

Milton Keynes Reader Service

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
held on Saturday 28 July 2018 at 10am
at The Oak Tree Centre,
Wallinger Drive, Shenley Brook End,
Milton Keynes**

1. Chair's opening remarks

Paula Suchy MBE welcomed everyone and introduced herself. She said that she was chairing the meeting on behalf of Judy Smith, the Chairperson, who had been unwell. Paula then introduced the committee members sitting at the top table.

2. Roll call of those present

Karen Preece read out the list of attendees,

3. Apologies for absence

A list of apologies was read out.

4. Minutes of the Previous Annual General Meeting

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 29 July 2017 were read out by Alison Statham. Paula thanked Alison for reading them out.

There were no matters arising from these Minutes.

Paula asked those present if they were an accurate record of the meeting.

Acceptance of Annual General Meeting Minutes:

Proposed by Terry Calvert, seconded by Jeff Bashton.

There were no questions or comments and the Minutes were carried unanimously by members present.

5. Trustees Annual Report July 2018

Karen Preece read out a precis of the Trustees Annual Report.

She said that once again, it has been an incredibly busy and exciting year. There has been a stream of new service users and volunteers and a number of "one off" facilitations.

To help with the increasing workload, Karen Armstrong joined in January and is working five hours a week. Karen said thank you to everyone else who helps in the office, including Barbara Burgess, Jan Fanandez, Lesley Marshall and Hilary Robertson and Martin Lycett, who helps to keep the IT equipment up and running. She also thanked everyone who helps with the setting up of events, the meeters and greeters and the ladies in the kitchen.

A number of different events took place during the year. One of these was a volunteers support meeting with a bit of a difference, it was an interactive evening with the aim of trying to give examples of living with various kinds of sight loss. Those attending were invited to take part in tasks involving braille and using IT and view a display of equipment and aids.

To finance our activities, we are grateful to Milton Keynes Council for their grant and the Walnut Tree Community Shop, who kindly donate half their revenue to us. Other monies are raised by subscribing to localgiving and enrolling for their matching funding, taking part in the Community Foundation's 50/50 car raffle, transcription work, our members' donations, "one off" donations and flag days. Thank you also to

Paula and Stefan Suchy for putting together another successful quiz night and to Paula for her sponsored climb up Snowdon, which took eight hours.

Since the last AGM, Caroline Pearson stood down as Chairperson, after successfully steering us through our move to Margaret Powell House. In August, Judy Smith took over as Chairperson.

A team of five people from the Reader Service took part in the "Eggheads" TV quiz programme. The result, which is a closely guarded secret, will be revealed when the programme is aired in September/October.

Karen said it was her last AGM, as she was retiring at the end of August and she introduced Lois Wright, the new Co-ordinator, who would be starting work on 6 August.

Karen thanked Paula Suchy and Paula Varey who have helped her so much over the past seven years and also Alison Statham and Liz Roe for all their support. She said she has met some wonderful people and will look back fondly at her time at the Reader Service, as it has been so exciting to have helped with the development of the charity and to see it progress in so many ways.

Paula asked if there were any questions about the Trustees Annual Report and there were none.

Acceptance of Annual Report:

Proposed by Alison Statham, seconded by Elaine Maries.

Agreed unanimously by members present.

6. Presentation of Trustees Annual Accounts 2017-2018

Stephen Harrison said there had been an increase in rent costs because of the first full year in Margaret Powell House. The benefit of the move is a much safer and better working environment for Karen and a good location for people popping in to help her.

The accounts show a deficit of £5,600 which is due to the timing of payments, ie building of recording room.

We own a one-third of the share capital of the company which operates the Walnut Tree Community Shop and the Reader Service is now registered at Companies House as a 'person with significant control' over the company.

Paula asked if anyone had any questions about the accounts.

Alison Statham asked about the dispute with Woughton Parish Council about the rent for the previous office in Tinkers Bridge. Stephen said the Council hasn't pursued the matter.

Karen Preece said she had received a note from Milton Keynes Council who said the grant to the Reader Service is on its way.

Michael Baldry asked how much we received from Walnut Tree Community Shop. Stephen said we received £7,250 and trading for this year is in line with last year.

Martin Lycett asked who owns the other two-thirds in the Walnut Tree Community Shop. Stephen said one-third is owned by an independent director and the other one-third is held by another person on behalf of Rethink which is the other charity which receives donations from the shop. He said that Rethink has been encouraged to take formal ownership of the shares like the Reader Service. However it is a national charity with more bureaucracy than the Reader Service and this is taking some time and may not be practical.

Paula thanked Stephen for his hard work preparing the accounts.

Acceptance and adoption of Trustees Annual Accounts:

Proposed by Jeff Bashton, seconded by Jean Thomas.

The accounts were carried unanimously.

Paula proposed that Hills and Burgess Accountants in Leighton Buzzard, who provide their services free of charge, be approached to check the accounts for next year. This was agreed by the members present. Stephen said we present them with a box of chocolates by way of thanks for the service they provide.

7. Election of Management Committee

Paula said that this is the first Annual General Meeting since becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and therefore one-third of the current committee are required to stand down. It had been decided that this would apply to the longest standing members, who were Paula Suchy, Caroline Pearson and Lynn Bovis, all of whom are eligible to stand for re-election if they so wish.

Volunteer representative:

There is one space for a volunteer representative, which will be filled by Mark Lawrence.

No other applications to join the committee had been received.

Paula then passed the meeting to Alison Statham for the election of committee.

Election of Committee

Alison Statham then read out the nominees statements provided by Paula Suchy MBE, Caroline Pearson, Lynn Bovis and Mark Lawrence.

There were no objections and the nominees were proposed en bloc by Jean Thomas, seconded by Michael Baldry. This was carried unanimously.

Alison then handed the meeting back to Paula.

8. Questions and Suggestions

Paula asked if there were any questions and suggestions.

Marilyn Barby asked about the photo identity cards for volunteers. Paula said it is still to be done, however, there are over 100 volunteers and will take time. Stephen Harrison said the process will also involve a cost.

Terry Calvert talked about the 30th anniversary celebrations, which included setting up three scrabble events in libraries across MK. Caroline Pearson spoke about the Talks Project which she arranges.

Alison Statham, who is a singer with the Guild Singers, said they hold concerts in the summer and winter to raise money for charity. She presented Paula Suchy with a cheque for £462 which was raised at their recent concert.

Karen Preece said that Mark Lawrence has updated the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) forms, which all service users and volunteers will be required to sign. There are copies available in the reception. Paula said that Christine Amos is taking photos and if you would prefer not to have your photo published on our website, please let Christine know.

Paula Suchy said Karen Preece is leaving after being with us for seven years and she will miss her so much. A collection for a gift for Karen had been arranged and resulted in such kind donations. Paula then presented Karen with gifts of a gold love knot necklace, a set of gold twirly earrings, a plant for her garden and John Lewis gift voucher. She said there is more money coming in and this will be exchanged for garden vouchers.

Paula handed over to Karen, who said it has been a brilliant seven years and she has met some lovely people. She has really enjoyed working together with the service users, volunteers, and people from other organisations. Karen then thanked everyone for the lovely gifts.

9. Chairman's closing remarks

Paula thanked everyone for coming to the AGM and asked them to sign the Data Protection forms and Karen's leaving cards.

The meeting closed at 11.28am.