

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
MINUTES FROM THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Via Zoom

10.30 Monday 22 June 2020

Present: José Wilson (Chair), Lori Weber, Richard Watts, Katie Lewis, Chris Chowney, Venera Town, Velda Kemp

We also welcomed Fiona Leathart.

Apologies: Apologies were received from Linda Dunn, who had hoped to attend. Richard Watts was absent for part of the meeting because of a power cut.

Minutes of the AGM of 9 May 2019 were approved. Proposed Lori Weber seconded Venera Town.

Matters arising: Katie Lewis had written to Nigel Stewart to thank him for auditing the accounts.

Annual Reports

Editor: Lori Weber reported on a very “interesting” period for the magazine. Work in 2019 had created a faster and simpler process, then came the Covid-19 lockdown, and we decided to publish the magazine online from the April edition onwards, via the website. Partly because of this, we acquired and Lori and Katie learnt a new software package, Affinity Publisher, which is installed on Lori’s personal laptop. Creating the online magazine had been exciting because of the ability to incorporate colour and photographs, and particularly to use both for the front cover, but disappointing in the low number of downloads compared with our distribution numbers for the physical magazine. Also adverts had not been included because some would need reformatting for the new software, and they would increase the file size for downloads, while only reaching about a third of the usual number of households. Contributions continued to flow in, mostly from the usual sources, whom Lori thanked. Another advantage of the online magazine was that it could be as many pages as there was content. Lori had also organised the advertisers into an Excel spreadsheet to streamline the system and improve cashflow. A decision would be taken on how to invoice advertisers following the lockdown period. Lori thanked everyone on the committee, Katie in particular, for their help in the monthly task, and continues to enjoy the role of editor. Fiona asked about the adverts, and Lori explained that about 40% of them would need reformatting. This was a matter for the committee to decide at a later meeting.

Chairman: José Wilson said this had truly been a year to remember. She paid tribute to Gill Evans, who was a stalwart member of Weston News throughout its life. She was a founder member on the original committee in 2004 and had been Treasurer and then in more recent years had run the advertising. Her sudden death shocked us all and we miss her. José also officially welcomed Velda Kemp, who had joined the committee during the year. José thanked Eleanor Bette Bennett for her many years on the committee. She was also a founder member, but has now stood down because of failing eyesight and trouble in recovering from a hip operation, but was still willing to support folding and stapling. Finally

José thanked Richard Watts for his year as Treasurer. He stepped into the breach and transformed the invoicing system; he was now standing down as Treasurer but was willing to remain on the committee.

José thanked Lori and team for the online magazine, which is fabulous and much appreciated when people take the trouble to look at it. Velda Kemp offered to forward the link for it to a WhatsApp group for Ariconium Place. We would return to a hard-copy format when we could realistically do it safely, and the committee would meet at the end of July to review whether the September edition could be produced in the normal way. It could also be possible to produce it online as well as in hard copy.

Treasurer: Velda Kemp (who was taking over the Treasurer role and standing for election to it) presented the figures for the 2019–2020 financial year (year-end 28 February), because at this point Richard Watts suffered a power cut and was absent from the meeting. Total receipts this year were £2,586 and expenditure £1403, giving a profit for the year of £1,182. Cash in the bank totals £3,004, meaning that we now hold £4,186. Velda was unsure about an entry for thank you gifts, so José explained that these are the small tokens – now with much nicer labels produced by David Weber – handed out to the whole team at Christmas, at a cost of about £1 a head, but to great appreciation. José also explained that the figures were probably a bit skewed this year because of advertising payments and subscriptions delayed from previous years now having been paid, so that Velda is now starting with a clean sheet and we should now get a clear picture of annual income and expenditure. We look forward to Velda’s recommendations about banking. [See also Richard’s additions at the end of the meeting.]

Elections:

Officers: There was only one candidate for each post, and so the election/re-election en bloc of the following was proposed by Chris Chowney and seconded by Venera Town

Chairman	José Wilson
Editor	Lori Weber
Secretary	Katie Lewis
Treasurer	Velda Kemp

Committee members: The following were the only candidates and their election/re-election en bloc was proposed by Lori Weber and seconded by Katie Lewis.

Chris Chowney

Venera Town

Richard Watts

The committee will welcome other members who might volunteer during the coming year. José thanked the committee for continuing, especially the online team. David Weber has been doing the front cover.

Any Other Business

The committee would later discuss how best to deal with invoicing advertisers in view of the gap in advertising. [At this point, Richard rejoined the meeting.] Katie and Lori thanked José for her support and for steering the distribution up to February. Richard supplemented Velda's report by comparing figures with the previous year. Over the year advertising receipts had increased 100%, and there was 84% growth overall. The biggest expenditure is printing and stationery, and those charges had gone down. One explanation could be the timing of the bills from Gooch's. José referred again to the updating of advertising invoices, and charging the school for arrears, and to having invoices from Gooch's when we want them. Richard said we're in a good position this year compared with last, but some of the surplus may actually belong to the previous year. Small accounts can be dramatically affected by one transaction. Discussion is still needed about a few outstanding advertising invoices. Fiona asked about Gooch's involvement, and José explained that they supply consumables and maintenance for the printers, charging us per printed page for the maintenance.

The meeting closed at 11.30.
