

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY 21.10.98

Attending:-

Ken, Clive, Alistair, Maggie

Apologies:-

None

Absent:-

Caroline

Agenda:-

The Structure of the Executive Committee:-

Caroline has made it clear that she doesn't wish to fulfil her role as secretary "for the time being". She has been asked to make it clear what her intentions are, because the organisation cannot run without a secretary. We are still awaiting a reply from her with respect to this. Minutes of meetings are supportive to volunteers in addition to which, without them ELLGaS is running unconstitutionally. It was, therefore, decided to put Alistair's name forward for election as secretary at the next General Meeting.

Decision-Making in ELLGaS:-

Maggie aired some concern regarding the manner in which a decision was made as to who attended a training day on Sunday 18th October. Unless we are seen to be making decisions democratically (i.e. involving ALL volunteers in the decision-making process), whether that be formally at a meeting, or informally by phone, we are working unconstitutionally. As this affects the way we are seen by outside agencies who provide ELLGaS with its funding, the matter needs to be treated with some seriousness. Alistair, who made it clear that he was present when the said decision was made, stated that, had he known fully of the implications, he would not have allowed it to happen and that now the matter has come to light, we need not allow this to recur.

The Move to Blackburn:-

Expenses

A quote has been obtained from Town and Country Removal Services (Burnley) for £232.96 (inclusive of VAT and Insurance) which takes care of the entire removal process including dismantling and reassembling. Whilst this seems expensive the quote was accepted on its merits around practicality, time and ease for all concerned.

Dates

The move will take place on Wednesday 4th November 1998.

2.

Telephones

The new office at the Jarman Centre will be available to us anytime after 26th October, when the previous occupants vacate. Maggie has set up with B.T. that the phone will divert from the Burnley office from the afternoon of Tuesday 3rd November.

The new switchboard number will be (01254) 69 42 42.

There will be a "Feature-Line" whereby 3 phones (or 2 phones and 1 Minicom) will be able to operate from the one number on a "Hunt Group".

There will be an Admin line which will be on the "Intel Highway" whereby phone, fax and the Internet will all run from the one line.

It had been decided by the General Meeting that we did not want a freephone (0800-number).

Various phone divert options available to us from the Burnley Office to the Blackburn Office were discussed. It was agreed that the B.T. "Intercept" Option was the most satisfactory, whereby the caller is advised "the number you have dialled has changed to" and they have to re-dial the new number themselves. (Auto-Divert, where the caller is transferred without their redialling or being advised of the change is also the most expensive option.)

Training

It was agreed that the whole group needs to be fully conversant with the Jarman Centre and its Rules, Regulations and Procedures. (Certain procedures specific to keyholders need also to be addressed.)

To this end Maggie is setting up a training day to run on a drop-in basis on the Saturday and Sunday after we move in.

Leaving Burnley

Major issues were raised in opposition to our relinquishing the Burnley Office.

75% of our annual funding comes from Joint Finance (comprising of Social Services and The Local Health Authority) under The Nelson Health Authority. Following major re-structuring, Blackburn, separate from the 5 other Authorities in East Lancs, now operates its own budgets independently and funds cannot be transferred from one authority to another

Maggie has liased with Dorothy Lowe (The Chief Executive of The Council for Voluntary Services at Joint Finance in Burnley.) It has been established that if we regard our opening at The Jarman Centre not so much as a move lock stock and

3.

barrel, rather an expansion, we will not jeopardise the validity of the existing business plan (based upon growth of our cause in a rural area) and thus the vast majority of our annual funding.

The bottom line is that we need to “tread water” and keep our options open, bearing in mind that Dorothy Lowe has told Maggie to hold onto the Burnley office for these reasons. In this light a decision was made to keep our options open in this matter for the time being.

The Charity Commissioners Annual Returns:-

A problem has arisen around the Annual Returns (accounts) sent for the year ending 30th November 1997. The Charity Commission have asked for an independent inspection of last years accounts (similar to an audit but not so detailed) which can cost anything between £350 - £1000 !!

We have been given 10 months to do this, which Clive said can be extended, and we can do a lot of this ourselves in order to get the accounts in as good as condition as possible before we send them off for inspection in the hope of keeping the cost as low as possible.

Maggie stated that we will be needing a full audit on this year's accounts for further funding applications.

In light of all this Clive has agreed to spend time working through last year's accounts and will act as Treasurer for as long as this takes. Ken agreed to take over the role of Chairman in principle and the General Meeting will be consulted for ratification purposes on this matter.

New Members:-

Duncan Berry's application has been received along with references. Ken agreed to phone Duncan to arrange a first contact meeting.

Telephone Rotas:-

Ken highlighted the problem around inconsistency of phone coverage i.e. that there are 4 volunteers in every Tuesday, 2 in every Wednesday and 2 in only on every 2nd Thursday. Clive stated that he can cover a Thursday only if it does not fall on the same week as an Executive Committee Meeting or General Meeting.

Somebody needs to be responsible for checking the rota for the month. Maggie stated she was prepared to co-ordinate rotas and make sure there is cover.

4.

Above all it was agreed that for volunteers to simply not turn up without communicating their movements was unacceptable.

Publicity:-

It was agreed that for many months our publicity levels and resulting visibility in the community have been highly unsatisfactory. This has been due to shortfalls in funding. Maggie is in the process of consulting with Peter Lowenz regarding a publicity budget.

Following our move, Maggie is arranging for a press release directed at The Lancashire Evening Telegraph, Boyz, Diva, Pink Paper, Gay Times, Scene Update and maybe some others.

In addition a mailshot has been organised directed at local contacts, most specifically those we are in communication with around funding and other administration issues. Jeremy is helping Maggie with this.

Role Specifications:-

The matter was raised of the absence of any role specifications for Secretary, Treasurer, Worker, Volunteer, Co-ordinator, Chairman etc.

Alistair expressed a wish that some form of specification, however informal, be drawn up in order that he can fulfil his role as perceived by ELLGaS to the best of his ability.

The matter will be given some thought.

The next Executive Committee Meeting will be on Wednesday 11th November in the new Jarman Centre Office

The next General Meeting will be on Wednesday 28th October at the Red Triangle Café.

The next Social will be on Thursday 5th November at the Burnley Mechanics

PLEASE COMMUNICATE ANY ALTERATIONS TO THESE DETAILS TO ALL MEMBERS.