



Minutes of the 42nd AGM held at Fittleworth Village Hall on Wednesday 19 July 2017

In attendance: Sir Brian Barttelot (President), Alistair Sheppard (Chairman), Rodger Hunt (Honorary Vice President), Alan Goss (General Secretary), Barbara Pert (Honorary Treasurer), Steve Whyley (Communications Manager), Alex Dolby (Fleet Manager), Pauline Whyley (Membership Secretary), Fiona Wright (Steyning), Pat Farmer (Wisborough Green), David Cresswell (Petworth), Steve O'Dowd (Billingshurst), Steve Keating (Pulborough), Brian David (Five Villages), Ian Clarke (Storrington), plus 24 passenger and volunteer members from the Divisions.

The meeting was opened by the Chairman at 10:05.

Item 1: Apologies

Nick Herbert MP (Vice-President), David Coster (Training Manager), Jim James (Storrington), Rita Seymour (Ashington), Lesley Sales, Jill Barry, Rita Reeves, Cheryl Richardson Fyfe Gillet, John Cooper, Helen Cooper, Mr & Mrs Ellis, David Davison, Christine Hanson, Caroline Hyland, John Draper, Janet Matthey, Mark Cristofoli

Item 2: Approval of the Minutes of the 41st AGM held on 8 July 2016:

The Chairman drew attention to the following inaccuracies in the minutes:

- **Item 7.1** Should read "The appointment of Independent Examiners Ltd as the Association's independent examiners was proposed by Barbara Pert, seconded by Alistair Sheppard and confirmed by a majority show of hands."
- **Item 9.1** Delete "cost of servicing" insert "fleet running costs"

Subject to the above amendments acceptance of the minutes was proposed by the Chairman and agreed unanimously by a show of hands.

Item 3: Matters Arising

There were no matters arising which would not be dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.

Item 4: Chairman's Report

- 4.1** The Chairman thanked Barbara Pert for drawing attention to an error in his report (Page 11) and confirmed that the Association did not operate at a financial loss for the year to 31 December 2016. This was largely due to the receipt of a one-off grant of £29,000 from the Department of Transport for the purchase of a new minibus.
- 4.2** 2016 was a notable year for the Association with the commemoration of our 40th Anniversary at Champs Hill and later in the year the presentation of the Queens Award for Voluntary Service by the Lord Lieutenant at the same venue.
- 4.3** The Chairman expressed his thanks for the efforts of all volunteers and in particular Sir Brian for his continued support as President and Rodger Hunt who contributed so much to the organisation of the special events of 2016. He also thanked Brian Ball, Robin Chittenden and Ken Lintill who have stepped down as Divisional Organisers after many years sterling service to the Association in Pulborough, Billingshurst and Petworth respectively. He also expressed his thanks to the members of the Executive Committee for their important contributions to the running of the charity. He noted in particular the work of Barbara Pert who unfortunately has announced her intention to resign as Treasurer for personal reasons.

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- 4.4** The Chairman drew attention to the importance to the Association of compliance with the growing range of Regulatory requirements governing charities including the need to have current DVLA reports for drivers, the new controls on fundraising activities, and the Data Protection Regulations which will come into force in May 2018.
- 4.5** He explained that the total cost of operating our service equates to approximately £1.30 per bus per mile. Some recent analysis carried out by Barbara Pert indicates that current income from fares is in the region of only 50p per bus per mile. As a charity, we do not expect to recover all costs from fares and we are always seeking ways of generating income from grants, sponsorship and other fundraising activities. However, it will also be necessary for Divisional Organisers to seek to increase fare income whether by fare increases, increasing bus occupancy rates or both and they will be fully supported by the Trustees in this respect.
- 4.6** The Chairman's report was adopted unanimously by a show of hands.

Item 5: Treasurer's Report – presented by The Chairman

- 5.1** The Chairman confirmed that the Association reports its financial performance in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Small Entities (FRSSE).
- 5.2** He confirmed that although income exceeded expenditure by the sum of £27,892 for the year to 31 December 2016 this was largely due to the receipt of a one-off grant of just under £30,000 from the Department of Transport for the purchase of a new minibus. The charity continues to suffer an annual operating deficit of approximately £20,000. He reported that operating costs have been reduced significantly and are unlikely to fall further.
- 5.3** The Chairman noted that income from grants and sponsorship is increasing. Grants were received from the following Parish Councils: Bramber, Coldwaltham, Northchapel, Plaistow and Ifold, Pulborough, Steyning and Wisborough Green for which the Association is very grateful.
- 5.4** The Charity currently has reserves in the region of £300,000 which are invested but at present produce very low rates of interest. If the charity continues to run an operating deficit at its current level and does not increase income from other sources there is a danger that these reserves will be extinguished by 2022.
- 5.5** The Treasurers Report was adopted unanimously by a show of hands.

Item 6: Conversion to CIO – Progress Report

- 6.1** The Chairman announced that the new Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) was established on 13 July 2017 with the same name as the existing charity and with a new Charity Number: 1173818.

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- 6.2** After some considerable difficulties with the Charity Commission the following Objects were agreed for the new CIO:

"To provide transport facilities in West Sussex for people who have special need of such facilities because they are elderly, young, poor or living in isolated areas where there are no adequate public transport facilities."

- 6.3** Steve Whyley confirmed that he was in the process of developing a plan for the transition process from the old to the new Charity. He will be producing a newsletter to update members on progress but most people whether passengers or volunteers will not be affected by the change.
- 6.4** The Chairman explained some of the detailed work which will be undertaken to implement the change to the new organisation including the transfer of ownership of the minibuses and other assets and the transfer of all monies which would be audited by Independent Financial Examiners. This is likely to take place at the end of September 2017.
- 6.5** He confirmed that there will be no changes to the work of most volunteers or services to passengers, that Trustee members and the Management Board would continue to meet every two months, that there will continue to be an Annual General Meeting. The minutes of meetings and other key documents will continue to be published on the website.

Item 7: Election of the President, Vice President, Honorary Vice President, Chairman, Officers and Committee for the ensuing period pending the transfer to CIO.

- 7.1** Sir Brian Barttelot was proposed as President by Alistair Sheppard, seconded by Rodger Hunt and appointed unanimously by a show of hands.
- 7.2** Nick Herbert MP was proposed as Vice President by Alistair Sheppard, seconded by Rodger Hunt and appointed unanimously by a show of hands.
- 7.3** Rodger Hunt was proposed as Honorary Vice President by Alistair Sheppard and appointed unanimously by a show of hands.
- 7.4** Alistair Sheppard was proposed as Chairman by Rodger Hunt and appointed unanimously by a show of hands.
- 7.5** The following officers were proposed by Alistair Sheppard and appointed unanimously by a show of hands: Alan Goss (Secretary), Steve Whyley (Communications Manager), Alex Dolby (Fleet Manager), David Coster (Training Manager).
- 7.6** The Chairman paid tribute to the valuable work carried out by treasurer, Barbara Pert and reported that Barbara was prepared continue in office temporarily to facilitate the transfer of duties to her successor who is yet to be identified.
- 7.7** The appointment of Independent Examiners Ltd as the Association's auditors was proposed by Alistair Sheppard and approved unanimously by a show of hands.

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Item 8: Agree the Annual Subscription

8.1 After a brief discussion it was proposed by Alistair Sheppard that the annual subscription should remain unchanged at £5 which was approved unanimously by a show of hands.

Item 9: Officers' Reports

9.1 Fleet Manager – Alex Dolby

Alex thanked all drivers for their efforts in 2016 which resulted in an accident free year. Unfortunately, 2017 will not be quite so good. He reminded drivers that they should not accept liability for any accident which may occur. Such matters should be dealt with exclusively by our insurers.

Manual steps have not been a success and all vehicles that do not already have electric steps will be fitted with them in the near future. All buses will be supplied with new fire extinguishers.

OJ Motors of Storrington, the Association's main provider of repairs and servicing are providing a good service.

Alex reminded all drivers that our AA membership has been cancelled resulting in a saving for the Association. However, all vehicles carry an AA Fleet Service Card which enables us to call for assistance in the event of a breakdown and pay a one-off charge for the service.

9.2 Training Manager – David Coster

In David's absence, the report was presented by Alan Goss.

The pace of driver assessment slowed during 2016 as the re-assessment programme will not restart until early 2018.

David wishes to thank Mark Romain and Ian Alexander for their assistance with the programme. Unfortunately, Mark has now moved away from the area so anyone who would like to take his place should contact David for further details.

Discussions regarding the Passenger Escort Development programme are still ongoing and David would be very keen to hear from any experienced escorts who would be interested in helping with the programme.

9.3 Communications Manager – Steve Whyley

Steve drew attention to the importance of the 40th anniversary celebrations and the receipt of the Queens Award for Voluntary Service which together have contributed to the raising of the Association's profile in the area. This has increased our chances of success in applications for funding.

Steve noted that the website was updated during 2016 and encouraged all volunteers to register to enable them to gain access to various documents and information. He also encouraged Divisions to use the site to publicise their events. The Association also has a Facebook page which is up and running – many thanks to Helen Pengelly-Johnson for her management of this facility.



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Steve requested that all volunteers and passengers who have email addresses should notify the Membership Secretary if they have not already done so. The use of email makes communication with members easier and saves a significant amount of money.

Two sponsorship deals were agreed with Estate Agents, Fowlers and Osborne Humphries, during 2016 and more sponsors are sought.

Those present were reminded of the "Give as You Live Scheme" which enables the Association to receive between 1 & 4% of the purchase price when members shop online at most of the major online retailers. There is no charge to the customer.

The Charity received a grant of £8000 from the West Sussex County Council Transport Bureau early in 2017.

Steve expressed his thanks to Jane Jeffery for her assistance with the on-going search for further funding opportunities and reminded the meeting of the importance of local fundraising initiatives as well as those organised centrally.

Item 10: Sir Brian Barttelot

Sir Brian informed the meeting that he was extremely proud to be associated with the charity the achievements of which were suitably acknowledged during 2016 by the 40th birthday celebrations and the Queens Award for Voluntary Service.

He expressed his thanks to all the dedicated volunteers without whom the charity could not continue to function.

Item 11: Any Other Business

11.1 The Chairman invited questions from the floor:

Annie Cutting asked whether it would be possible to fit air conditioning to the buses as they can be uncomfortably hot in summer, particularly on longer trips. Alex Dolby explained that the current policy of the Association is to purchase buses that are three years old and that these are not available with air conditioning. However, if new buses are purchased at any time in the future this requirement could be considered.

Pat Beard who had been a volunteer but was now only involved with the charity as a passenger expressed her thanks to all the volunteers who provided such a valuable service for their communities.

Bill Cutting expressed his thanks to the Executive Committee for their efforts in managing the Association. As an ex committee member' he was acutely aware of the additional difficulties caused for all charities by the increased burden of Regulatory requirements.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 11:40.