

READING CIVIC SOCIETY

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 1 April 2017 in the Garden Hall, Watlington House, Reading at 2.00 p.m.

Committee Members present: Richard Bennett – Chairman
Alison Bennett – Membership
Fiona Rycraft – Hon. Secretary
Amanda Martin
Adam Sowan
Sean Duggan
Clare Platts
Lynette Edwell

35 other members attended.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from 6 members.

2. MINUTES OF 2016 AGM

The minutes of the previous AGM were agreed.

Matters arising: Richard Bennett had now joined the Watlington House Trust as a voluntary Trustee.

Blue Plaques: work was under way on a plaque to Phoebe Cusden.

Planned events: covered in the Chairman's Report.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2016-2017

The Chairman's report had been circulated and made available on the Society's website. He reported that the society had again renewed its membership of Civic Voice. He listed the events which had taken place during the previous year. He indicated forthcoming events: a visit to **Bath** in July or September. He asked members present to consider the relative merits of the two possible dates, in view of the higher cost of a coach in July, members did not consider the cost difference to be significant. Lynette Edwell was organising a **tour of churches** in the Newbury area on 24 September. **Heritage Open Days:** a series of walks was being planned, and in this connection the Society was working with the Dept. of Typography at Reading University to update Town Walk leaflets it last published in the 1980s.

4. MEMBERSHIP REPORT

There were now 197 members, including 9 honorary life members; 164 copies of the newsletter were sent out.

5. HON. TREASURER'S STATEMENT OF THE ACCOUNTS

The Chairman reviewed the accounts, copies of which were available at the meeting, and which could be viewed on the website. Paul Welch FCA had agreed to continue to examine the accounts. The balance in the bank was currently £8,243. Gift Aid of £600 for the years 2015 and 2016 was received in January and will therefore be shown in the 2017 accounts.

6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The chairman thanked the Committee for work during the year, and appealed for more people to come forward to help with the Society's activities.

Adam Sowan took over the chair for the election of Chairman. Richard Bennett was proposed by Alan Futter and seconded by Sidney Gold, and elected unopposed.

The Chairman proposed that the committee members be re-elected en-bloc; all had indicated their willingness to stand again. They were proposed by Muriel Parsons and seconded by Robert Parsons. Carried unopposed.

7. ELECTION OF EXAMINER OF ACCOUNTS

Thanks were expressed to Paul Welch for examining the accounts; he was willing to continue in this role, and was proposed by Amanda Martin and seconded by Karen Rowland.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) Karen Rowland, member and Chair of the Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee, reported that the first draft of the review of the Russell Street and Castle Hill Conservation Area was now available for consultation: one proposal was the extension of the Conservation Area. The draft document could be seen at The Oasis (corner of Baker Street and Carey Street) on Sunday 9 April 2.30 – 5.00.

b) Arthur Hill Baths: Brian Morley pointed out that a leaflet had been produced by the group trying to save the Baths, a Community Interest Company set up, as a non-profit-making organisation; a final decision on their future would be made the following Monday at the Council meeting.

c) Steve Bale reported on the Bell Tower Community Association: this was not a Conservation Area, but is an area bounded by Caversham Road, the railway and Richfield Avenue valued its close community of mainly Victorian streets. The Group hoped it might be designated as an Area of Special Interest. A street party would be held on 17 June and a walk was planned for 16 or 18 June. It was noted that the site of the old printing works, Cox and Wyman, would be redeveloped.

d) Leaflets were available for members concerning the future of St. Patrick's Hall and about Reading May Tree Festival on 1 May.

The meeting closed at 2.25 p.m.

After the meeting refreshments were served, then Dan Allen of the Victorian Military Society gave a talk on the Battle of Maiwand and the inspiration for the Forbury Lion.