions from the appointed ‘Consultant’ and Craven District Council’s Building Control department. An application for planning consent would only be submitted once this contact had been made and clear instructions/guidance received.

*Action – Mr Doyle to seek a report on progress.*

**3. Finance Report**

The Treasurer reported that three grants, totalling £10,807, had been received from Craven District Council relating to the coronavirus restrictions and lockdown. A furlough payment for January had also been received. Expenditure related to ongoing work in hall related to electrical repairs and improvements, new curtain track for the Octagon and a large screen, purchased for the new ‘Conference Room’. A number of questions were addressed regarding the detail of the accounts and the location of specific items of expenditure.

The Annual Accounts, for 2020, had been drawn up and submitted for external examination. A deficit of £7,665 was likely to be reported which was a good result, when compared to the forecast in autumn 2020.

#### **4. Budget setting for 2020**

A new system of budgeting had been discussed over recent weeks but it had not been possible to meet to agree the final format. Trustees acknowledged that the new system would provide for financial forecasting and planning and this would be a step change from the traditional method of reporting retrospective income and expenditure. A draft budget, based on part year income and expenditure figures for 2020 had been drafted and it was hoped this could be finalised and signed off by the Spring.

#### **5. Future arrangements for the repair, maintenance and development of the Town Hall**

For a variety of reasons, it had not proved possible to hold a joint, face to face meeting with Grassington Parish Council in January. However, the ongoing work on projects meant it was much more likely that the Trustees would become aware of urgent, external works which needed to be carried out and some discussion had taken place with the Deputy Chair of GPC. A collegiate way of working had been discussed and this could be 'trially' by reference to the immediate problem of water ingress (see item below). A letter had been sent on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021 to the Charity Commission to seek its advice on the subject of lease and the conditions surrounding its approval of the GDI's application to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in October 2019 and a reply was still awaited.

Some discussion ensued regarding the proposal which had been made to Grassington Parish Council regarding guaranteed community funding and the Council's 2021 budget. The budget appeared to suggest that there could be some funds available within existing reserves and annual budget headings but this would be a matter for discussion in due course.

#### **6. Water ingress – repairing the flat roof above the foyer**

As a consequence of recent heavy rain and snow melt, water had penetrated the flat roof above the foyer and had pooled on the floor. The problem had been reported to Grassington Parish Council and Councillors had supported urgent repair works being carried out. It would appear that 'Team M' could make a very temporary repair but the fibre glass covering to the roof now needs replacing. An estimate had been requested already from one roofing contractor and at least one other would be sought. Trustees felt that these estimates, when received, should be submitted to Grassington Parish Council for consideration. If need be, a discussion could take place thereafter to confirm the funding source for any work to be undertaken and GDI may be prepared to contribute to the cost of this work. This should not be seen as a precedent, nor should it in any way be seen as a binding responsibility on the GDI. However, the potential for the two organisations to work co-operatively and quickly would be assessed using this repair project as a test case.

*Action – Mr Doyle to seek and obtain further estimates for the roof repair/replacement.*

#### **7. Forward calendar and events for Quarter 1**

Planned bookings by Grassington Players, ahead of a major production in May 2021 had been cancelled and Grassington Festival had sought options to delay their programme from June 2021. Few other bookings were in place for the first half of the year but some dates in the second half, such as a wedding, would not be moved to make way for postponed events. Given that the latest Government guidance suggested that schools may be the first to return to 'normality' from 8<sup>th</sup> March, it was agreed that the Town Hall was unlikely to have any bookings or indeed be able to open until at least the beginning of April.

The screened event, planned for February and March 2021 would now be cancelled and refunds offered to people who had made advance ticket purchases. The Town Hall would remain closed for the period up to and including 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 but Trustees would keep the situation under review.

A village 'business meeting', arranged between the local Chamber of Trade and the production team of 'All Creatures....' Would be allowed to take place in the Town Hall on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021. The production team

had been signposted to the GDI's risk assessment for Covid-19 on the website and all participants in the meeting would be expected to follow the guidance provided.

*Action – Mr Wood to provide a copy of the Covid-19 risk assessment for the Town Hall to the local Chamber of Trade. Mr Wood to cancel the two planned screenings in February and March and to make arrangements, with the Treasurer, for ticket refunds. Mrs Barton to notify a private hirer that a party booking has been cancelled.*

## **8. Contractual position of the Caretakers**

In light of the decision to keep the Town Hall closed until April, it was agreed that the Caretakers should continue on furlough for the same period, without the requirement to work. Discussion took place as to the ability or otherwise of the GDI to top up the money available from the Government's Job Retention Scheme, bearing in mind, recent grants received, likely repair and project costs and the lack of bookings in the first half of 2021. It was agreed, by majority, that there should be a top up of the two Caretakers salaries for February and March 2021, to 90% of their normal income. This would be communicated to them this week. Any improvement in the financial outlook could allow the remaining 10% to be topped up retrospectively but there would be no guarantee that this would be possible.

*Action – Mr Wood to write to the Caretakers to confirm the decision.*

## **9. Email business addresses for the GDI**

Only one email address was in use for the Town Hall and monitoring of the 'traffic' to and from this address had been limited in the past. Looking ahead, it was felt that there would be greater accountability and it would be more professional for each Trustee to use a business email address which would allow correspondents to email a named Trustee, linked with a particular piece of work or responsibility. The cost of moving to a [name@grassdevinst.org](mailto:name@grassdevinst.org) address for up to 25 different addresses would be £8 in year one followed by £16 per annum. One of the GDI's members, Mr Thornton, had researched the issue on behalf of GDI and had indicated his willingness to put this in place if approved by Trustees. This was agreed and it was noted the new addresses would need to feature on the website and in all future correspondence once established.

*Action – Mr Wood to inform Mr Thornton of the decision and to ask him to progress the change of email addresses.*

## **10. Business Plan 2020-23**

The draft Business Plan had been made available to all GDI members as part of the January 2021 newsletter. No comments or questions had been submitted and, apart from a couple of minor amendments made by Trustees, the document was regarded as 'final'. This was agreed. The document was now being used to inform a funding application under the 'Power to Change' initiative and Mrs Doyle was thanked for taking this on. The bid, for up to £20,000, would need to be submitted by 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021. A list of bids submitted, since 2020, would be drawn up to include some basic details for future reference. The Business Plan would be an integral part of all applications for grant income up to and including 2023.

It was agreed that the final version of the Business Plan would be submitted to the website as soon as possible. A limited access area of the website was being considered which would contain all certificates, guarantees and licences which may need to be referenced by Trustees and/or members.

*Action – Mr Wood to arrange for the website to be updated. Mr Doyle to ensure the grant application was submitted by the due date.*

## **11. Constitutional position regarding the AGM**

The GDI's Constitution required the AGM to be held, under normal circumstances, on a face to face with members, with those attending having the opportunity to vote on resolutions. However, whilst there may be dispensation from

the Charity Commission to delay the AGM, one way of allowing it to take place was to seek a resolution to allow an electronic process, which could include using 'Zoom'. Trustees discussed how 'Zoom' technology could allow the relevant presentations to be made and resolutions voted upon and agreed to recommend the following resolution to members for adoption as an addendum to the Constitution:-

*"In exceptional circumstances, including those relating to restrictions on gathering due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the business of the AGM may be conducted by electronic communication. All members, by whom an email address has been provided, shall receive an electronic copy of the Annual Accounts and the Trustees' Report, along with any resolutions relating to business legitimately to be transacted at the AGM. This includes the re-election of Trustees and the election of new Trustees. All documentation and proposed resolutions shall be forwarded to members at least 14 days before the scheduled date for the AGM. Members will be invited to attend the meeting via 'Zoom' to ask questions on any aspect of the documents or resolutions and will be entitled to vote at the meeting, which will take place on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2021, commencing at 7pm. A majority of votes for or against resolutions, will determine the outcome."*

The resolution would be forwarded to all members, for whom an email address has been provided, by 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

*Action – Mr Wood to prepare a newsletter to members and to include the resolution on which the members will vote.*

## **12. Installation of a 'weather cam' at the Town Hall**

A camera had been purchased and tested which could be linked to the Town Hall's website, which would show those visiting the website the weather and a live view of Grassington from a fixed camera position. Its link to the website may encourage viewers to peruse the events guide and potentially purchase tickets for future visits. The GDI's intention to do this had been notified to the Deputy Chair of Grassington Parish Council who, it was thought, may have investigated the installation of such cameras in the past. Some initial contact had been made with householders whose properties could be in the line of camera sight and there had been no initial concerns or objections but this would be done more 'officially' before 'go live' date. The camera was likely to need to be externally mounted due to the glare caused by window reflections when tested on the inside of the Snooker Room.

A potential future use, subject to proper scrutiny and approval by the relevant authorities, was to record the images captured on a SD card but this would change the cameras purpose to include security which was not the initial intention. Good practice guidance had been reviewed but it was felt that neighbourhood consideration and consent would be powerful statements in favour of the project.

*Action – Mr Doyle to arrange for the necessary consultation of neighbours and for the subsequent installation of the camera, subject to any further guidance received.*

## **13. Membership**

The GDI currently had 135 subscribing members. A membership leaflet had been drafted with the help of volunteers and this would be finalised, printed and circulated when it was safe to do so. The first draft of the leaflet was very professional and a small, number of changes were proposed ahead of or at the meeting.

*Action – All Trustees to consider how to complete the panel currently showing as reserved for the standing order form. Mrs Slater to finalise the leaflet and arrange for copying and distribution, in conjunction with Mr Parry, in due course.*

## **14. Prize Draw**

The winner of the monthly draw was Hanneke Dye (Member number 20-019).

## **15. Any other business**

### **i) Tree Lights in top square**

It had been noted that the Town Hall still appeared to be providing electricity to power (Christmas?) tree lights in the top square. Given the YDNPA had a series of events this month relating to 'dark skies', it was felt that these lights should be disconnected or turned off. This was agreed.

*Action – Mr Doyle to arrange for the lights to be turned off or disconnected as appropriate.*

### **ii) Flower tubs at the Town Hall**

A suggestion was made that the tubs at the Town Hall be taken under the wing of Grassington in Bloom. It was agreed that a contribution of £200 be offered to GiB to plant and maintain the tubs immediately outside the building.

*Action – Mrs Barton to contact Grassington in Bloom to suggest the idea.*

### **iii) Dressing Room Chairs**

A number of the wooden chairs in the Dressing Rooms had been treated for woodworm and sold, realising around £400. The main users of this area of the Town Hall could be asked to suggest replacement options, which needed to be lightweight and easily stackable. When received, the 'scheme' could be costed and decisions made as to whether GDI should bear the full cost of replacement or seek contributions from user groups.

*Action – Mrs Barton to contact Grassington Players, Pantomime and Grassington Festival to seek their views on appropriate replacements. Mrs Barton also to ensure that the funds from the sale of the chairs are transferred to the GDI's account as soon as possible.*

### **iv) Flags**

A proposal was received to draw up a list of the flags which should be flown from the Town Hall's flagpole at different times of the year. This could include a new flag, bearing the GDI's new logo. Some aesthetic improvements to the flagpole or the brackets supporting it were suggested and approved if possible.

*Action – Mr Doyle to draw up a list of flags and dates on which they should be flown. Mr Doyle also to make enquiries as to the likely cost of obtaining a GDI-logo flag.*

### **v) Octagon Curtains**

The new curtain track had been installed in the Octagon and Main Hall door curtains had been re-cycled and re-sewn by volunteers. This concluded the new curtaining for the building and the scheme represented a major improvement.

### **vi) Stage Lamp Shades**

It was reported that a number of the old stage lamp shades had been sold and monies would be transferred to the GDI's account in the near future.

*Action – Mr Parry to ensure funds from the sale were transferred as soon as possible.*

## **vii) Volunteer hours**

It was suggested that a summary note of the hours worked by volunteers during each month be sent to the Chair. Each team leader to retain more detail on these hours related to the reason for the contribution. This was agreed.

*Action – All Trustees to submit a note of their total monthly hours, plus those of name volunteers to Mr Wood and to retain details of the reasons and numbers of hours spent by volunteers on specific projects.*

## **16. Date and time of next meeting**

The next meeting of Trustees will take place, via 'Zoom', at 10am on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

DPW  
2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021.