

**Meeting:** No. 56: 6 November 2021 15:00 at Lands Village Hall

**Attendees:** Glenn Reffin (GR), Alison Deakin (AD), David Dodd (DD), Carol Suddick (CS), Malcolm Steer (MS), Philip Harrison (PH), Donald Metcalfe (DM)

**Proxy votes:** Felicity Barker, Carl Barker, Gerard Gaynor, Tracey Gaynor, Elaine Harrison, Mel Stewart-Pratt, David Thorpe

**Apologies:** Paul Dodd

**Chair:** Glenn Reffin (GR)

## 1. Introduction

GR called the meeting to order at 15.00 hrs. The Trust issued a notice of the AGM following the requirements of the Constitution. He reminded the meeting that the last AGM was held on 18 March 2020, three days before the first Coronavirus Lockdown began.

He said that it had not been possible to hold an AGM in March this year, as planned, because COVID-19 restrictions were still in force and planning was required following the lifting of those restrictions during summer.

He went on to state the purpose of the meeting was for:

- the Trust to engage with the community, in particular, the members of the Association;
- members to elect the Officers of the Trust and the other Trustees;
- members to receive the Officers' Reports and the Annual Report and Accounts; and,
- members to determine other matters reserved for a general meeting.

GR stated that he received apologies from Paul Dodd and possessed seven proxy votes. He explained that he would use proxies for the quorum and motions.

## 2. Statements

### Officers' Report

GR introduced the Officers' Report, informing the meeting that the Trust's priorities for the year were:

- raising funds to undertake refurbishments to the hall;
- Completion of refurbishments required to reopen;
- engagement with the community; and,
- development of a plan for future refurbishment works.

He said the Trust had successfully applied for grants and funding, significantly improving the Trust's finances and putting it on a sound footing.

The funds raised during the year enabled the Trust to complete electrical rewiring work, which allowed us to reopen the hall. The rewiring has provided safe lighting, power, heating, and fire detection and made several improvements, including the number of power sockets available and energy efficiency.

Throughout the COVID-19 restrictions, the Trust initiated projects to engage the community, including work to open the North Field for community use and revitalising the village green.

Additionally, the Trust had implemented new social channels to engage with the community, using Facebook, a new website and a newsletter.

The Trust achieved all of its objectives: it has a healthy bank balance for the first time in many years; the hall is open for business; it is in regular use, and the Trust currently has 35 paid members.

AD added that Durham County Council contributed funding for the work in the North Field, allowing the Trust to open the land for public use for the first time since the Trust acquired it in the 1990s. She stated the Trust intended to provide the field for recreational use, walks and picnics. Trees, including heritage fruit trees, were planted, paths cut, and tables installed for use. Further works are planned in the future as funding or donations become available.

## Annual Report and Accounts 2020

DD introduced the accounts for 2020. The statements showed a substantial increase in the Trust's bank balance: from £2,020 in the bank in March 2020 to almost £15,000 at the year-end. This balance was on a turnover of more than £17,000.

He continued, the Trust's bank balance has stabilised; this allows the Trust to invest in refurbishment. Our investment has been made possible by judicious applications for funding and grants.

By year-end, the Trust had a *circa* £13,000 net income, he claimed. This revenue compared favourably to a £1,300 loss in 2019.

The historical *Income, Expenditure and Balance Chart* at the end of the Annual Report demonstrates the financial position in a historical context.

The meeting ACCEPTED the *Officers' Statement* and the *Annual Report and Accounts, 2020*.

## 3. Elections

GR explained that one of the essential powers of the AGM is the election of the Association's representatives for the new period. The newly elected bodies have tenure immediately following the end of this AGM.

### Executive Officers

GR said there are three Executive Officers: the Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer. All Officers are due to retire at the end of this AGM and may stand for re-election. Noone contested any of these positions, and, as no members present raised objections, the meeting re-elected the incumbents to their positions:

**Chairman:** Glenn Reffin

**Secretary:** Alison Deakin

**Treasurer:** David Dodd

### Management Committee

GR explained, the Management Committee has up to 12 seats available to fill at the AGM. Again, existing members of the committee may put themselves forward for re-election. Because there are six retiring members available for re-election and two new nominations, there is no contest for any position. As no member present at the meeting objected to these appointments, these nominations were elected:

Felicity Barker, Simon Dobson, Paul Dodd, Gerard Gaynor, Elaine Harrison, Melanie Stewart-Pratt, Carol Suddick, and David Thorpe.

The newly composed Management Committee reserves the right to co-opt additional members according to 10. (b) vii of the Constitution. The elected members were required to become Trustees and entered into the Register of Trustees maintained by the Charity Commission of England and Wales.

## **4. Representatives**

### **Evenwood and Barony Parish Council**

GR explained this requirement under 8. (a) v of the Constitution. The AGM is responsible for determining whether to invite a representative of the Parish Council to attend meetings of the Management Committee. He reminded the meeting that the last AGM extended an invite to the parish, but they failed to identify a representative.

The meeting discussed this matter and questioned the value of inviting the council to provide representation if they had no interest in doing so. The meeting voted on the issue and determined to extend an invitation again on considering proxies.

**GR will extend the invitation to the council. AD, who is a Parish Councillor, will raise the matter with the parish.**

### **Appointment of qualified Auditor or Independent Examiner**

GR explained, the last AGM devolved the appointment of an auditor or examiner to the Management Committee. The committee did not appoint one because the accounts fell short of the threshold required by the *Charity Act, 1993*.

He continued, during the year, the Executive had tried to find a suitable examiner but found it difficult in the COVID-19 restrictions. However, an examiner would

probably be required for the current year's accounts as the Trust is close to meeting the legal threshold.

He proposed to use the same approach again, whereby the meeting devolves the power to appoint an auditor or examiner to the Management Committee. AD seconded this proposal which the meeting unanimously APPROVED.

**GR shall ensure that the Management Committee takes necessary action to appoint an Independent examiner or qualified auditor if required by Law.**

## **5. Constitutional changes and other business**

This proposal resulted from the COVID-19 restrictions imposed by HM Government for over 12 months. These restrictions made it impossible for the Trust to meet its usual calendar of holding an AGM in March of this year, resulting in a six-month delay.

The delay in calling this AGM should result in the elected Officers and Trustees holding office for only six months before retiring at the next AGM in March 2022.

If the proposal is approved, the next AGM will be in March 2023, receiving accounts for 2021 and 2022. This change will realign the AGM cycle with its usual schedule.

The proposal was unanimously APPROVED. The meeting instructed the Management Committee to put the proposal into practice and prepare accounts and reports for the intervening period for the next AGM in 2023.

GR closed the meeting at 15:25.