

MINUTES OF ROADWATER VILLAGE COMMUNITY SHOP CBS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
10th JANUARY 2024, 6.00 PM, IN THE CAFÉ

PRESENT: Mary Coles (Chair), Cherry Bird (Sec.), Di Binding, Sheila Robertson, Claire Sawatzki, Bruce Freeman.

APOLOGIES: Simon Smith (Treas.), Karl Toth. *Note: Simon emailed his thoughts on relevant items to be used to aid discussion and where a vote might be needed.*

1. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

- **Roof repair:** Completed and as yet no further leaks have occurred.
- **Christmas vouchers:** As a gift for staff and volunteers, these were appreciated, especially as they provided choice about how to spend the £10 or even not to use them.

2. MAINTENANCE ISSUES

- **PA testing** went well, with nothing untoward found.
- **Dishwasher leak:** Colin has repaired this and sorted out a few other small issues.
- **Electrical check on the flat:** Quotation received from Manchip @ £590. Another company has also been approached but has so far not provided an estimate. If nothing more is heard within the next week we will ask Manchip to go ahead.

3. SHOP/CAFÉ MATTERS

- **Staff/ volunteer discounts:** Sheila has taken this work further, and showed samples of the cards with barcode for 5% discount on café items. She is ready to trial in the café on **1st February**. It was agreed that discount will apply only to staff and to regular volunteers on the list. Anyone who ceases to work or help in the shop would be expected to return the card and it is non-transferable, ie cannot be used by friends and family. New volunteers or staff will only receive a card after completing a 3-month probationary period. An outline of plans was given at the last staff meeting and **Sheila** will attend the next one (25th January) to give more detailed information and instructions. Agreed we will review how this is working after 3 months, ie gathering evidence in the second half of April to discuss at the May meeting.
- **New Lottery arrangements:** These were explained at the staff meeting. Steve is ready to support the startup, but is still awaiting further information from Allwyn.
- **Saturday youth workers:** The question has arisen about our policy when youth workers reach age 18 and they are officially classed as adults, requiring a contract and higher rate of pay. Should we continue to employ them or end their employment in order to give the opportunity to others? Note that this opportunity is intended to be a social service offering the chance to build experience and confidence and it is therefore good to offer to as many young (school-age) people as possible. Since the current cohort were not told there was any limit to the time of their employment when they started, it was felt any change should not be retrospective. After much discussion it was agreed that: (1) From now on any new youth workers would have a statement in their agreement that the opportunity ends when they reach 18 and this should be clearly explained to them, with reasons (2) The current cohort could continue beyond 18 if they wish. [*The question was also raised as to whether it is legal to set an age limit. As far as I can establish, it is normal and legal to offer work experience opportunities for children, which by definition ends when they reach 18. There are multiple references to this.*]

- **Milk deliveries:** Since Chew Valley took over, these have become very unreliable in terms of quantities ordered and shelf-life dates. This has caused particular problems with the refills, many of which have gone off, causing numerous customer complaints, to the point where many have stopped buying the refills. Two other local shops have experienced the same problems. Julia has negotiated a new arrangement with Longmans, which will start asap.

4. PUBLICITY

- **Social media:** Julia wishes to post more regular information on our Facebook page and the website about special offers and other interesting items. Cherry has agreed to work with her on this and send items to Les. We would also like to start an Instagram page if anyone knows of someone willing to help with this.

5. FINANCIAL UPDATE

- **Monthly figures and P&L for first 6 months of the financial year:** Simon sent his analysis by email, noting the news is not good. Although monthly gross profit remains the same for December, net profit has fallen by 9 percentage points compared with a year ago, with the same pattern repeated for every month of the half-year, showing a drop of between one and 9 percentage points each month. This seems to point to increased overheads, of which the biggest is wages (increased by 19% for the half year). Simon is of the opinion that action must be taken to understand and address this, with the committee taking a stronger role in managing payment of wages, through the HR representative and treasurer, especially extra casual payments or payment for more hours than contracted and booking holiday. There were questions about how such minor payments could have such a noticeable effect. All agreed that the first step is to ask **Simon** to arrange/undertake an analysis of payments made in order to have evidence.

6. AoB

- **Reuseable cups:** The stock of re-useable cups has now been finished. Sheila suggested we should not order any more but look at new ideas for marketing.
- **Team work:** It was noted that there have been instances of important tasks left undone or having to be taken on by volunteers, when they should have been managed by staff (in one case café volunteers sorted out a large shop delivery left outside). This kind of thing has happened before and all agreed it needs to be addressed by the HR representative, though it is rather sensitive. First, clear evidence of incidents and dates is needed. Please could **everyone** pass any such information they have to **Cherry** so that she has a basis for discussion.

Next meeting: Wednesday 31st January 2024, 6.00 pm. Special discussion on finance.