

Hawstead Community Council
AGM
Treasurer's Report for the Year End 13th April 2022

Overall position

This financial year we have seen the recovery from COVID restrictions reflected in our accounts. Bookings are now taking place, and the hall has been able to resume relatively normal business. The current accounts total stood at **£44,716.24** (13.4.22).

Income

Hall rentals, which make up the bulk of income, have increased from £7513 to **£23,530.50** from last year. This is due to both the opening of COVID restrictions generally and the large number of deposits ahead of time for weddings booked for the summer of 2022 (likely a post-COVID factor). At the end of 2021 we raised the cost of weddings from less than £1000 per weekend to £1300 in 2022 and £1500 in 2023. This followed an analysis of similar venues locally and will be kept under review. We have 12 weddings currently booked for 2022 and 5 weddings for 2023.

Income from the fete, fundraising and other events has now resumed, with the fete raising **£1,877.74** and the May plant sale **£722.20**.

Expenditure

Expenditure changes from last year worth highlighting are:

- **Deposit returns** – from £2,869 to **£6,542** – a combination of full refunds for COVID-cancelled events plus standard bond returns after events that took place
- **Maintenance** – increased by 180% compared with the last financial year from £1937 to **£5,419.11** – included internal painting of the lower part of all interior walls, wood preservation of two sides of the external walls (other two sides to be completed May 2022), installation of Bluetooth sound system link, and repair of urinals.
- **Utilities, rates and waste collection** – Increased by 48% from £1424 to **£2106.18**
- **Cleaning / caretaker** – increased by 372% from £686 to **£3243**

Summary

The COVID grants from the previous financial year left the accounts in a healthy position. This has been supplemented in the current financial year by:

- a smaller closure grant of **£2,667**

- not paying for a bookings clerk for the majority of the year (saving ~£5,000)
- deposits taken for the large number of weddings booked for 2022 and 2023.

We are urgently seeking a long-term solution to the bookings clerk position so that we can move away from over-reliance on the goodwill of a small number of village volunteers. This will inevitably cost us more each year, and we estimate ~£5,000 annually for a bookings clerk.

Looking ahead

Raising the wedding rate for 2022 and 2023 does not appear to have discouraged people from hiring the hall. This rate will be reviewed regularly to reflect local prices/demand.

We are very aware of a number of significant expenditures in the near future which will need funding, including replacing the ridge tiles on the roof, a new hall floor, new curtains, repainting inside, new chairs, repointing the patio, new base to the play area, new play equipment, etc. We also need to ensure we have an emergency fund (~£12,000) in place to cover the costs of, for example, a new boiler.

The issue of the bookings clerk needs resolving urgently.

We have sought suggestions from villagers for ideas for community projects funded by the Community Council and are awaiting replies.

LJ 2022