

SAFFRON WALDEN INITIATIVE LIMITED
A Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered Number 03340325

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE COMPANY
HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, SAFFRON WALDEN, ESSEX
AT 7.30PM ON 9th OCTOBER 2017**

The following Members present at the meeting signed the attendance sheet:

Lorraine Chitson, Ann Clarkson, David Corke, Dominic Davey, Patrick Hawke-Smith, Chris Hingston, Ros Hyde, Chris Knight, Barbara Light, David Pearl, Jacqui Portway, Jane Ready, John Ready, Peter Riding, Judith Rowland, Peter Sanders, Simon Sharp, Sue Ullstein, Kenneth Wilson

Apologies for absence were received from the following Members:

Annette Chapman, Brandon Chapman, Anne Hughes, Richard Hughes, Jane Knight, Barbara Leckenby, Jezz Leckenby, Andy Long, Peter Long, Gillian Mulley, Judith Rodden, Donna Sharp, Anthony Skipper, Mark Starte, Cindy Whife, Sue Wiseman, Job Tissot, John Westnedge, Barbara Wilcox, Janice Wrigley

Peter Riding was in the Chair and a quorum was present

1. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 19th October 2016

On the proposal of Simon Sharp and seconded by Chris Hingston it was unanimously agreed that:

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Company held on 19th October 2016 were a correct record and approved for signature by the Chairman.

2. Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising

3. Chairman's Report

Your **Board** met **six** times since the last AGM and the other Directors have been Patrick Hawke-Smith, Chris Hingston, Chris Knight, Jacqui Portway, John Ready and Cindy Whife. We have been very lucky to have Sue Wiseman as the Membership Secretary and Cindy Whife has also been the Treasurer.

Saffron Walden Initiative is registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee which means that we are a Company with no shares and so can be regarded as a **non-profit making organisation**. The Board is elected by the Members. There currently are **187** registered Members - slightly down from 195 last year.

Events organised for **members only** in the past 12 months were: a Talk by Support4Sight; a tour of St Mary's Church; a visit to Finchingfield Guildhall; an evening of Saffron Walden nostalgia with Bruce Munro; a visit to the Saffron Walden Museum new store at Shirehill; a visit to 25-27 Church Street which is being restored; a visit to the Waste Management Park at Waterbeach; a visit to the Uttlesford Foodbank in Shirehill; a visit to a modern, diversified Family Farming Business near to Bury St Edmunds; and a visit to St Mark's College at Audley End.

Events which the Initiative has organised for the **wider community** in the past 12 months were the charity stalls for the Late Night Christmas Shopping last December organised by Patrick Hawke-Smith, the singing and musical entertainments for the Late Night Christmas Shopping weekend organised by Jacqui Portway, a Social Quiz in the King's Arms in January organised by Barbara Wilcox and Ginny Eley, a Music Saturday in June organised by Jacqui Portway which involved 20 individual or group entertainers busking in 11 locations around the centre of Saffron Walden and, finally, the very successful Dance in the Square on August Bank Holiday Saturday which featured the Uncle Funk band organised by Jacqui Portway and myself.

Specifically for the **business community**, Chris Hingston has arranged monthly Saffron Business Friends networking meetings in the King's Arms which have featured a different speaker each time.

At the Maze Festival in August last year a **new permanent maze** was launched next to Swan Meadow Car Park. The land belongs to Uttlesford District Council and the project was planned and co-ordinated by John Ready from the Initiative. In the months after the maze was opened some 90 branches were snapped off the young plants, often unintentionally, by children running around the maze without adequate adult guidance. Also, four of the mini mazes on the planters were damaged or dislodged and had to be removed for installation of additional support brackets. So last December we decided to close the maze for a while in order to give the plants a chance to establish themselves. In the event, despite watering and weeding, the very dry weather of the first six months of this year and extreme heat of May and June caused a lot of stress to the young plants and root systems, leading to

progressive failure. This was followed by heavy rain showers in July and August which accelerated choking weed growth. The Initiative is now looking at alternative options that will give the maze greater long-term resilience, reduce the maintenance workload and enable us to reopen it for children to explore its pathways and interact with the mini-mazes and labyrinths. With the support of local district and town councillors, a bench has been installed alongside the adjacent footpath and it is hoped that this will encourage beneficial adult oversight of the maze when it is re-opened.

This year John Ready has continued to put together **Welcome Packs** for new residents to the area. To date he has distributed around 750 packs through Estate Agents and the Tourist Information Centre. We give them free to the TIC but charge Estate Agents £2.50 per pack to help cover our costs.

The **Listening Bench** in the museum grounds - where you can hear a range of oral history recordings which the Initiative set up in July last year with the help of Essex Record Office - has continued to be popular and the buttons have now been pressed more than 8,000 times. As our contribution to the **Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan**, five Initiative members prepared detailed Heritage and Character Assessment reports for different key areas of the town such as Thaxted Road, Radwinter Road and Little Walden Road. More recently the Initiative has been helping a new member, William Glanville, start monthly **Tea Dances** in the United Reform Church Hall in Abbey Lane.

Looking ahead, the Town Council has asked if we can arrange **working parties** to clean the fingerposts and town entrance signs which the Initiative was instrumental in installing. So, we are looking for a volunteer to co-ordinate the working parties as a Spring Clean in April or May.

I would like to record our thanks to our Accountants, Croucher Needham (Essex) LLP of Market Walk in Saffron Walden who prepare our annual accounts for no charge which is much appreciated. And finally I'd also like to give a vote of thanks to our excellent Board of Directors, Treasurer and Membership Secretary.

4. Financial Statements and Directors' and Accountant' Reports for the year ended 31st March 2017

The meeting received and considered the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2017 and the Directors' and Accountants' reports on those Statements.

On the proposal of Chris Knight and seconded by Dominic Davey it was unanimously resolved:

That the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2017 and the Directors' and Accountants' reports thereon be adopted and approved.

5. Election of Directors

The following Directors elected at the Annual General Meeting in 2016 offered themselves as candidates for re-election: Patrick Hawke-Smith, Christopher Hingston, Chris Knight, Jacqui Portway, John Ready, Peter Riding and Lucinda Whife.

On the proposal of Lorraine Chitson and seconded by Barbara Light it was unanimously agreed:

That the appointment of the candidates for re-election and election be decided by a single resolution, and that Patrick Hawke-Smith, Christopher Hingston, Chris Knight, Jacqui Portway, John Ready, Peter Riding, and Lucinda Whife be elected Directors of the Company to hold office until the next Annual General Meeting.

6. Appointment of Accountants

On the proposal of John Ready and seconded by Sue Ullstein it was unanimously agreed:

That Croucher Needham (Essex) LLP of Market Walk, Saffron Walden be re-appointed accountants of the Company to hold office until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting.

7. Any Other Business

Jacqui Portway thanked all the Initiative members who helped out at this year's Dance in the Square.

The meeting closed at 8.05pm