

Draft Minutes of Walsham le Willows Community Council AGM, 14.06.2018

Chair welcomed all those present, referred to the paperwork that could be found on their seats, and stated that this year's meeting was slightly different to previous years as the positions of Chair and Secretary were being contested. Trustees had agreed that in the interests of the sensitivities of people working together in a small community, voting would be by paper ballot with full scrutiny and oversight by the candidates. Short statements had been supplied by the candidates and were available amongst the papers. He hoped that this openness and transparency in the proceedings would be acceptable to everyone. No objections were raised.

1. **Those present:** Committee members: I Bartholomew, R Barber, I Campbell, M Barber, J Nielsen, T Roberts, R Belson, F Bloomfield, J Bloomfield, K Rotheron, J Hubbard, R Hubbard, J Thomas, B Wills, K Boardley and S White.
There were 62 members of the public present.
2. **Apologies:** M Mansfield, J Clark, A James
3. **Minutes of AGM held on 8.06.2017:** Acceptance was proposed by J Neilson, seconded by J Hubbard, votes for, 16 (19 people present on 8.06.17)
4. **Matters Arising:** None
5. **Chairman's Report:** Attached at the end of this document
6. **Treasurer's Report:** In giving his report, I Bartholomew reported that the audited accounts along with the independent examiner's report to the trustees were available in paper form to all members at the meeting. In giving his report he highlighted the different streams of income for the MVH including hirings, Community Lunches and Coffee Shop, recycling, individual fundraising events and grants totalling £8,162. All this was to be viewed alongside the fact that the hall had been closed for three months for refurbishment works. On 31.12.17 the MVH had a balance of £40,661.41 in hand of which £39,135.79 was in the Building Account. Community Council had income from Observer adverts and donations, Christmas Fayre, Eastern Angles play and grants and donations. On 31.12.17 the Community Council had total funds of £3,123.74. He also highlighted the fact that the rebuild had come in on time and on budget and that we had the final retention monies to pay out by the end of this December. Ian proposed that the accounts for MVH and CC as presented, be formally accepted. This was seconded by R Newell and passed with no dissenters.
7. **Election of Honorary Officers:** I Bartholomew stated that as his position was not being contested, he and K Boardley, Clerk to Parish Council, would manage the voting process. Candidates would be invited to read out their statements. Candidates could oversee in person all aspects of the ballot and count. No questions were raised from the floor.
 - **Chair – Nominations:**
Fred Bloomfield (proposed by Jeannie Bloomfield, seconded Janet Hubbard)
Rob Barber (proposed by Ian Campbell, seconded Trevor Roberts)
Voting by paper ballot was Fred Bloomfield 34, Rob Barber 39. Rob Barber was re-elected as Chair for one final year.
 - **Secretary – Nominations:**
Angela Wiley (proposed by Jeannie Bloomfield, seconded Ralph Hubbard)
Maggie Barber (proposed by Trevor Roberts, seconded Ian Campbell)
Angela Wiley withdrew her nomination prior to a ballot and Maggie Barber was elected unopposed.
 - **Vice Chair – Janet Hubbard (proposed by Jeannie Bloomfield, seconded Ian Bartholomew)**
Shirley White's proposal from the floor of the meeting that Fred Bloomfield be put forward was accepted by the meeting without demur. Thereafter Janet Hubbard withdrew her own nomination and Fred Bloomfield was elected unopposed.

- **Treasurer** – Ian Bartholomew (proposed by Jean Nielsen, seconded Trevor Roberts) was elected unopposed.
- 8. Acceptance of Representatives from 4 Statutory Organisations:**
- **Sports Club** – Shirley White
 - **Parochial Church Council** – Jean Nielsen
 - **Women’s Institute** – Barbara Wills
 - **Parish Council** – Trevor Roberts
- 9. Election of Committee:** Ian Campbell remains on committee in his role as a Trustee. Previous committee members who were willing to remain were R Hubbard, J Hubbard, J Bloomfield, K Rothern, J Thomas and K Boardley. Three new members were put forward from the floor and accepted by the meeting; Sarah Cousins, Angela Wiley and Kevin Nelson.
- 10. Public Open Forum**
- **Phase 5 Building Project** – in answer to a question from the floor of the meeting, a resume was given of the next phase of building work to be undertaken and the hope that we might be successful in a bid for funding via Garfield Weston Foundation.
 - **Committee Meeting Venue** – R Hubbard questioned the suitability of the Six Bells side room as a meeting venue as he found it difficult to hear what was being said. Chair acknowledged again that there were some hearing issues with the current arrangement of the tables, and promised to look at alternatives.
 - **Car Park** – in reply to a question about the use of the car park, it was reiterated that as a general rule, there is no problem with casual parking at the MVH but at times when the car park is needed by hirers of the hall or Bowls Club, it may be necessary to close the facility to casual use as at Gardens Weekend when ‘parkers’ go elsewhere during that time.
- 11. Conclusion and Refreshments** – Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions to the meeting. Refreshments had been served at the beginning of the session.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm.

Chairman’s Report 2018

The Community Council was set up and registered under the Charities Commission of Great Britain in 1968 as a voluntary umbrella organization to promote social, educational and recreational activities in our community.

Initially this was achieved through the creation of The Observer magazine. For its current mix of information, letters and comment we are indebted to Jeannie Bloomfield who, as Editor, draws everything together with unfailing help from Fred. John Hall plays an important role as Advertising Manager and Jan prints the magazine. A team of about 10 or 12 are brought together by Phyllis Lunken to collate and staple the magazine ready for 22 others to deliver free of charge to all 594 households. We are fortunate to share the costs of operating the printing machines in The Widow’s Room in The Causeway with the Church Benefice of Badwell and Walsham and that magazine advertising together with donation envelopes once a year, cover our costs. The format and organization of the whole enterprise was set up by Ian Toulson and myself as far back as 1997. It seems to have served the village well and most of the original team, including many of the delivers, Ken Stockton and myself, continue our involvement to this day.

The other arm of our activity is the one acre site in The Street which includes ownership of the Bowling Green, car park, the Memorial Village Hall with its garden, generously created for us by Joan and Ray Freeborn in 2011. In addition we manage the recycling bins for clothes, paper and glass, dealing with occasional misuse of the facility and the threat of punitive excess charges from the operators.

The main hall reopened in December 2017 following its full insulation, the fitting of double glazed windows together with the provision of new energy efficient heating and lighting systems. The work was finished on time and within budget, leaving only the kitchen and bar server areas as the final phase of work to bring this 1958 building into the 21st century. For this a planning application to Mid Suffolk District Council has been approved and Ian Bartholomew is now putting the finishing touches to an application for grant aid from Garfield Weston Foundation to add to the £8,000 which we have set aside since paying for the work on the main hall.

The use of the hall is good as the diary of our Caretaker and Bookings Officer, Keith Rother, proves. Some thirty loyal cake baking volunteers figure in the rota which I organize to run the twice weekly Coffee Shop. Sadly the Satellite Post Office has not operated since December but my negotiations with Jo Churchill MP, Jessica Fleming our District and County Councillor and Ken Penton, the Post Office External Affairs Manager in London, appear to be bearing fruit, as last week's letter from Ken Penton confirms. Emma Wade, Sarah Rossiter and Jackie Ridding run a very useful and highly professional pre-school parent and toddler group on Wednesdays. Recreational badminton has an evening slot. Shirley White and Jean Neilsen are to be congratulated on the success of the monthly Community Lunch which thrives because of Carol Hubbard's generous catering for 30 to 40 diners. Cinema screenings are led by Ian Bartholomew, Debbie and Frank Watson. Richard Belson has been our linkman with Eastern Angles Touring Theatre and Maggie liaises with Creative Arts East, brought together our re-opening Ceilidh and worked with John Hubbard for the Music Evening. Successful Sale Trail events and Table Top Sales have been organized by Ralph and Janet Hubbard and, at a personal level, I say a huge thank you to Ralph who sets out chairs and tables for every Coffee Shop session and puts them away afterwards as some of our volunteers can no longer take on the heavy lifting of furniture.

Add to all these events, bookings for conferences, family parties, a christening party and a wedding reception and you will appreciate that such good use keeps Keith very busy but also generates income above our considerable running expenses such that after paying for the work here last year, we already have £8,000 in our building fund ready for the next phase of work.

This success is down to the regular commitment of teams of people and individuals working with us, the committee, not for personal gratification but for the good of the community.

Our work to update the hall and its environs began with fundraising in 1997 and saw the crater strewn car park levelled and resurfaced in 2004 for £27,000. Since then the Committee has raised funds and spent a further £250,000 in our phased and carefully planned modernization of this building which is nearing completion. I have heard it said that we should have bulldozed the building to the ground and started again from scratch. How could we have demolished a building raised by volunteers as a memorial to the men and women of the 1939-45 war? Far better I feel, to have modernized and extended it to continue to encompass the aspirations of those early workers and join it to the needs of our modern society.

We do have concerns including:

1. Continuing to push hard to renew the Satellite Post Office facility
2. Trying to ensure no more misuse of our recycling facility for clothes, glass and paper only
3. Finding more ways to encourage use of this excellent village hall facility.

To everyone involved in the production of The Observer, the use and management of the Memorial Village Hall building and lands, including our Bowling Green tenants, and there are a lot of you in total, I say very well done and thank you for your time and efforts on behalf of, and as a very important part of, this community.