

Suffolk Guild of Ringers

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held on 18th June 2005

Present: Winston Girling, Maurice Rose, Rolie Whiting, Keith Ashton-Jones, Richard Knight, Christine Knight, Carl Melville (observing), Robert Scase, Trevor Hughes, David Mulrenan, Jason Busby.

1. Apologies for absence were received from David Salter, Mary Garner, Jonathan Stevens, James Smith, John Pereira, Stephen Pettman, Richard Gates and Ian Harris.

Welcome

The chairman welcomed Keith Ashton-Jones and Jason Busby as new members of the GMC. In the absence of the secretary Christine Knight had agreed to take the minutes.

2. The minutes of the previous meeting on 19th February 2005, were agreed unanimously.

3. Matters arising

Badges. Rolie Whiting reported that the stocking of badges is in hand.

Venue. Maurice Rose asked if a warmer venue had been followed up. Buxhall had been booked for the October meeting, but it was agreed to investigate the Chapel Hall at Old Newton as a cost-effective alternative for the future.

Peal Fees. The Peal Secretary referred to the apparent discrepancy in peal fees in 2004. The total sum was down significantly on 2003, although the number of peals had risen by seven. This was the result of an arrangement between Stephen Pettman and the previous Treasurer, in which he had received credit in peal fees in lieu of claiming Central Council expenses. She offered to provide a breakdown of exact figures for the next meeting.

4. Correspondence

Insurance The Secretary had received a quotation from Ecclesiastical Insurance, but it was difficult to compare the cover with that already offered by Howe Maxted. It was also more expensive. As time was very short, it had been decided to continue with Howe Maxted. 650 members were covered.

In response, the treasurer suggested that, in order to review the quote, a sub-committee should be set up in October.

5. Financial Statement

The Treasurer reported that income from subscriptions was 88% of last years level. The cost of producing the Report had risen by £150, pushing it just over the £1000 mark. Donations and the like were standing at £300, compared with approximately £1000 received last year.

The Parish Affiliation Scheme Secretary had notified that about one third of the subscriptions had been received so far.

Richard Knight reminded the meeting that the possibility of collecting subscriptions by Standing Order had been discussed previously. One potential problem would be the need to set subscription levels for as much as five years in advance. There were, however, many

advantages. It was agreed to discuss the issue at the next meeting so that an outline proposal could be put to next year's AGM.

6. Ringing Master's Report

No report had been received. On the Ringing Master's behalf, the chairman commended the achievement of the Guild band that had come second in the Ridgman Trophy Striking Competition on June 4th at Grantham. Ian Holland had agreed to write an article for the Newsletter.

The Chairman also mentioned the pleasing level of support for this year's Guild Striking Competition and congratulated the team from Old Newton on achieving fourth place in the six bell competition in their first year of entry.

7. Sub Committee Reports

Belfry Advisory. The Chairman read minutes of the meeting held on 10th June. He also referred to the Technical Adviser's concern about the machining of clappers. Diagrams were circulated and it was agreed unanimously to make the following a condition for receipt of a Guild grant:

'Each clapper shall have a mass and distribution appropriate to the size of bell for which it is intended. As a guide, the section sizes and mass shall be that of a good wrought iron clapper..... Upon application to the Suffolk Guild of Ringers with dimensions of the clappers proposed, a ruling will be given on whether the clappers proposed adhere to this condition.'

It was also agreed unanimously to make it a condition of grant that payment should be made directly to the bellhanger or contractor.

Sudbury. Richard Knight reported that the Ringing Master had assured him that a site meeting would take place at All Saints Sudbury in the next 2-3 weeks. He also confirmed that the St Peter's bell-frame had now been painted.

Leslie Mills' Plaque. Trevor Hughes raised this matter, which had remained unresolved for a long time. The Council for the Care of Redundant Churches would not permit a permanent plaque. Considerable discussion followed and the Chairman agreed to approach George Pipe about producing a commemorative 'certificate' for display in St Peter's Ringing Chamber.

Recruitment and Training

No information was available about the most recent meeting.

8. Applications for Grants

The Chairman reported that Fressingfield intended to proceed with a re-hang in the old frame at a cost of £106 208, in spite of advice to the contrary from many quarters. The Chairman outlined the opinions of the current and a previous Technical Adviser that this would not be viable. He also referred to a report which recommended that the bells should be lowered to reduce tower movement. The parish's plan was to proceed with the current frame in situ, two bells remaining on an upper tier. Trevor Hughes proposed and David Mulrenan seconded that no grant be given under these circumstances. This was agreed unanimously. The Chairman said that a letter would be written to advise the parish that a substantial grant could have been obtained if advice had been followed.

9. Ratification of Non-resident Life Members

None to ratify.

10. The Five Year Rule for the Election of Guild Officers

This was discussed at length. The Chairman said that there was a consensus of opinion between the Ringing Master, the Secretary and himself that the rule should be left as it is so that the main Guild officers did not feel 'obliged to stay on'. Conversely members were often reluctant to vote against an officer in post, so the rule led to a healthy change in personnel. There was general agreement with this view, but Rolie Whiting suggested that perhaps the more 'technical' posts of Treasurer and Secretary could be difficult to fill on occasion. Richard Knight pointed out that good elections had been made this year and proposed that the Five Year Rule be left as it is. This was seconded by Trevor Hughes and passed unanimously.

11. Dates for Meetings in 2006

The Chairman announced that in 2006 GMC Meetings would take place on 18th February, 17th June and 21st October.

He also confirmed that the 2006 AGM would take place in the NW District, and that Ian Holland had agreed to Bury St Edmunds being the venue.

12. Any Other Business

Guild Cheques The Treasurer raised the issue of signatures on Guild cheques. The two Guild deposit accounts (The General Fund and the St Peter's, Sudbury Fund) are held with the CCLA. The CCLA insists on two signatories for account transactions, unless acceptable written evidence is provided authorising operation by one signatory. Apparently, the extract from the minutes of this year's AGM is insufficiently precise. The obtaining of two signatures can be very cumbersome. There are no chequebooks with these accounts. The only transactions are deposits into the CCLA accounts, and transfers from the CCLA accounts into the Guild's current account. In view of this the Treasurer requested that at the October Meeting, the GMC be asked to approve the following resolution:

'In accordance with the Guild Constitution (paragraphs E11 and E12), and recognising the nature of the transactions involved, the GMC authorises single-signature operation by the Treasurer or other authorised signatory in respect of the Guild deposit accounts held with the CCLA.

Vote of thanks This was proposed by Trevor Hughes to Richard Knight for co-ordinating the painting of the bell-frame at St Peter's Sudbury.

13. Date of next meeting: October 15th 2005 at 6.00pm at Buxhall Village Hall.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 7.27pm.