



Minutes of North Middleton Village Community Hall

Meeting of Office Bearers

21 January 2026

Present: Sam Paterson (SP)
Norma McDonald (NM)
Janet Donaldson (JD)
Ross Thomson-Chandler (RTC)

A meeting of office bearers was called by the Chair following a meeting JD had with Environmental Health and the Licensing Officer for Midlothian Council.

JD advised that she had only been expecting the Environmental Health (EH) meeting following an email requesting a visit however, the Licensing Officer (LO) was also in attendance. JD was advised that the LO was attending following complaints and allegations received by them regarding village hall. SP thanked JD for dealing with the council meeting which obviously was more involved than anticipated.

JD itemised the points raised in the complaint advised by the LO as follows for discussion:

Lack of hot water – JD advised EH and LO that the committee were aware of this issue and were taking steps to resolve it. A plumber and electrician were engaged to try and find out where the fault lay and also investigations into specialist heat source pump companies for advice regarding resolving the issue was being sought. EH and LO seemed satisfied with the steps being made to resolve this. EH did advise however that the hall could not use the kitchen for high risk food preparation without the facility for acceptable hand washing. This needs further discussion at the full committee meeting. A list of acceptable food use in the kitchen currently was advised until hand washing facilities were rectified.

Cleanliness of bar/kitchen - EH and LO were very satisfied with the cleanliness of the kitchen and bar area.

The facilities for the storage of beer and the fact it is not in a cellar area - LO and EH investigated the area where the beer kegs were kept and were satisfied that this area was acceptable.

Stock rotation/out of date stock - EH and LO checked the area where the bar stock is stored. EH was satisfied with the cleanliness of the area. The committee however were aware that there had been some out of stock items here and in the bar at times and this needs to be addressed and correct and regular stock controls put in place. An immediate stock check will be undertaken.

Alcohol left out in the bar area at all times and within easy access - LO stated that any theft of alcohol was obviously the committee's responsibility however the concern is that any underage user of the hall could easily access alcohol and that was a significant licensing issue. JD acknowledged the concern and did advise that there was usually a committee member in the area during usage. The leaving out of alcohol on the optics and bar and in the food fridge must be addressed and removed going forward, at all times.

Bar left unattended and door left open to the bar - LO advised that there was an allegation of bar staff leaving the bar unattended to play pool and also the door to the bar being left open and unattended so that anyone could gain access. It was agreed that this could have happened and needed to be addressed with the bar staff, also the bottom half of the door to the bar can be locked and this should be done to negate any unauthorised access. Further investigation required and resolution made.

Unavailability of Designated Premises Manager - LO advised that, on receipt of the complaint, he had tried to contact the registered DPM (designated premises manager) for the bar on numerous occasions with no success. Voice messages left were never answered. This is obviously a breach of DPM licensing responsibilities. SP to advise the DPM of this and ensure that all the details are correct re contact. It also transpired on further checking, that the personal licence of the DPM shows the wrong address and in fact the

required mandatory refresher in 2023 had not been undertaken and therefore wasn't valid. This must be rectified immediately and further prevention required to ensure no similar situation reoccurs.

Additional note - The LO had suggested that there could be more than one personal license holder for the village hall. The DPM is the designated contact but does not physically have to be present in the bar when in use. Further discussion at the next committee meeting regarding personal alcohol licenses.

Also noted at this meeting that the bar prices were not displayed and hadn't been reinstated since the hall decoration.

There was a further discussion around the responsibilities and consequences of committee members and Trustees of the hall and the consequences of any licensing and accounting breaches. RTC and SP expressed concern at their positions as Trustees and further deliberations would have to be made.

The meeting ended with SP contacting the DPM to advise of the current situation and gain further information. A meeting with the other committee members may have to be called outwith the normal committee meetings.