

WETHERSFIELD CLUB
Old Mill Chase, Wethersfield, Braintree, Essex, CM7 4EB

Minutes of AGM held on Friday 10 May 2019

The meeting was held at the Club, starting at 8.15 pm

There were 40 members present (Quorum 40).

Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous AGM held on Friday 11 May 2018 were distributed to those members present. A move to adopt the minutes was proposed by Mair Godley and seconded by Jack Slight. They were unanimously agreed, and the minutes signed by the Chairman.

Chairman's Report

The Chairman welcomed all members present and thanked them for their attendance saying that without the support of the members the meeting would not go ahead.

The Chairman thanked all Committee members, past and present, for volunteering their time to keep the Club running smoothly, this was much appreciated. The Chairman thanked in particular Julia Broad as Secretary for all the work she undertakes with the taking and distribution of minutes, dealing with correspondence and organising the agendas for all the meetings, as well as working behind the bar.

The Chairman also wished to thank Dave Price as Treasurer, who unfortunately was currently on holiday in Australia so was unable to be at the meeting, he has done an excellent job with the accounts, banking, VAT returns etc. He has prepared a financial report which the Chairman advised he would go through later in the meeting.

The Chairman advised that despite the personal time and effort these roles demand, neither Dave Price nor Julia Broad would be accepting any honorarium payments again this year. All present expressed their thanks and appreciation to them both in the usual way.

The Chairman then moved on to the business end of the Club, being the bar. He expressed his sincere thanks to Stewards Kim Patmore and Matt Suckling for the excellent job they have done this year. He then advised of a management change that was now in place. Kim has decided to step back from the role of bar management and staffing to concentrate on managing hospitality and catering, whilst still being a regular presence behind the bar. The Committee had consulted with them both to establish a new structure, and Matt Suckling has now taken control of all things behind the bar, staffing, membership and entertainment. This has been running since the beginning of April, and the Chairman advised that the Committee were committed to seeing this new structure succeed and would be monitoring and assisting going forward.

The Chairman advised that it could be seen from the Treasurer's report the bar has been a financial success again this year, and he expressed thanks to Kim, Matt, and the rest of the staff, being Sid, Laura, Clare, Justine and Julia for their hard work and support over the year. All present expressed their thanks in the usual way.

The Chairman moved on to progress this year, whereby work has been undertaken to review the Club's identity and constitution. The Club is now known only as the Wethersfield Club, and work has been ongoing to get remove anything that refers to the Club as the Wethersfield Village Hall Men's Club as this was no longer relevant and did not match the identity we were looking for with the open and welcoming Club to all. Bill Norman asked if the bank account details had been updated, the Chairman confirmed that they had.

The Club's Rules/Constitution has also been updated, and various policies, including safeguarding rules, have also been prepared and updated. These would be available on the Club's website in due course.

The Chairman advised that the next project would be the kitchen and following a failure to obtain any grants for the work to be done the Club has now allocated an initial budget of £4,000 to get these works completed. A new floor has recently been fitted, and work is now being done on the electrics and fitting of stainless-steel units to provide the appropriate level of health, safety and hygiene.

Now that the shop is closed there are no outlets available to residents of the Village, or indeed the Parish, for obtaining food. It is hoped once the kitchen is up and running then bar snacks, and possibly food nights, such as curry nights, Italian etc could be organised as part of the Club.

The Chairman advised that the Committee of the Club were fully in support of the CROWS initiative, and fund-raising Bingo Nights were now happening on a monthly basis to help raise funds.

The Chairman then moved on to the new till that has been installed in the Club, advising of the benefit now to Members of a reduction of around 40p per drink, as against the price paid by non-members. He explained the reasoning behind the introduction of the membership cards and hoped that all members would appreciate the benefit of these as time goes on, noting that the discounted prices can only be obtained by presenting the membership card. Monies can be added to the card so that it can be used on a similar basis as a debit card, and discussion is ongoing as to possible reward system based on card use, although this is to be finalised. Matt Suckling advised that photos would be required in due course and asked if members present could send him a photo that could be added to the database as soon as practical.

The Chairman advised that the till will also help with stock control, VAT returns and membership matters, which will streamline matters considerably, whilst also improving takings on an ongoing basis. The Chairman advised that we had been able to maintain prices at their current level, although this would be under continuous review.

The Chairman thanked Matt and the Entertainments Committee for all their efforts over the last year. Costs for entertainment have been lower than in previous years, in part due to the performances by Another Loud Sunday, who use the Club facilities to practice, and then perform at no cost to the Club. The Chairman thanked the band for the support of the Club. There have been other bands performing, all of which have helped provide enjoyable evenings for members and non-members alike. Those present expressed their appreciation in the normal way.

Matters Arising

The Chairman referred to previous minutes and the issue of advertising for the Club. This is being addressed by way of a Facebook page and also a new website specifically for the Club, separate

from the Village website already in place. It is hoped this will help promote the activities of the Club more generally. A newsletter has also been created, the first edition of which was delivered around the Village a couple of weeks ago. The newsletter has been created by Jon Birks, and thanks were expressed to him for all his efforts. The intention is to produce an edition on a quarterly basis, to include items of interest in relation to the Club, but also to Village events. The Chairman asked that if anyone had any ideas for inclusion, they could contact Jon through the Club Facebook page or the website.

The Chairman advised that minutes of previous meetings were available to members for review and would in due course be updated to the website.

The Chairman handed over to the Secretary for her report.

Secretary's Report

The Secretary thanked the Chairman for his report, and again thanked everyone for attending. She echoed the comments of the Chairman, particularly in support of Matt and Kim for all their hard work during the year. In recognition of this and as a token of appreciation she presented Matt and Kim with gift vouchers. All present expressed their appreciation to them both in the usual way.

The Secretary specifically thanked Matt for all his work on events for the Club, and also for events in the Village, in particular the upcoming Live and Loud on the Green on 24 May, and the main Music Festival on 29 June. All these events take a great deal of time and effort and whilst running alongside the Club they also help promote the Club throughout the Village.

The Secretary then moved on to the teams/clubs that run from the Club.

The Ladies Darts Team year was not yet concluded, but Yvonne Benfield provided a written report for the first half of the year whereby the team were 3rd in the Singles, 7th in the Pairs, 5th in the Fours, and 3rd in the Captains competition. Unfortunately, the team lost in the semi-finals of the 5s, but Yvonne reported that they had two ladies in the semi-finals of the singles, which are still to be played.

Yvonne Benfield advised that new players would always be welcome, and if anyone would like to come and play, whatever experience, they should ask Kim for details.

Matt Suckling updated on the performance of the Men's Monday night league. The team had had an excellent season, and overall had received 6 trophies through the season, all of which were in the display cabinet. All present expressed congratulations in the usual way. The summer league is underway, and new players are always welcome.

The Tuesday night pool league is ongoing, although there is definitely room for improvement. There will be a finals night again soon, with the Wednesday night pool league coming to a conclusion.

Mair Godley advised that there is a regular group that now play Scrabble on a Tuesday evening, along with a crib club that also play, again on a Tuesday night. Anyone interested is welcome to turn up and play.

The Chess Club still play on a Wednesday evening, again any new members would be welcome, as the group is currently only 4 in number.

The Secretary advised that the Committee would welcome new members and if anyone was interested in joining to help move the Club forward then they should contact a current member of the Committee.

The Secretary handed back to the Chairman, who would be dealing with the Treasurer's Report.

Treasurer's Report

In the absence of the Treasurer the Chairman read through the Report provided by the Treasurer before he left for Australia, as attached.

The Chairman highlighted various aspects of the figures, in particular the Current Account balance of £7,736.76, and a Reserve Account balance of £33,032.22. He confirmed that a budget of £4,000 has now been allocated for the kitchen and with the reserves in place it is hoped we can complete the work ourselves.

He highlighted the major savings made by the Treasurer in the utility bills for the Club, these had reduced from £9,084.46 to £5,550.73, which was a considerable effort on the part of the Treasurer, and all present expressed their thanks in the usual way.

He confirmed that the honorarium had not been taken by either the Treasurer or Secretary saving the Club £1,300.

He confirmed that the VAT returns had increased, this had been part due to the lack of expenditure where VAT could be reclaimed.

License fees have also increased over the year, but we now have in place the appropriate license to show DVDs on the premises, and a suggestion of establishing some form of film club was being considered.

He confirmed the delay in any decision to raise prices, and also to freeze membership fees. He felt we offered good value to members and also to non-members, noting that the average price of a pint in Essex (CAMRA Oct 2018) was £3.71.

He advised there would be an increase in bar management fees to take account of the increase in the minimum wage for bar staff. He also confirmed there had been no increase in the fees for catering/cleaning for a number of years, and this would also be reflected in increased costs in running the Club.

The Chairman advised that if anyone had any specific questions in relation to the Income and Expenditure statement for the Club then these would be referred to the Treasurer on his return from holiday.

Mair Godley raised a point in relation to the possibility of running a film club and advised that the Trustees of the Village Hall had considered a similar possibility, and that perhaps there could be a discussion/exchange of views between the two to consider the idea.

The Chairman referred to the item of £550 on the accounts marked 'Other'. He advised this had included a donation of £200 to the Parish Council towards the cost of the new oil tank, plus donations to various organisations/charities in relation to funeral donations etc. The accounts were proposed by John Ballentyne, and seconded by Dave Curtis.

Election of Committee

The Chairman moved on to the Election of the Club Committee.

He asked if Julia Broad was still happy to continue as Secretary, she confirmed she was. This appointment was proposed by Jim Dobson and seconded by Dave Nightingale, all present were in agreement.

The Chairman advised that Dave Price had confirmed he would be prepared to continue in the role as Treasurer. This appointment was proposed by Jack Slight and seconded by Bill Norman. All present were in agreement.

The Chairman advised of the further members of the Committee who were all prepared to stand, being Derek Martin, Jon Birks, Jack Slight, Emma Totman, Jo Kattenhorn and Paul Bragg. All present were in favour of the remainder of the existing Committee.

The Chairman advised that Nick Godley had left the Committee earlier in the year, and he wished to thank him for his time and commitment to the Club during his time on the Committee.

The Chairman advised new Committee members would be welcome, and if anyone was interested then please contact an existing Committee member.

Any Other Business

There had been no issues raised by Members ahead of the AGM.

The Chairman opened the floor to Members for any comments.

Blake Temperly asked why the proposed shop could not be sited in the back room of the Club, currently used as the band practice room. The Chairman noted the point but felt that it would not be an ideal position to locate the shop as there would be little passing trade and difficult access. The Chairman asked that if anyone had any further ideas as to a potential site for the shop then the CROWS committee would be interested to hear from them further.

He advised that at present the CROWS Committee are awaiting a meeting with the pre planning team at the Council to consider matters and proposed plans in more detail. The Chairman commented that the Village Hall CIO Trustees were in favour of the siting of the shop at the front of the Village Hall. Blake Temperley asked if the Trustees were fully in favour of the proposal, Mair Godley advised that the majority of the Trustees were in favour of the same.

Jack Slight raised a question in relation to the quorate requirements for the AGM, currently being a figure of 40 people. It was confirmed that had been in place for many years. He felt that perhaps this number should be reduced, noting the difficulties in achieving the require quorate figure at this and previous AGMs.

Matt Suckling confirmed that current membership figure was 169, and members suggested that the number be reduced to 30 or 35. The Chairman advised that he felt the proposal to do the same would need review alongside the constitution and rules as to the number that should be present to ensure all procedures were correctly followed and in place.

There was extensive discussion around the room, with most in favour of the idea of reducing the

quorate number, but agreement that the matter should be reviewed by the Committee and members then contacted by email to seek a decision on any change in this regard. A proposal was effectively put forward to reduce the number to 30, with the proviso that it would be considered in detail and members contacted accordingly to reach a consensus ahead of next year's AGM.

There being no further business the Chairman confirmed a complimentary drink was available for all present and again thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm.