

Hinton St George and Locality Rural Community Services Limited (HRCS)

Minutes of Annual Members Meeting

held on 27th January, 2017
St George's Village Hall, Hinton St George

Present:

Management Committee:

David Clements - Chairman

Andrew Norton - Deputy Chairman (IT, website and communications and handyman)

Jeremy Rook- Treasurer

Keith Hurse - Post Office

Jean Roberts (co-opted)

Les Farris (co-opted)

68 members (including committee members above)

1	Chairman's Welcome	
	<p>The Chairman, David Clements, welcomed Members present and thanked them for attending. He outlined the information to be covered during the meeting, reminding Members that they had received copies of the signed accounts by email. Copies of these and the Committee Report to Members were also available at the meeting.</p>	
2	Apologies	
	<p>Committee: David Wheeler (Company Secretary), Nick Kirby (EpoS and stock control) and Judy Craig (co-opted minutes secretary)</p> <p>33 apologies for absence were received from Members.</p>	
3	Approval of Minutes	
	<p>The Minutes of the last AGM held on 22nd January 2016 had been circulated prior to the meeting. With no amendments the minutes were put to the meeting for approval: proposed by Bob Kefford, seconded by Robert Heelis and unanimously approved by a show of hands.</p> <p>Matters arising: Bad debts - The Chairman was pleased to report that there had been no write-off of bad debts during the year and thanked Jillian for keeping on top of customer accounts. Forecasting accuracy - Following the request made at the last AMM, the presentation to follow now included comparison of budget with outturn. Pension implications: only 2 staff members have taken up the</p>	

	offer of a pension; the cost had been included in this year's budget.	
4	Report to Members	
	<p>Overview: After 5 full years of operation, the Chairman was pleased to report a 3rd successive year showing a modest profit. The 5th Birthday was marked by a party at Our Shop, attended by ITN News. The Lloyds Bank loan was re-financed with a 20 year, £190,000 fixed rate mortgage from South Somerset District Council at a favourable interest rate.</p> <p>Bank accounts were consolidated; the Co-op Bank handling the day to day activities while spare cash is held with Nationwide. A staff reward scheme was successfully introduced with staff members receiving a share of the profits where they exceeded budget.</p> <p>There have been many improvements in Our Shop which will have been noticed during the year. It is hoped that the flat now has a stable tenancy, an important factor in Our Shop finances as is the current stability of Our Shop staff. These factors help maintain our small profit.</p> <p>A pension scheme was introduced in October 2016, thanks to much hard work by Fiona Piper, Ann-Marie Lawson and Keith Hurse. Fiona Piper also manages the Staff payroll on a voluntary basis.</p> <p>The Post Office has recently awarded a grant of £13,000 for improvements to the Shop. This will cover a new Post Office counter, new shelving units, new freezers and a projecting Post Office sign. Our Shop will have to contribute up to £3,000 from reserves to complete these projects.</p>	
5	Financial report on the Annual Accounts for the year ending 30th September, 2016	
	<p>The Chairman presented the Annual Accounts for the year ending 30th September 2016. Copies of the Financial Statement had been emailed to members prior to the meeting and further copies were made available at the meeting.</p> <p>The principal points were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • turnover and gross profit for the year was flat, being almost the same as the previous year; • operating expenses were below budget; • interest costs were significantly lower, reflecting the lower interest rate on the SSDC loan; • the surplus for the year was well ahead of budget and a little up on the previous year; • For the first time, a taxation charge was incurred on our 	

	<p>property income;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • net assets were up by some £4,500; • the forecast for the current year is that the surplus and cash will both show a slight reduction. 	
6	Operations Report	
	<p>The Chairman reminded the meeting that information on the ever improving range of goods and merchandising in Our Shop can be found on Our Shop Facebook page, in Our Shop Newsletter and in the Hinton Hound.</p> <p>Indications are that wastage is lower than the Plunkett Foundation average for community shops; we work hard to minimise this figure.</p> <p>The quality of the staff team led by Jillian Fawcett had been a major factor in the performance of the shop.</p> <p>New volunteers have greatly aided the daily running of Our Shop; more volunteers are needed to commit to regular hours to ensure full staffing each week. This would ease the task of compiling the weekly rotas. Volunteers to draw up rotas are needed and it can be done by someone who prefers not to work behind the counter in Our Shop. Many thanks to all those involved this year. The summer barbecue for volunteers has become an enjoyable annual village event.</p> <p>The Chairman reminded us that the regular income provided by the continual letting of the flat and garage is critical to HRCS finances. Garden maintenance by volunteers is no longer needed as much of the shop garden is now utilised by and maintained by a neighbour. Shop maintenance is always needed and the work done by Andrew Norton and Tony Gates to keep Our Shop functioning is much appreciated.</p>	
7	Current priorities	
	<p>With the help of the grant from the Post Office Community Branch Fund, to improve the Post Office together with the shelf displays which will involve closing the Post Office for a week.</p> <p>To replace the old inefficient freezers will reduce the electricity bills.</p> <p>To install a projecting Post Office sign to attract more visitors to the village into Our Shop.</p> <p>To be aware that price increases are essential to maintain profitably at a time of inflation especially as a £220,000 turnover is needed for the security of Our Shop.</p> <p>To win the Countryside Alliance Village Shop of the Year competition to give us wider publicity.</p>	

	To attract more volunteers, especially those offering to work at regular times.	
8	Membership Report	
	In the absence of the Company Secretary, the Chairman reported that on September 30th 2016; there were 385 Individual and 19 Corporate Members. During the year there were 9 new members and 4 have died. An encouraging number of new residents have joined since October 1st, 2016.	
9	Management Committee: resignations and elections	
	<p>Mike Mills- Roberts and Ann Marie Lawson resigned from the committee during the year and Patricia Heelis has decided not to seek re-election. The Chairman thanked them all for their hard work.</p> <p>Elections to Management Committee Keith Hurse, Nick Kirby, Andrew Norton and Jeremy Rook retire by rotation and offered themselves for re-election.</p> <p>The co-opted members Judy Craig and Jean Roberts (joint Minutes Secretaries), Sally Wroblewski (Designated Premises Supervisor i.e. Licensing Holder) and Les Farris (Press and Publicity) offered themselves for election to the Committee.</p> <p>The Chairman stated that valid nominations have been received for all the above and also for Jackie Bristow.</p> <p>Valid nominations had been in respect of all of the above.</p> <p>The election of these Members en bloc was proposed by Simon Grant, seconded by Barry Tyler and approved unanimously by a show of hands.</p>	
10	Resolutions	
	<p>1. To approve the committee report to members for the year ending 30th September, 2016. This resolution was proposed by Adrian Cavendish, seconded by Heather Morecombe and this was approved unanimously by a show of hands.</p> <p>2. To approve the annual accounts for the year ending 30th September, 2016. This resolution was proposed by Michael Phillips and seconded by Bob Kefford, unanimously approved by a show of hands.</p> <p>3. To authorise the Management Committee to dispense with a full professional audit for the year to 30th September, 2017 and to appoint a Reporting Accountant at its discretion. This resolution was proposed by Simon Grant and seconded by Adrian Cavendish, unanimously approved by a show of hands.</p>	

11	Open Forum	
	<p>Questions/Comments were then taken from the Members.</p> <p>John Hansell asked why we paid £895 tax this year on a profit margin which was almost the same as in last year's accounts. Jeremy Rook explained that it was paid on property income against which we no longer had any losses carried forward to offset it; this cannot be offset against trading income.</p> <p>Marguerite Aubrey queried whether Click and Collect could be introduced after the Post Office improvements have been carried out as there will be more space. The Chairman replied that it will be possible for small parcels to be left at the Post Office for villagers to collect. However, the Post Office states that secure storage must be ensured and that space will remain restricted after the improvements.</p> <p>Ideas for improving turnover:</p> <p>Robert Heelis suggested a flyer delivered to every house in the village setting out which items are cheaper in Our Shop than in Waitrose. The Chairman agreed this was worth doing again. He stressed that Barrett's meat is the same price if ordered and collected at Our Shop, as it is at Barrett's in Crewkerne.</p> <p>Joy Benson asked if plants could be sold at Our Shop? She also appreciated the window displays and asked if space could be let the window? She learned that both these have happened in the past and one window is available now. Space is the problem with plants. A small shelf outside, under the window will be considered.</p> <p>Barry Tyler asked if a Loyalty scheme has ever been or could be considered. Andrew Norton replied that this had been tried but failed as the considerable administration could not be handled at a time when staff turnover was high. It is now felt that our profit margin is not sufficient to offer such a scheme. Simon Grant and Jillian (Our Shop Manager) both agreed with Andrew's viewpoint and in response to a question, members present generally indicated that they felt that such a scheme would not increase sales.</p> <p>Salle Wroblewski suggested persuading suppliers to give a loyalty bonus to Our Shop. She also suggested takeaway coffee and tea. The Chairman responded that the latter point has been discussed and rejected before as it would directly compete with Dorothy's Tearoom. The point about loyalty bonus (or discount) from suppliers will be considered further.</p>	
	There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 7.05 pm.	