

# **THE MARLOW SOCIETY**

Registered Charity 262803

## **Minutes of 58th Annual General Meeting**

### **Present**

Sir Keith Stuart (President), Mr Martin Blunkell (Chairman), Mr Graham Fletcher (Hon. Treasurer), Mr George Lawrence (Hon. Secretary) and around thirty-five other Members of the Society met in Liston Main Hall at 8:00pm on Thursday 3rd May 2018. The Town Mayor, Cllr Jocelyn Towns was present.

### **1 - Chairman's Opening Remarks**

Martin Blunkell welcomed Members to the 58th AGM. After the official business, Members would be addressed by District Council Deputy Leader Cllr Dominic Barnes on the proposed rearrangement of local government in Buckinghamshire; and by Mr Ian Manktelow, Strategic Planning Manager at Wycombe, who would speak on the new Local Plan.

The President of the Society Sir Keith Stuart was invited to take the chair for the formal business of AGM.

### **2 - Apologies**

Apologies had been received by Hon Secretary from: Shirley Arnold, Helen and Barry Belasco, Mike and Lyn Cottrell, Peter and Jo Diplock, Don and Valma Grattan, Guy and Sarah Greenhous, Caryl Hopwood, Sheila Hyde, Alison Rae, Richard Scott, John and Trisha Smith, Jim Thornton.

### **3 - Minutes of 57th AGM**

The minutes of the 2017 AGM had been posted in the room and placed on the website before the meeting. No changes were suggested from the floor and the meeting was pleased to adopt the minutes as a correct record.

### **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 2017/18 'Annual Review' Newsletter, which had been delivered to Members before the meeting.

The meeting was pleased to unanimously adopt the Report.

## **6 - Annual Statement of Accounts**

Hon Treasurer, Graham Fletcher, reported on the Society's Annual Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2017. Copies of the summary accounts had been distributed in the hall with the meeting agenda.

Hon Treasurer registered his thanks to the retired treasurer, Mike Cottrell, for his help and guidance in ensuring a seamless handover. Graham noted that as the Society's gross income is less than £25,000 the Charities Act does not require an independent examination. However, as in previous years, Executive Committee had chosen to undertake the voluntary review. This review had kindly been overseen by Elizabeth Horton at Seymour Taylor Audit Limited. After Executive Committee approval, the Chairman and Hon Treasurer had signed-off the Accounts on 3rd May 2018.

The results for 2017 show that receipts exceeded payments by £437, total receipts amounted to £3,720, a year-on-year decrease of £219. This was however offset by a decrease in payments which at £3283 was £457 less than we recorded in 2016.

Graham highlighted a few areas within the accounts. Subscription income received in 2017 was £2845 which fell back slightly from the ten year high in 2016.

Activities - which includes walks, talks, publications, Heritage Open Day and our new-style Garden Party - saw income of £844 and expenditure of £610. The overall effect being a net receipt of £234. The cost of producing three editions of our Newsletter remained at £567 as in 2016.

Committee payments includes expenses incurred by the officers, executive committee members and by the Local History Group, along with publicity costs. At £1,098, committee payments were down on the previous year by £125.

The Society's finances are sound and as at 31st December 2017 we had reserves of £15,440. the Executive Committee is comfortable with the level of reserves: although not excessive this would give the Society access to a judicious amount of legal advice in furtherance of the Society's objectives, should the need arise.

On behalf of the Members of the Society, Graham will be writing to Elizabeth Horton to express our thanks to her for carrying out the examination of the accounting records. Graham is delighted that Elizabeth has indicated her firm, Seymour Taylor Audit Limited, are willing to act as examiners for the financial year 2018.

Hon Treasurer asked for questions. Two individual comments were made from the floor.

Firstly that the reserve would be insufficient to fight a proposal to close the bridge. The officers agreed, but noted that the Society would be able to make a specific appeal for funds in such circumstances. Secondly that the Society's committee required insurance. In response it was noted that insurance is taken out annually and is an expense in the accounts.

The President proposed that the accounts be accepted. The meeting was pleased to agree this proposal.

## **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
Graham FLETCHER	Honorary Treasurer

No other nominations had been received. The meeting was pleased to confirm these Officers.

## **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

The meeting was pleased to confirm these Committee members.

## **9 – Appointment of Independent Examiner**

Messrs Seymour Taylor of High Wycombe have indicated willingness to continue as Independent Examiners of the Society's accounts. The work is very kindly carried out on a pro bono basis for the Society.

Hon Secretary proposed that Seymour Taylor be invited to examine the 2018 accounts. The meeting was pleased to confirm the proposal.

## **Address by the President**

The President wished to recognise several personal contributions to the success of the Society.

Gordon Hopewell will be missed. He was a leading member of the History Group and generously stood-in to manage the walks programme.

Peter Bailey has retired from the chair at the Local History Group and is now leading the group that presents the Town to visitors through the Society's guided walks.

Keith Ray has taken on the chair at LHG and has arranged the 2018 meetings programme. He has also assumed responsibility for reorganising the Society's extensive archive.

Helen Belasco and Enid Briggs are to be thanked for organising our successful Garden Party. Barrie Lea again kindly allowed Members to enjoy his garden.

The President noted that there is a danger that our thoughts locally are dominated by negatives. However the Society's membership is rising. A good working relationship is maintained with the District and our influence in guiding the decision makers is increasing. Marlow continues to be a very attractive place to live.

The Chairman thanked the President for chairing the formal AGM and introduced the evening's outside speakers.

**Martin Blunkell**  
Chairman

**George Lawrence**  
Hon Secretary