

THE MARLOW SOCIETY

Registered Charity 262803

Minutes of 56th Annual General Meeting

Present

Sir Keith Stuart (President), Mr Martin Blunkell (Chairman), Mr Mike Cottrell (Hon. Treasurer), Mr George Lawrence (Hon. Secretary), and forty other Members of the Society, forming a quorum, met at the United Reformed Church, at 8:00pm on Wednesday 4th May 2016.

1 - Chairman's Opening Remarks

Martin Blunkell welcomed members to the 56th AGM. After the official business, the Chairman would provide initial feedback on the Society's parking survey and members would have the opportunity to discuss this and other matters of current interest.

The Chairman gave a tribute to Patricia Burstall BEM. He reflected on the many expressions of loss and appreciation by many members on learning of Patricia's untimely death. He summarised the outstanding contribution that Patricia had made to the whole community in Marlow and nationwide.

The President of the Society, Sir Keith Stuart was invited to take the Chair for the AGM.

2 - Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received by Hon Secretary from: Shirley Arnold, Lyn Cottrell and Michael New.

3 - Minutes of 55th AGM

The minutes had been posted in the hall and placed on the website before the meeting. No changes were suggested from the floor. The motion that the minutes be adopted as a correct record was proposed by Enid Briggs and seconded by Mike Overall. The vote was carried unanimously.

4 - Matters arising

The Executive Committee had notified no outstanding matters to raise and none were raised from the floor.

5 - Chairman's Report

The Chairman's Report had been included in the 2015/16 Annual Review Newsletter, which had been sent to all members three weeks before the meeting. The motion was proposed by Derek Done and seconded by Roy Cadman. The report was unanimously adopted.

6 - Annual Statement of Accounts

Hon Treasurer, Michael Cottrell, reported on the Society's Annual Accounts. Copies of the report detail had been distributed to Members as they arrived.

The Hon Treasurer noted that as the Society's gross income remains less than £25,000 the Charities Act does not require an Independent Examination. However, as in previous years, the Executive Committee had chosen to undertake the voluntary review. After Executive Committee approval, the Chairman and Hon Treasurer had signed-off the Accounts on 30th April 2016.

The results show payments exceeding income by £572 on total receipts of £4,148 in 2015. Subscription income increased to £3,067 (£2,918 in 2014). The Society's change to new accounting software and handover to a new Membership secretary had been completed and the outstanding Gift Aid claim would be submitted shortly.

On 31st December the Society had reserves of £14,804.

Executive committee had considered the Society's annual subscription charges and decided that these are to remain unchanged during 2016/17. The charges have not been increased since 2002.

On behalf of the Society, Hon Treasurer would be writing to Elizabeth Horton to express our thanks for carrying out the examination. Michael is delighted that Elizabeth has indicated her firm, Seymour Taylor, is willing to act as examiners for the financial year 2016.

Hon Treasurer asked for questions on the accounts, of which there were none, before thanking Members for their attention.

Helen Belasco proposed and Alex Collingwood seconded that the Annual Accounts be accepted. This was agreed unanimously.

7 - Election of Officers of the Society

The President advised that the three Officers of the Society had offered themselves for re-election:

Martin BLUNKELL	Chairman
George LAWRENCE	Honorary Secretary
Michael COTTRELL	Honorary Treasurer

No other nominations having been received, Tony Reeve proposed and Alison Rae seconded the re-election of the Officers. The meeting confirmed these appointments.

8 – Election of an Executive Committee

The following six members of the Society have been nominated and have indicated their willingness to serve on Executive Committee and so join unopposed for the next year:

Helen BELASCO
Carole HOLME
Ray ISTED
Mike OVERALL
Keith RAY
Geoff WOOD

Put to a motion proposed by Deirdre Philpott and seconded by Louise Blunkell, the meeting confirmed these appointments.

The President took the opportunity to note that the Executive would welcome other Members of the Society willing to be co-opted to assist with the committee's work.

9 – Appointment of Independent Examiner

Messrs Seymour Taylor of Wycombe are willing to continue as Independent Examiners of the Society's accounts.

George Lawrence proposed and Enid Briggs seconded that Seymour Taylor be invited to examine the 2016 accounts. The motion was agreed unanimously.

10 - Address by the President

The President thanked Carole Holme for taking on the duties of Membership Secretary. Sir Keith thanked Gordon Hopewell for taking responsibility for the organisation of the Society's Walks programme following the sad loss of Patricia Burstall.

Sir Keith reiterated his call from last year that all members consider themselves to be ambassadors for the Society. It was heartening that seventy Members had since joined.

The profile of the Society had been raised by the Chairman and its impact on decision makers was recognised. The President's thanks to Martin were applauded by the Members present.

There being no other items of formal business for the Annual General Meeting, the President passed the chairmanship of the meeting back to the Society's chairman.

Post-AGM Meeting

The Chairman recorded his thanks for the invaluable 'back office' work by Anthony Owen with the database and Kelvin Warne with the website. He welcomed Keith Ray to the Society's executive where his knowledge as trustee of Wycombe Museum would be valuable.

The Chairman then initiated discussions by noting that our Town is changing dramatically and that its success would increasingly be determined by its appeal to our many visitors. The new Local Plan will have fundamental effects for the next twenty years. The excellent news is that the associated audit of the Town's Green Belt had found the large part to be of the highest standard. The Chairman noted that the Newsletter is available to exchange our thoughts.

Discussion centred on the local administrative boundaries - that our Member of Parliament was MP for Beaconsfield - why was Marlow not included in his constituency title? Marlow Bottom is in the Wycombe constituency which seemed anomalous. An appeal was made for stewards for the Town Museum.

After further refreshments, the meeting was closed.

Martin Blunkell
Chairman

George Lawrence
Hon Secretary