

The Henley Society
Annual General Meeting
Held at Shiplake Memorial Hall
Thursday 21st March 2024

Draft Minutes

Present:

Karen Grieve, Nora Scanlon, Claire Symons, Angus Ross, Sandra Moon, Roger & Hilary Bennett, Ian and Veronica Carlton, Joan Clark, Anne Gott, Helen Grubb, Diane Miller, The Baroness Buscombe of Goring, Julian Brookes, Geoff & Madeleine Probert, Denis McCoy, Ken Arlett, Catherine Notaras, Peter Stone, Dr Jenny Copeland, Paul Harrison, Errol Facy, Dr Sheilah Bell, Judy Clinton and Geoff Lockett.

Apologies for absence:

Valerie Alasia, Peter & May Ashby, Sir Martyn Arbib, Monica Brohm, Chris Barnard and Jane Probbitts, Sally Burn, Mr & Mrs S Carter, Mr & Mrs C Chisholm, Ruth Gibson, Mr & Mrs S Greenhalgh, Nigel Grundy, Mr & Mrs M Lines, Anthea Osborn-Jones, Mr & Mrs S Morton, Barbara Phipps, Michael Porter, Cllr Ian Reissmann, Nick Richardson, Gillian Symons, Mr & Mrs C Thompson, Monnik Vleugels

Welcome The Society President, the Baroness Buscombe of Goring, opened the meeting by saying how hugely honoured she felt to be President and by welcoming all members who attended. She announced that the evening would be in three parts - the business of the day, a talk by the Deputy Mayor of Henley Cllr Rory Hunt, and a drinks reception to follow. The Baroness thanked the Chairman & Committee for their hard work during the year.

Minutes The Minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting had been posted on the website and were proposed as a true record by Dr Jeny Copeland, seconded by Judy Clinton and unanimously approved.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

Chairman's Report The Chairman's report had been circulated prior to the meeting and he repeated his thanks to the hard-working Committee who had overseen another successful year for the Society. He made special mention of four Committee members, Valerie Alasia, Veronica Carlton, Karen Grieve and Nora Scanlon who were not seeking re-election this year and thanked them for their past service and hard work for the Society. He also thanked the membership for their support during the year and looked forward to meeting many of them at our 2024 events.

Treasurer's Report & Accounts The Treasurer, Sandra Moon, presented the accounts for year ended 31st December 2023 which had been circulated prior to the meeting. They showed a surplus for the year and a healthy balance on hand at year end. There was a question from the floor regarding the increased costs of running the web site and the Chairman explained that the sum included a complete redesign of the site, with much good work carried out by Veronia Carlton who he thanked, and that

there should be no similar cost next year. Paul Harrison proposed that the accounts be adopted, seconded by Geoff Probert and unanimously approved.

Report on Planning Matters The Planning report jointly produced by the Chairman and Vice Chairman had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Vice Chairman expanded on certain planning issues currently in progress – and mentioned especially the Premier Inn, the Smith's Hospital site at the far end of the Fair Mile and Thames Farm in Shiplake. The meeting was pleased to hear that the time for Premier Inn to challenge the Planning Inspector's refusal for a 115-bedroomed hotel at the Station Car Park had now passed.

In connection with the Smiths Hospital a member from the floor, with much knowledge of these matters, said that he was confounded to see the development there approved on the casting vote of the SODC Planning Committee Chairman, but was pleased to note that over the past few years Henley had won many of the contentious Planning appeals thanks to the combined work of Henley Town Council and the Henley Society.

Appointment of Honorary Auditors Sandra Moon, Treasurer, proposal to re-appoint the Auditor, Brian Villers, was unanimously supported. A letter of thanks would be sent to Mr. Villiers for his work on the 2023 accounts.

Election of Secretary : In accordance with the Constitution Karen Grieve stood down and did not seek re-election. Nick Richardson, having been properly proposed and seconded according to the Constitution, was elected unanimously.

Election of Treasurer : In accordance with the Constitution Sandra Moon stands down and having been properly proposed and seconded offers herself for re-election. Carried unanimously.

Election of Executive Committee : in accordance with the Constitution the Executive Committee all stood down and the undermentioned, having been properly proposed and seconded, offered themselves for election. (Julian Brookes, Joan Clark, Dr Jenifer Copeland, Geoff Luckett, Catherine Notaras, Monnik Vleugels). Carried unanimously. The President explained that the new Committee were due to meet on Monday next when, in accordance with the Constitution they would elect from their number a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Membership Secretary. (Post meeting note – the above meeting took place and the following were elected – Geoff Luckett (Chairman), Julian Brookes (Vice Chairman) and Monnik Vleugels (Membership Secretary).

To confirm Lady Rosemary Hardie as a Vice President - During the year the Committee wished to strengthen the panel of Vice Presidents. It was proposed to ask our long-time supporter Lady Rosemary Hardie to become a Vice Presidente and the Committee were delighted when she accepted. We now seek this meetings permission to endorse that decision. Carried unanimously.

It was with regret that the President announced that Sir Martyn Arbib has decided to stand down as a Vice-President at this AGM. Sir Martyn has been a strong supporter of Henley, making many quiet donations to various causes including notably the River & Rowing Museum. He had been a Vice-President of the Society since 2001 and will be sorely missed. The Chairman would send him a letter of thanks.

Any Other Business

A question from the floor concerned holding Society meetings away from Henley and the Chairman explained the difficulty in booking suitably sized meeting rooms in Henley to accommodate the possible number of attendees likely to come. He explained that Committee attempted, exactly one year ago, to hold this meeting at a venue in Henley but

even with that notice we could not be accommodated. Committee will attempt to book next years meeting at a Henley venue.

The President closed the meeting at 8.20pm and after a short break she introduced our guest speaker, the Deputy Mayor of Henley, Cllr Rory Hunt. The Councillors speech is attached.