

LAVCH Members Meeting

09.04.2022 9.30am

Grimsargh Village Hall

Members Present:

NAME	ORGANISATION
Eileen Murray	Grimsargh VH plus Chair & Trustee of LAVCH
Sian Middlebrough	Grimsargh VH, LAVCH Trustee
Teresa Taylor	LAVCH Trustee & Treasurer
Karen Durkin	Cowpe Community Hall
Audrey Pickup	Salesbury V H
Peter Pemberton	Goosnargh VH
Ruth Abram	Community Futures (Note works Mon-Wed)
Peter Higham	Whittle-le-Woods VH
Barbara Higham	Whittle-le-Woods VH
Giselle Edge	Mellor Brook Community Centre
Simon Kirkman	Catterall VH
Michele Sanders	Rainhill VH
Chris Moore	Rainhill VH
Anne Huson	RV VH Ass & Grindleton Pavilion

Introductions: Each representative introduced themselves to the group – a number were new faces who have become involved with their halls recently

LAVCH- future direction: Eileen Murray (Chairman) explained the background pre Covid which had been more formal in approach, but now LAVCH needs to be member led. The “admin team” – Sian, Teresa and Eileen cannot give the amount of time that the previous committee gave to it, but a great deal can be gained by the sharing of knowledge and experience. All agreed.

We have gained experience of Zoom through Covid and this could be used to compliment face-to-face meetings

Fees, due to healthy bank balance (legacy from previous grants etc) of nearly £8,000 no fees are currently required. **All in favour.** Noted new bank account being set up

Face to face meetings – used to be twice a year, most of the day with lunch, speakers invited. New focus & all consider morning only needed & meetings in between via Zoom.

Constitution – discussions on this started with the question of whether or not LAVCH needed to be a registered charity. After a little debate - considered safer to remain as Charity, no disadvantage, gives greater kudos & easier to attract grants if remaining as Charity. **Unanimously approval to retain Charity status.**

The current 1999 LAVCH Constitution includes in its object wording stating that the Association provides advice, which we are not qualified to do. All agreed this made it out of date. **Unanimous approval to change Constitution**

Community Futures <https://www.communityfutures.org.uk/> – Ruth explained her role as “broker / signposter”. At the start of Covid, Community Futures realised Village Halls needed help and set about sending out all information they had to whoever they could. This then received a small grant to keep running for 6 months. After that CF set up a new group, for which they got National Lottery funding for 2 year project “Connecting Communities in Lancashire”, which supports Ruth’s role to assist up to 215 Halls in Lancashire (Old Lancashire Palatine area, inc. parts of Greater Manchester & Liverpool). **She is only available Monday to Wednesday.** Anne Huson, Peter Pemberton and Eileen Murray are part of the reference group for the project. Community Futures has 2 levels of membership, assistance based on the level. Level 1 £30 / year, basic advice, Level 2 £200 / year. Level 2 includes training on numerous issues inc. Governance & halls can upgrade a level if needed. They can also use Level 2 to gain what is needed, then lower to Level 1 for the following year. ACRE Action with Communities in Rural England <https://acre.org.uk/> was mentioned – huge national company & charity, have done sterling work to assist Halls during & post Covid, however ACRE is not infallible, as they had caused a deal of additional costs for Halls following PRS / PPL legal case. Noted all work done by Marcus Hill, former LAVCH Chairman on this. In addition to hirers / entertainers having their individual Performing Rights Licence, Halls are required to pay for their licence based on turnover, not profit, even if the hall is making a loss.

Facebook Group as discussion forum for LAVCH Members – this has proved highly successful and is gaining popularity. Any LAVCH or hall committee member can join the discussion group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/LAVCHDiscussionForum>

You need to request to become a member and state the hall you are affiliated with. All those in the room had a Facebook Account, so would be able to join. All who were already members commented on its usefulness.

Members Discussion – Management Policies discussed in broad terms, with examples. Grindleton have revised policies using drafts from Community Futures, Grimsargh has a one page Hire Agreement, <https://grimsarghvilleagehall.co.uk/facilities-and-hiring/> all Catterall policies are transparent & on their website <https://catterallvillagehall.co.uk/policies/>. A view was expressed that if a hall has concessionary rates these should be documented & transparent to avoid allegations of favouritism & that (unless the Hall’s own Constitution specifically provides for another clause) then any & all hire must be charged for (as Halls are Registered Charities). Noted that in some cases concessionary rates can be abused e.g. Members of a Hall’s 100 Club booking the hall on behalf of other family members who were not 100 Club Members. Further discussion on types of hire and exclusions

LAVCH website – what should be on it? Sub group to consider? Members felt that minimal information was necessary on the website itself, but with links to those organisations who

could advise. No sub group was considered necessary to review this. Noted that Community Futures guidance (via link) so no need to duplicate.

All asked to review the “Useful Documents” on the website to see if anything in particular might be added:

<https://www.lavch.org.uk/useful-reading/>

One member asked about setting up a website. **Eileen Murray** explained that Grimsargh use the Voice Online Communities facility. This is used by Grimsargh Village Hall (and, not-coincidentally Grimsargh Parish Council), LAVCH and a very large number of other community groups up and down the country. Their website describes it perfectly:

<https://e-voice.org.uk/>

Refreshment Break – Numerous useful conversations, seems support for future meetings via Zoom, potentially for at least a Constitution sub group, possibly others, by Members rather than Admin Team.

Pressing issues – LAVCH Constitution. **Peter Pemberton (Goosnargh VH)** kindly agreed to look at the existing and at the model constitutions on the Government/Charity Commission website with a view to proposing amendments to fit LAVCH. He may contact others to review this matter.

Eileen Murray raised query relating to setting up Mailchimp for emailing to multiples of contacts. **Anne Huson / Simon Kirkman** have knowledge.

Queries on use of Facebook – personal profiles, vs a Page and a Group. Noted that a Group or a Page is best set up with 2 or more admins, to future proof. It is probable FB can change the administrator, but it takes time. All reminded if they are posting on a FB page, beware of any conflicts of interest (e.g. Parish Councillor who is also a Hall Trustee)

Wanted for future meeting- Speaker on Facebook for Halls – Simon Kirkman has contact with Ed Walker

Zoom / Physical Meetings for LAVCH? – Considered a good idea, between 2 per year face to face meetings, with topic from FB forum, so Members can join or not. Weekday evening preferred, Mondays most suitable (not second Monday of month). **Agreed up to 4 Zoom per year, 2 monthly intervals between physical meetings. Physical potentially to be held April & October.**

Open Forum - featured insurance of Bouncy Castles. Most do not allow, if allowing, recommended that hirer has own insurance to cover against accidents. Owners only cover equipment hire, so care / liability needs full consideration. Considered that most household policies would not give sufficient cover for injury & legal costs & 1 day public liability prohibitively expensive.

Trustee indemnity & status of “Committee Members” – most Hall Constitutions suggest or specify that Committee are Managing Trustees with liability under Charities Act. One member queried difference between Trustee & Committee Member. Some (few) Halls may

have two tier system, which must be part of their Constitution: normally “Committee” are Managing Trustees.

(Post meeting note – useful document also available on LAVCH website:

<https://www.lavch.org.uk/assets/documents/role-of-trustees-slcc-article>)

Eileen Murray explained that Grimsargh VH has agreed to move to Charitable Incorporated Organisation, which brings together framework of a Limited Company with a Registered Charity.

(Post meeting note - This page lists the four main types of charity structure and explains the differences between them. Many/most halls are likely to be unincorporated associations:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-types-how-to-choose-a-structure>)

Some considered there is a “fear factor” in becoming a Trustee, others wished to walk into a Hall knowing it was safe, as risks had been properly managed & documented. None were aware of any Hall Trustee being personally sued, the balance of fellow Trustees brings balance to risk. **Community Futures** can provide training in such aspects of risk & governance.

Idea – Recruitment of Trustees – use all publicity including website, newsletter but also leaflet drop with other groups, e.g. Brownies may deliver their own & yours.

Contacts for Halls – Noted that LAVCH meetings used to attract 35 / 40 attendees, but substantial lunch was provided! **Eileen Murray** to bring list of halls & contacts to next meeting & all to look at contacting neighbours to attract Members / Attendees.

Security of contact sharing - Following discussion, all attendees agreed their email & contact could be shared with others round the table - but not in Notes / Minutes, but as a separate document.

Next Meeting – Saturday 01 October 2022 at Salesbury Village Hall **TBC by Audrey Pickup for availability.**

Catterall Village Hall offered for April 2023 (will be AGM) **Simon Kirkman to confirm**

Future Agenda Items

- Charging Policy (not just rates, see Grindleton Pavilion)
<https://www.grindletonpavilion.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/ACTIVE-Hire-charges-2021-22-final-.pdf>:
- Sustainable Energy – especially in respect to heating systems – anyone know any experts??
- Charity Format & Structure, inc. Charitable Incorporated Organisation
- Attracting other Halls / Members
- Facebook for Halls, with speaker