

**FRIENDS OF GREENHILL LIBRARY  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
23 October 2019**

**Present:** Tony Bell, Lucy Booth, Chris Brown (Chair), Laurence Coates, Liz Coates, Patrick Coghlan, Wendy Crookes, Janet Crowther, Margaret Davis, Vera Dyer, Shelley Fox, Ann Hartley, Sam Jacob, Gill Millard, Roy Munn, Judith Oates, Cynthia Russell, Annie Samuel, Gill Stern, Mike Stern, Linda Stevenson, Shelley Walsh, Chris Whitehouse, David Wildgoose.

**Apologies:** Richard Brown, John Child, Gill Coghlan, Lynn Munro, Roger Stevenson, Mike Walters.

**1. Welcome, introduction and apologies**

Chris Brown welcomed members and introduced the board. Apologies were noted.

**2. Minutes of the last AGM on 24 October 2018** were approved.

No matters arising were identified.

**3. Minutes of the special General Meeting on 15 May 2019** were approved.

No matters arising were identified, except for the matter dealt with in item 4.

**4. Resolution** proposed by Chris Brown and seconded by Laurence Coates:

**This Annual General Meeting, held on 23rd Oct. 2019, agrees to amend the Friends of Greenhill Library constitution as follows:**

by adding to section 16 on page 16 "Normally no trustee may hold the same officer post (i.e. as Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary or Treasurer) for more than 6 years consecutively. Where no suitable replacement can be found for an officer post, one additional year may be allowed."

It was said that the Board saw this as a reasonable compromise between the risks of not finding people to fill the officer roles and of opportunities for fresh blood being blocked. It would leave sec. 16 as:

"A trustee may serve for nine consecutive years, i.e. the equivalent of three standard terms; after that they may not be re-elected or reappointed until at least two years have elapsed. Normally no trustee may hold the same officer post (i.e. as Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary or Treasurer) for more than 6 years consecutively. Where no suitable replacement can be found for an officer post, one additional year may be allowed."

Vera Dyer expressed concern about trustees serving for nine consecutive years.

**The resolution was approved, nem.con.**

**5. Trustees' Annual Report.**

Chris said we had just passed the fifth anniversary of the Friends running the library. He commended the report and highlighted some points through his personal SWOT analysis:

**Strengths.**

- 1. **A great building**, which works well as a library and can be used flexibly for events, which have a community impact and can raise funds.
- 2. **A much improved book stock** than 5 years ago, thanks to Ann Hartley and her team.
- 3. **Healthy finances** because of (a) the Council grant (he was grateful for that and the support of Central Library staff), (b) the diverse fundraising shown by a pie chart of

2018-19 income, and (c) many grants for specific purposes obtained by Margaret Davis and Phil Petty.

- 4. **Amazing volunteers** from a range of backgrounds, who worked together to provide a quality service. He gave examples of their contributions. Chris expressed his personal thanks to Laurence Coates and Ann Hartley for all the help they provide.

#### **Weaknesses-a relatively poor outreach to:**

- 1. **Teenagers and young adults;** a liaison role to tackle this was ably filled by Laura Alston.
- 2. **Lowedges.** Only 7% of the users registered on our Koha system were from the estate and only 4% of the books issued were to them.
- 3. **Local Businesses.** Only occasionally did we exploit the good feeling in the community towards the library by enlisting contributions from local businesses.

#### **Opportunities.**

- 1. **To address the weaknesses.**
- 2. **Lowedges Outreach.** Lucy Booth, employed with funding for 2 years to lead the Outreach, was introduced to the meeting. Chris recounted her progress towards opening a sub-branch library in the Community Centre in January. Clive Opie's skilled, productive work with Lowedges Academy was also commended.
- 3. **New Build.** Chris reported on progress towards a Community Room, expanded kitchen and accessible toilet amongst other proposed developments.
- 4. **Sheffield Year of Reading.** We will be encouraged to participate in Sheffield Libraries themed events in 2020, aimed at raising the low level of book issues in the city.

#### **Threats.**

- 1. **Short-Term.** A reliance on a small number of key people, who could be difficult to replace.
- 2. **Medium-Term.** The possibility of over-ambition, e.g. the building project.
- 3. **Long-Term.** Declining library usage nationally. Chris showed a Book Issues graph for Greenhill Library. Though the figures were 3% up in the last year and Yellow Sticker books were now 48% of our issues, the trend was down here and in other libraries. However, a bar-chart adding the 700 or so books, sold from our bookshop and presumably read, made the figures look more encouraging.

#### **Comments and questions.**

- As a community resource we are not solely a library, so a question was asked about overall footfall. Patrick Coghlan said the recorded numbers remained very stable at about 6,000 per month
- Mike Stern asked for data about people using the computers, another important service. Ann Hartley said that, when it was measured, it was about 200 hours p.w. Patrick suggested the figures be put in the next report, if they could be collected routinely.
- Chris concluded with the thought that it was difficult to measure the social impact of all our activities, but how to do it would be considered.

## **6. Presentation of the Annual Accounts.**

David Wildgoose said the accounts, which had been approved by the trustees, showed we had assets of over £100,000 and had achieved a surplus in 2018-19 of nearly £10,000. Whilst the Council grant was likely to reduce he thought it would continue in order to help those associate libraries, which struggled financially. He was confident about our financial health as long as our fundraising was successful, but the cost of the proposed building developments was a concern. We needed to keep a rainy-day fund and might have to match-fund building grants.

The accounts were received.

## **7. Election of Trustees.**

Laurence Coates said that, whilst he had been delighted the Board had gained 5 new members the previous year, the only nomination for election as a trustee now was for Richard Brown to be re-elected; **Richard was proposed by Laurence and seconded by Ann Hartley and elected for 3 years nem. con.**

Laurence said that David Wildgoose was not seeking election, but the Board would be considering re-appointing him for the next year. Chris said that we would be looking for a new treasurer during the year and that he was not sure he would be willing to continue as chair after the next AGM. David said that his work had been lightened significantly by a new volunteer, Stella Crookes, acting as assistant treasurer.

Vera Dyer asked about election of the other trustees. Laurence said he and Chris had been elected in 2017 until 2020 and the others had been elected in 2018 to 2021.

**8. Vote of Thanks.** Ann warmly thanked Chris for all he did for the library, a sentiment reflected in applause.

LNC/AGM 2019 minutes