

**Folk Camps Council Meeting – “Working Weekend” – actually a series of Zoom meetings supported by Slack channel discussions.**

Convened by video conference due to Coronavirus pandemic meaning face to face meeting prohibited by government advice.

**03 October 2020 – meeting 1.**

Present:

- Marcus de Frettes (Chair)
- Patrick Self (Vice Chair)
- Judith Jenkins (Company Secretary)
- Anne Guthrie
- Mel Horton
- Anthony Keen
- Sue Malleson
- Paul Weir
- Rebecca Boram
- Kerstin Jewell
- Steve Porritt
- Graham Clements
- Jenny Hopper

Apologies:

none

Agenda:

- TBD – from Marcus doc.
- AOB

**1. Topic: Previous Meetings Minutes**

Minutes of 28 June – not ready for approval yet.

**2. Topic: Chair Introduction**

Council shared their individual experiences of the Covid-19 pandemic. We noted the isolation felt by many, how most of us knew people affected including severe illness and deaths, how we had different work and domestic situations which meant the impact was unequal, the impact on people’s mental well-being. Council felt that Folk Camps can play a part in helping members reconnect with each other.

The virtual Lockerdown events run by Folk Camps over the summer were a valuable asset to those taking part. Some will continue. Approx 30 have been run.

### **3. Topic: Folk Camps Annual Accounts**

Accountant had prepared draft of accounts just before the meeting.

Very little difference from the current internal FC Quickbooks accounts system.

**Action: WHO** to verify the accounts and ensure the narrative in the accounts is accurate and up to date.

Suggestion of Claire Mycock (on finance committee) to also look at accounts. **Action Marcus** to forward to Claire.

Headline figures: Loss of approx. £61,000 for this year due to cancellation of all the programme of Folk Camps except for the February Craft Break.

Accounts shows reserves of £127,000 but actually, when disregarding the camper credits, we have £156,000 available. (The camper credits can only be used as a credit against future bookings, they cannot be paid out as cash, so they artificially reduce the reserves figures.)

Council has significantly reduced future losses by changing the Contractors' contracts from fixed fees to only hours incurred. Council again expressed thanks to the Contractors flexibility on this. Council intends to return to fixed fees in future once the pandemic is over and normality is resumed.

Council believes we did the right thing with this precautionary approach to changing the contracts, and the timing of the decision was judicious and reduced losses.

Consideration was given to our investment strategy but it was generally felt to be an inappropriate time to make changes.

### **4. Topic: Company Secretary Report**

Judith had nothing significant to report.

Only topic re Company Secretary is the potential need to change our company rules so that we can hold AGMs virtually, at any time in the future and not just in the period that the government has legislated for. Covered in AGM discussion later.

### **5. Topic: Approach to 2021 Programme in current Covid Situation**

Discussion on what to do next year, re what programme to plan for, how to be flexible in the changing situation, when to publish the programme, open bookings, commit to camps, or commit to cancellation etc.

Council took account of rapidly changing situation (timing of this meeting is when UK-wide cases have started climbing significantly after several months improvement/decline in case numbers).

Factors taken into account include what the situation may be in a few months' time, what the membership may want to do, how their views will change as the world situation changes, that we want to provide something, that village halls may have restrictions / protocols that make our bookings impossible, that UK-wide rules on numbers of people gathering have changed significantly, and will continue to do so, that the UK government has suggested we have at least 6 months of restrictions before the situation may improve, that we don't yet have a way of knowing when an event like a Folk Camp may be permissible, that we do want to provide our members with information about when we may be able to be more definitive, that we do want to keep our options open.

Council noted that in 2019 we kept options open and made decisions at suitable times. There had never been a point in 2019 when we thought it was safe or possible to run a Folk Camp after the initial March lockdown, but we did not make decisions too early that prevented a possible event to be run later. We want to follow a similar approach in 2021.

Decision to consider camps in 3 groups:

- February Craft Break in hotel
- Spring self-cater events
- Summer catered events (+ Aug Bank holiday events)

Proposed a timeline for decision making and communications: for further discussion tomorrow.

#### **04 October 2020 – meeting 2.**

Present:

- Marcus de Frettes (Chair)
- Patrick Self (Vice Chair)
- Judith Jenkins (Company Secretary)
- Anne Guthrie
- Mel Horton
- Anthony Keen
- Sue Malleson
- Paul Weir
- Kerstin Jewell
- Steve Porritt
- Graham Clements
- Jenny Hopper

Apologies:

- Rebecca Boram

#### **6. Topic: Brief discussion on finance projections spreadsheet**

This showed that the majority of Folk Camps income comes from the summer camps, particularly the marquee camp due to the costs, prices and capacity. The weekend camps generally breakeven or make only a minor contribution to the organisation's overheads.

Paul pointed out that initially Folk Camps only ran summer week-long events and that the weekend camps were added to the Folk Camps programme many years ago as an addition, more for social reasons, than for making a financial contribution to Folk Camps overheads.

Marcus shared the spreadsheet with Council after the meeting. It did not have any further bearing on decisions in this meeting.

## **7. Topic: Covid Decision Points timetable**

**Decision:** Agreed the following timetable for Council to make decisions / take actions on the viability of running Folk Camps in 2021. (Proposed by Marcus, seconded by Judith, agreed unanimously)

### **Craft Break**

1st November 2020 Go/no go (final date for an abort decision)

### **Spring weekend camps**

1st Feb 2021 Provisional go ahead (surveying membership and other evidence gathering starts)

1st March 2021 Open bookings

1st April 2021 Go/no go (final date for an abort decision)

### **Summer camps (including August bank holiday camps)**

1st March 2021 Provisional go ahead (surveying and other evidence gathering starts)

1st April 2021 Open bookings

1st June 2021 Go/no go (final date for an abort decision)

We would only consider running events if government regulations allow them, and we are confident that they would be possible, safe, and feasible. We would take account of risks, and whatever may be in place in the country and health system by then, most of which we cannot predict at the moment.

**Decision:** If the above is viable, that when we open bookings, we will allow bookings without deposits, to reduce the administration costs of processing deposits and refunds if we have to subsequently cancel camps.

Discussion on pricing for 2021: A suggestion was made that we could consider a small financial loss in 2021, as long as it could be a social success for the membership, with intention to return to break even in 2022. Suggestion to not waste effort on prices until we know if the camps may be viable.

**Decision:** to not set prices for next year yet.

**Action: Paul + Marcus** to create communications to explain the plan to members ASAP.

**Action: Patrick** to update website to show last years programme still, and to add a statement that the 2021 programme aims to be similar to 2020 – see what’s still published for a flavour of events.

## **8. Topic: AGM**

Government legislation will allow us to run the AGM as a virtual event.

To use Zoom would require a number of people to manage the event. The Folk Camps Zoom account can host 100 people.

Suggestion to ask Live-to-your-living-room to run the event: we could pay them as we are saving venue hire costs.

**Action: Judith:** to contact Cat Kelly to see if Live-to-your-living-room would be up for running the event.

The AGM date is 21 November.

**Decision:** Need an update to M+A so we can hold future General Meetings as virtual events. Also to allow for electronic voting. Paul proposed, Marcus Seconded, agreed unanimously.

**Action Sue and Patrick** to determine procedure and wording for M+A update. Needs to be done ASAP: notification for AGM and Resolutions needs to be out to members by 25 October.

Suggestion of a virtual ceilidh afterwards. Can be using our own Zoom account.

Action Paul to arrange – e.g. with Chris Jewell.

## **9. Topic: Fundraising**

Marcus had proposed some ideas for Folk Camps fundraising in the slack channel before the meeting. However, some of this mixes up the Folk Camps ethos of volunteers providing their skills to members with working for money. If Folk Campers run events (e.g. online workshops) then no need for them to make a financial contribution to Folk Camps, do not run ticketed events in Folk Camps name. However, it would be good if they mention Folk Camps (e.g. in the event, in their event bio / blurb). And Folk Camps can promote the event on Social Media e.g. “Folk Campers X + Y are running this event” to show that Folk Campers have these skills.

One idea to follow up is to promote people making donations / legacies in their wills to Folk Camps. E.g. in the past Yvonne Hunt left a considerable sum that has been financing the Bursaries. Other bequests have been received in the past.

**Action: Anthony:** to write an article in Extent.

**Action: Patrick:** to add a legacies / donations section to the website.

**Action: Patrick** to modify the booking process to encourage membership to repeat bookers as part of the camp booking process.

## 10. Topic: Young Adults Contact Details

We often do not hold the contact details of young people as they become adults, due to e.g. a parent making family booking even as teens become adults. So, we often lose contact with young adults as they become 20-somethings.

**Action: Patrick** to modify the booking process to encourage capture of teens and young adults contact details as part of the camp booking process. (beware GDPR though)

## 11. Topic: Membership Fee

Discussion on Governing Membership fee (currently £1/year, minimum 5 years purchase). Costs more to administer than it raises. Discussed options of increasing, potentially in steps over a few years, pros, cons. **Decision** (proposed Sue, seconded Patrick, unanimous agreement) to double the fee to £2/year, minimum 5 years still, for any new memberships or renewals taken out from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020 onwards.

**Action Patrick** to update website for this.

## 11 October 2020 – meeting 3.

Present:

- Marcus de Frettes (Chair)
- Patrick Self (Vice Chair)
- Judith Jenkins (Company Secretary)
- Anne Guthrie
- Mel Horton
- Anthony Keen
- Sue Malleson
- Kerstin Jewell
- Jenny Hopper

Apologies:

- Paul Weir
- Rebecca Boram
- Steve Porritt (Contractors not required)
- Graham Clements (Contractors not required)

## 12. Topic: AGM – how to run virtually, meeting content

Resolutions in AGM. Need at least 4:

1. Amendments to Memorandum and articles of association (as discussed in last meeting + minor additions noted by Sue and Patrick).

2. Approval of 2020 accounts

3. Re-appointment of accountants for following year (And Council suggest research on whether to change accountants for future years)

4. Confirm the approval of the 2019 accounts – as approved by Council earlier in the year, instead of at the scheduled and then postponed EGM.

**Action: Sue** to write a document to explain the resolutions above to go to all members.

The AGM notice is to go to all members via email (and post for a small number) at least 3 weeks in advance of AGM, and due to Kerstin availability needs to be sent by 24 Oct.

We generally take a register of members at AGM, but this is only filed away by Admin Manager, not published.

**Action: Patrick** to write out a timeline of AGM activities (before the meeting)

Cat Kelly has offered the Live-to-your-living-room Zoom account for the AGM. AGM to start at 2pm, to allow Live-to-your-living-room to use their Zoom account later in the day, must hand it back by 5pm latest. Folk Camps to use our own account for the Reunion virtual ceilidh.

**Action: Patrick** to compose 2 emails. (1) AGM notification to members (there is a standard function in the database to send this out, used last year. (2) general message to all mailing list to explain AGM via Zoom (but to get them to reply to obtain the Zoom meeting details), to inform of the evening ceilidh also on Zoom, and to mention becoming a governing member – and benefits (vote in AGM, vote in election, other benefits, deadlines).

**Action: Patrick** – to consider how to make AGM and Ceilidh Zoom meeting details available – e.g. a special email account with auto-responder? Don't want to send it out in ~1500 emails!

### **13. Topic: Council Election**

The M+A is vague on details of election. Only clarity is the dates for nomination window, ahead of the AGM. We have 3 candidates for 2 places (fewer than last year). Discussion. **Decision:** (Proposed Marcus, seconded Sue, unanimous) to ask an independent member of Folk Camps to be returning officer for the election. (As we did in the 2019 election). To determine how to run the election remotely. Ideally to run the count ahead of the AGM so that the result can be announced at the AGM. From reading the M+AA this seems possible.

### **14. Topic: Marketing**

Anthony reported that Extent should be ready for ~ 19 Oct. He published a checklist of topics to be included, looks like quite a full issue.

### **15. Topic: Marketing**

Sue stated no marketing activity at the moment, not spending any money on marketing. The Lockerdown events are a form of no-cost marketing, and have attracted some non-Folk Campers, who are likely to attend in future.

No point spending any money on marketing prior to us announcing the 2021 programme and opening bookings.

We can announce the Reunion virtual ceilidh on Facebook. People to email to obtain zoom id to take part

#### **16. Topic: Outreach**

Mel reported – this was mothballed due to Covid taking precedence and that we cannot run any outreach presently. She has posted a short 1 page on this, but nothing more has happened. Suggest to re-start when we restart Folk Camps. Potentially needs a working group outside of Council to define principles and boundaries.

For access to Folk Camps / funding of holidays for disadvantaged/disabled people, Sue had found 2 organisations that we may be able to get assistance from – this can also wait until we re-start events.

Cat Kelly had suggested that funding opportunities for small and large projects are available, she had success on relatively large projects from Arts Council, and could assist on this in future.

#### **17. Topic: Folk Camps Policy Documents**

Sue and Patrick have updated and placed all in the Slack Channel for review

**Action: All** to read and be ready to approve in next session next week.

H+S policy also needs confirming and re-[publishing with current date of approval.

When we commit to next year camps, we are likely to need to re-review the H+S manual in case of needing extra procedures / risk assessments etc. for running covid safe events. SO will need to consider this in Spring 2021.

Sue also wants to review and update the staff manual (camps management manual), but no urgent rush before we commit to running camps again.

#### **16 October 2020 – meeting 4.**

Present:

- Marcus de Frettes (Chair)
- Patrick Self (Vice Chair)
- Judith Jenkins (Company Secretary)
- Paul Weir
- Anthony Keen
- Rebecca Boram
- Anne Guthrie
- Sue Malleson
- Kerstin Jewell



Apologies:

- Mel Horton
- Steve Porritt (Contractors not required)
- Graham Clements (Contractors not required)
- Jenny Hopper (Contractors not required)

### **18. Topic: Policy review**

All policy documents have been revised and reviewed.

**Decision:** To adopt all the revised policies. Proposed by Marcus, seconded by Paul, agreed unanimously.

Vote of thanks to Sue and Patrick for all the great work in reviewing and revising policies.

### **19. H & S**

Discussed possible changes to H & S policies in light of Covid.

### **20. Topic: Permanent Administrator**

**Decision:** That for the time being we postpone the recruitment for a new administrator until circumstances allow and ask Kerstin to continue on an hours-worked basis in the interim. Sue proposed, Anne seconded, agreed unanimously.

### **22. Topic: AGM arrangements**

**Action: Patrick** to put proposed M&A change explanations on website.

**Action: Marcus** to discuss AGM hosting with Cat and Beci.

**Action: Marcus** to create Powerpoint to reflect intended content and running order of AGM

### **23. Thanks**

Many thanks to Paul and Sue for all their efforts with Lockerdown.

Many thanks to Judith Jenkins for 6 years service on Council including dealing with several difficult situations.

### **Future meetings**

30<sup>th</sup> October 2020 to decide on Craft Break 2021.

AGM 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2020.

1<sup>st</sup> February 2021 to decide on Spring camps 2021.

Working weekend 24-26 September 2021 in St. Albans.

**End of minutes.**