

Seavington Community Shop and Services Association

Minutes of the AGM held on 29 August 2017

Present: Ian Gibson (Chair), Ken Lake (Treasurer), Diane Bale (Secretary), Marion Bennett, Lesley Young (Minutes Secretary), Lis Tope, Ray Catling, Nigel England, Jenny Froome, David Froome, Manda Jagers, Ian Pamplin, Clive Reeves, John Tudor, Terry Gibson, David Bennett, Tony Beresford, Phil Gordon-Smith, Gill Beveridge, Jim Beveridge, Sheila Riley, Mark Ellis, Nicola Ellis, Ros Clampitt, Mary Wyatt, Karen Ogden, Lorraine Davey, Gill Bolton, Pauline Woodward

Apologies received from: Mary Corcoran, Pauline and Jim Lawton, Shirley and Tony Farrington, Brenda Lake, Gill and Bob Myers, Dee and Alistair Fyfe, Roger Clampitt, , Jean Tudor, Chris and Sally Gough, Joy Willerton, Annie Pritchard, Sue Sprague

1: Introduction

IG welcomed everyone to the meeting. He also apologised that a letter relating to the repayment of bonds had gone out uncorrected, which suggested that there is a problem with the repayment of bonds. This is not the true situation. We do intend to repay the bond holders and will review the current situation at our October Management Committee meeting. IG thanked everyone for the patience they have shown.

2: Review and Adoption of the Minutes of the AGM held on 9 August 2016

The minutes of the previous meeting and the current agenda had been emailed to all the members whose email addresses we hold. Hard copy had been hand delivered or posted to those members for whom we do not hold an email address. Hard copy had also been made available at the meeting for those whose addresses we did not have.

3: The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as accurate. There were no matters arising.

4: Accounts

Copies of the committee report and accounts of the year to the end of April 2017 were distributed.

Turnover had increased by £14,000 but so had the cost of sales, partly due to having had to write off stock, e.g. three chillers had failed.

Operating costs are up as we now have one paid assistant cook in addition to our cook Jane.

Property costs are higher. Repairs and maintenance costs include painting the outside of the building which cost £3000.

Accountancy fees are up as we are now paying for pensions administration.

Total operating costs are £55,810 which gives an operating loss of -£10,229.

After Other Income and no Corporation Tax the accounts show a shortage of -£5394.

The balance sheet shows that our total assets dropped by £5000.

Six new people took up shares.

The accounts show a table of Fixed Assets with brought forward balances, grants, donations and depreciation.

Loans from local authorities = £4000. Of this £2000 will be paid off this year and £2000 next year.

Repayable bonds will be paid in due course.

KL asked for questions from the floor and tony Beresford queried the cost of repainting the building and asked if volunteers could not have done this work. He also asked how the shop committee intended to turn round the loss of profit. KL said that we have reduced staff costs as one assistant cook had left and we will not replace her full time so that we expect to save £5000 over the next year.

IG said that we have been looking at our stock situation. We had one bad period when much stock spoiled in the heat and the chillers were overrunning. We now have air conditioning which takes the load off the chillers and this problem should not occur again. At our last stock take we had to reduce some stock by 50% which meant that we lost money but we now work hard to make sure we do not overstock. We are also adding one or two pennies to the cost of some luxury goods to increase profit. Very little stock is now having to be marked down. We will also do stock takes more often to keep an eye on this situation.

David Froome asked if we could claim back Corporation Tax to offset our losses. KL agreed but would not anticipate a refund.

Ian Pamplin asked if the five-week closure of the road for gas works had lost business and IG said that yes it had but on the other hand we got additional business from the workmen.

KL proposed that we should not employ an auditor to audit the accounts. This was seconded by Jim Beveridge and passed unanimously.

5: Address by the Chair, Ian Gibson

IG thanked all the volunteers who gave so much time and effort to the running of the shop and cafe, both behind the scenes and at the till and in the purchase of stock and financial support.

During a two-day shift IG had conducted a verbal survey of customers to find out how many local/non-local people used the shop. His finding was that 75% of customers come from outside the village and was wondering why local people do not use it more. It was a firm belief locally that the village needed a shop seven years ago and IG asked the audience to let committee members know if they feel we stock the wrong goods or are too expensive, although IG could assure the room that on three products he had researched we are cheaper than Tesco.

As detailed in the financial report, we made a shortage this year. We believe that this is a one-off 'blip' caused by an increase in wages and the need to replace three chillers. The increase in the wages bill has been a necessity due to the overwhelming success of the cafe. We currently have a

full-time cook and a part-time assistant cook. We also employ cleaners and Saturday help. Donna has now left us but will fill in when cafe staff are away.

We are aware that we need a part-time shop manager to help to maximise shop profits. We cannot afford to pay for this post at the current time but hope to continue to apply for grants to help in this respect.

The supper club continues to be a great success. We held a very successful wine tasting evening as part of the Ilminster Literary Festival.

IG paid thanks to several volunteers who have worked hard for the shop, especially Diane Bale, Pauline Woodward, Thandi Wilson, Karen Day and Nicky Wootton. Carol Talbot took over the role as joint co-ordinator of the art and craft exhibitions with Thandi and they have both done a marvellous job. Carol now wishes to hand over this role and we are looking for someone to take it over and help Thandi. Our grateful thanks go to Mark Ellis who left the role of Chair last year but who continues to support us when he is in the village.

IG also thanked Ken for his tremendous efforts as treasurer. Even when moving house and helping with the Ilminster Literary Festival, Ken still found time to keep the books in order. Sadly Ken has now decided it is time to hand over this post and we are seeking someone to take this role on.

IG also thanked Terry Gibson for all her help in the office, Mary Corcoran for organising the rota and Marion Bennett for all her hard work in fund raising seeking grants – which takes an enormous amount of time. It was due to Marion's efforts that we were successful in raising funds from Leader, the Parish Council and SSDC to install air conditioning.

MyHermes continues to create funds and we are grateful to Ian Pamplin for sorting out our WiFi problems and giving support in many ways.

We will continue to fund raise next year to be able to replace old equipment as necessary. Most of this came to us second hand and we will look to plan for future replacement in good time.

As always we need more volunteers and for the help and support of the village as customers and to remind other villagers that we are here. When the road was closed for five weeks in July and August for gas pipes to be renewed our regulars gave great support. Despite this our takings were down by nearly 15% compared to last year or on accrual nearly 22% which is nearly £1400 in takings. We have survived and believe next year will be successful but the support of the village is needed.

IG said he had been proud to take on the role of temporary Chair but someone is needed to oversee the next stage of growth, someone who can give both time and expertise to the store. Please spread the word and if you feel you or someone you know could fill the role of Chair, please contact IG.

IG asked for questions from the floor. Phil Gordon-Smith asked how the committee intended to find out why villagers do not use the store. IG said we might send out questionnaires. Phil suggested a door to door survey. IG said that everyone could ask their neighbour if they used the shop and remind them it is there. David Froome said that *The Seavingtons' News* could do a survey and IG said the committee would compile one.

Mary Wyatt asked if we could seek compensation for the disruption caused by the gas pipe fitting. IG said we had received £300 as compensation when the electricity was cut for a day but that he was not sure we could claim compensation for the gas work as the road was open here and there. He also said that we did make profits in the cafe when the workmen came in to buy food.

6: Election of the Management Committee

The current management committee was re-elected by the floor without any dissent.

Ray Catling

Ian Gibson (Chair)

Lesley Young (Minutes Secretary)

Ken Lake (Retiring Treasurer)

Marion Bennett

Diane Bale (Secretary)

Lis Tope

Mary Corcoran was elected to the committee and IG said that both Pauline Woodward and Lorraine Davey will join the committee. The committee comprises 10 members.

All members were voted in by the AGM and there were no dissenters. A Parish Council representative will attend all committee meetings. The next committee meeting is in September.

7: Any Other Business

There was no other business and the meeting closed at 7.35 pm.