

FRIENDS OF GREENHILL LIBRARY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

2nd October 2024

Present: Kirsty Atkin (Trustee), Chris Brown (Chair), Gill Coghlan, Ann Cook, David Cooke, Michael Corbishley (Trustee), Jean Coulson, Janet Crowther (Trustee), Dawn Davis (Treasurer), Vera Dyer, Shelley Fox, Angela Fry, Michael Gormanly (Trustee), Ann Hartley (Trustee), Lyndon Henard (Secretary), Lynn Munro, Clive Opie, Louise Pegg, Lynne Raven (Trustee), Linda Stevenson, Roger Stevenson, Lindy Stone (Trustee), Jan Williams, Diana Wood, Steve Wood,

Apologies: Wendy Crookes, Jenny Emby

1. Welcome

Chris Brown opened the meeting and welcomed members.

2. Minutes of the AGM held on 11 October 2023 and Matters Arising

The minutes were proposed by Chris Brown and seconded by Janet Crowther to be considered a true record of the meeting. They were approved by the members.

There were no matters arising.

3. Presentation of the Annual Report

Chris Brown started the meeting reflecting on how he feels the volunteer libraries in Sheffield are demonstrating the way volunteer libraries can thrive and prosper, despite media reports of library usage falling elsewhere in the country.

Chris Brown spoke about how the confidence of the library has grown over the past 10 years. The library has in particular grown in its confidence as follows:

- Brought in our own book stock, to supplement the stock from the council;
- Created a system to manage our own book stock, and also 6 other volunteer libraries in Sheffield are using the system, with one more due to be onboarded shortly;
- Started evening talks, coffee morning, Lego club, coder dojo, poetry evenings, book clubs and so much more;
- Carried out broader events including Village Markets (20 in the past 7 years), 7 Open Gardens and a Scarecrow competition.

The success of a library is more than just books, but also the evidence of the impact that a library has in a community, and the above areas demonstrate this.

Chris Brown drew members attention to the annual report, and the success it spoke about of the past 12 months.

Chris Brown provided a tribute to Laurence Coates, who passed away in the past 12 months having provided a great deal of service to the Library. A plaque will be shortly installed in his memory.

Chris Brown gave an update on Lowedges Library, and in particular the success of the Roald Dahl day, which he noted had been an omission on the written report. He particularly thanked Jan Williams, Michael Gormanly and Carolyn Kirby for their ongoing hard work to maintain service. Chris acknowledged to the meeting that there is currently some uncertainty in the future of Lowedges Library for a variety of reasons.

Dawn Davis drew to the attention of the meeting that there was an error in the written report.

ACTION: Update the report to say that the annual accounts, will be until March 2024 (rather than March 2023).

Vera Dyer noted that there is currently in flight a plan to renew the windows in the office, but also there is a plan to build a Community Room on the outside tarmac

Vera Dyer asked a series of questions about whether now is the right time to complete the window upgrade (given the potential to build a Community Room) and also whether the plans would result in a risk to the amount of natural light in the office. Steve Wood also voiced his concerns about the natural light.

Michael Corbishly suggested that further information is shared with members as part of the development of the proposals, to gain their input. Vera agreed this was a sensible proposal.

4. Presentation of the Annual Accounts

Dawn Davis brought to the attention of member the overall health of the finances during the past year.

Dawn Davis outlined two particular areas:

- The new heat pumps have saved £4000 on utility costs over the past year.

- There was a surplus on the council grant as part of the 2023-2024 accounts, however this would cover an invoice that arrived just after the year end.

Dawn Davis outlined that the library used Chris Woodhead as our new accountant for 2023 - 2024; the prior accountant wasn't able to do the accounts this year.

Dawn Davis informed the meeting that the accountant had reviewed the accounts, and would formally sign them off after they had been presented to the AGM.

Roger Stevenson asked when the council would stop providing grants. Ann Hartley said that whilst the amounts have decreased over time the council had guaranteed that funding would continue for this year and next year at the current rate.

There were some members who had not had chance to review the accounts prior to the meeting. Since the accountants had already reviewed them it was considered that they would be likely to not have any errors, however it was proposed that the meeting approve the accounts, subject to no members raising any errors with the accounts by 9th October 2024.

Dawn proposed the decision and Michael Corbishly seconded it. There were no objections, and so the decision was passed.

5. Election of Independent Examiner for the 2024-2025 Accounts

Dawn Davis proposed that we retain the accountants for next year. Chris Brown seconded it. There were no objections, and the decision was passed.

6. Election of Trustees

Lyndon Henard explained that Chris Brown was stepping down as a trustee (and chair) at this meeting.

Michael Corbishly, Wendy Crookes, Janet Crowther, Angela Fry, Michael Gormanly, Ann Hartley, Lyndon Henard and Clive Opie all stood for election. They each provided a brief rationale as to why they wanted to be a trustee (with Wendy's being read as she had sent her apologies to the meeting).

It was informed that if all trustees were elected, this would take the total number to 12 which is the maximum number allowed on the board.

The members voted, and all voted in favour of all of the trustees being elected to the board. There were no abstentions or objections.

7. AOB

Michael Corbishley said thank you to Chris for all his years of service. Michael celebrated Chris' constant presence in the library, his support on the board meetings, his organisational knowledge and wisdom. It was acknowledged that Chris would be missed on the board, but will continue to be a volunteer at the library.

Vera Dyer asked about whether there could be more transparency in how the board is operating, and the way decisions are being made, and not just the minutes of the meetings. This was particularly important when decisions impacted the volunteers and the way the Library operated. Other volunteers also noted that this could be a concern..Michael Corbishly suggested that where there are decisions that have broader impact, that they could be wider consultation from the volunteers.

Ann Cook highlighted to the meeting that there were some questions from the volunteers of the Lowedges library around the future plans, especially in relation to the location, and Ann Cook asked if additional updates could be shared with the volunteers about these. Jan Williams explained that we had shared all that we already knew with the volunteers. Lyndon Henard and Jan Williams agreed to pick this up to see if there was any more regular updates that could be shared - even if the updates were just that we didn't have any additional information.

Chris Brown closed the meeting.