

Registered Charity No 523984



MINUTES

24th Annual General Meeting

Held in the Dodsworth Room at The Poppleton Centre

Date: Thursday 30 September 2021

Time: 7.30pm

In Attendance

Robin Tomlinson	Chairman
Warwick Spencer	Vice Chairman
David Richardson	Treasurer
John Craven	Trustee
Mick Crome	Trustee
Allen Jones	Trustee
Bob Wood	Trustee
June Hardy	Trustee
Mike Walter	Trustee
Allie Campbell	Trustee
Beth Kirkham	Centre Manager
Stuart Robson	
Barry Moss	
Pete Moss	
Sally Bell-syer	

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Trevor Lawson, Gemma Lawson and Emma Lawer

2. Chairman's Introduction

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that the AGM was usually held in June but because of the pandemic had been postponed until now.

3. Approval of Minutes of 23rd AGM held on 10 September 2020

The Minutes were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman. Proposed Bob Wood, seconded Stuart Robson.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Treasurer's Report

David Richardson (DR) explained that the figures he would be presenting were for the Financial Year ending March 31st 2021.

DR presented the draft accounts for FY to 31st March 2021, and reinforced that Covid 19 had a huge impact throughout our community and affected the services the Centre could offer.

Governmental support in the form of grants and salaries support through the furlough scheme protected the Centre and staff.

Hire income and events were naturally reduced during lockdown but hire demand was high when restrictions eased – which has continued in 2021.

The Centre saw a surplus for the year driven by the Covid support and generous support via donations.

Minimal level of expenditure incurred during the year on capital items with £6k spent on footpath works (2020 : £11k)

Cash and Bank balances at the year end of £83k (2020 : £41k) represent a strong position and has rebuilt levels to meet the Reserves policy

The balance on the remaining Charity Bank loan reduced in the year to £3k and was paid off in Aug 2021.

Release of previously secured grants/donations reduced the balance held to £140k (2020 : £150k). These represent a non cash impact in the income statement.

DR then reported on the situation regarding the Member Clubs.

Covid presented the same significant challenges for the member clubs as it did for the Centre restricting income from activities as well as much need fundraising

Through a combination of cost control and grant support the clubs have each managed close to break even positions and maintained positive cash balances at the year end - £35k

Combined with the Centre's reserves the combined Trust held £118k cash reserves at the year end

DR then reported on the current situation, April to August 2021.

As the Centre prepared for re-opening in April the Trust continued to get support grants from City of York Council and from the furlough scheme.

Venue hire has been strong in the first five months of the year with high levels of demand, including a number of new groups who have moved from other locations.

Net cash generated in the period has been £15k after operating costs, capital spend on the new sports hall curtain and paying off the last remaining Charity Bank loan.

DR then commented on the outlook for the rest of 2021.

Although restrictions are easing and some more normality is returning to everyday life Covid 19 remains with us and cases are still high so we must remain cautious.

Venue hire has started well in 2021 and Beth is driving opportunities to enhance this supporting more community groups and less corporate incomes

Fundraising events are restarting with a successful Scarecrow Trail in September and events planned for the rest of 2021 including a Hallowe'en Trail, the Bonfire and the Supermodels Concert.

Starting from a strong financial base there is cautious optimism that the Centre and its clubs can return to providing community activities once again and enjoy a positive year.

6. Chairman's Report

The Chairman, Robin Tomlinson (RT) then presented his report.

Clearly Covid has played a major part in the life of the Centre over the last financial year.

The Government lockdown directive meant that the Centre closed in Spring 2020 reopening briefly later in the year, then opening again in April 2021 with very limited happening - only child groups or educational groups could initially be admitted and the café was still only able to offer a takeaway service

These closures affected all of the sports clubs in various ways and particularly Sam and Louise who only opened their business in August 2019, so only comparatively recently have they been able to operate to their full capacity. Like many small businesses they had to adapt to stay afloat, and a takeaway pizza service together with

some financial assistance by way of a reduced licence fee during the tough months enabled them to survive.

RT referred to the Treasure's comments in that The Trust itself was fortunate to take advantage of Government financial help for small businesses. This enabled it to keep pace with the normal running costs such as rent, gas and electricity bills, and insurance.

Bob Wood kept the Centre flag flying and managed to deliver an online version of Centrepiece whilst our volunteer deliverers stayed home to avoid the bug.

RT then reported on activity since the Centre has been allowed to re-open.

He gave a taster of what has happened so far in that it has been remarkable the way that bookings have taken off – some, if not all, due to the hard work which Beth has put in prior to the Centre opening its doors again. There are now a record number of bookings, and even a waiting list for space. It is particularly pleasing that most of the people using the Centre now are community groups of one kind or another.

Trustees have for some time been considering how we can cope with this increase in demand for our space and a small development group is looking into a number of options, which RT covered later in his report.

RT then reported on other matters, including the fact that the Trustees have a lease with City of York Council which means that they pay rent of £2,000 per year and in return are supposed to cut grass, hedges and carry out general maintenance of the site. They have done very little of this which needs to be addressed.

The lease dates back to when Poppleton was in Harrogate district and what is now the Poppleton Community Trust was then the Poppleton Sports and Social club. So the whole thing needs updating.

The starting point was to get CYC to bring the site back to a state where it wasn't going to be costly to get the maintenance right. So during the course of a number of meetings and email exchanges CYC agreed to carry out a list of jobs, and to undertake construction of a new footpath on the football field side of the entrance road - the cost of which would be shared equally by the Council and the Trust. On this understanding we agreed to a 99 year lease.

RT reported that as of the date of the meeting none of the jobs have been even started but CYC are pressing ahead with the lease.

The Trust are anxious to go ahead with a new lease which we need for grant applications, but cannot progress without seeing some action by CYC.

During lockdown Trustees also thought that it would be a good idea to record the development of the Centre from the early days of the first meeting organised by Ken Taylor and Norma Fowler to the present day. RT was grateful to John Craven, Bob Wood and numerous others for producing this little book, which is currently available at £2.

RT reported that Trustees decided to explore the possibility of the Trust becoming Carbon Neutral. This turned out to be a bigger issue than first thought and Trustees have spent considerable time seeking advice and guidance. All we can do in the short term is to plant some trees pending future plans.

RT then expressed his thanks to Beth Kirkham and Barry Moss who keep the place running and looking spic and span and reported that the Trust has also recently taken on a part time gardener and already Chris Johnson has made a difference to the appearance of the Centre.

RT recorded his and the Trustees thanks to Pauline Craven who has tended the planters for several years and has decided to stop.

Thanks also to both Parish Councils for their financial support which is invaluable in all Centre projects.

Finally he thanked the Trustees who in their various ways help to ensure that the Poppleton Centre is one of the best community facilities in the whole of Yorkshire.

RT then asked Allen Jones (AJ) to comment on work that he and John Craven (JC) have been doing to consider the impending development of the village.

AJ reported that 1500 new homes are planned to be built on the Civil Service and British Sugar sites, bringing some 4000 new residents to the village. All village facilities and services will be impacted – Shops, Doctors, Schools.

The Centre is currently at 97% capacity with a waiting list from local organisations wanting space. Both Junior Tennis and Junior Football also have waiting lists.

AJ reported that he and JC have started a dialogue with the member and affiliated sports sections who will respond by the end of January on their view of how to go forward.

Trustees are in conversation with architects on how the Centre might develop to accommodate increased demand. The Trust will need grant funding for architect fees, planning applications etc and it is anticipated that bids to the National Lottery will be required for this. A full plan is expected to be ready by Spring 2022.

6. Election of Chair

AJ announced that Robin Tomlinson was prepared to continue as Chairman for a further year if asked to do so and as no other candidates presented themselves Robin was unanimously re-elected as Chair. Proposed by Allen Jones, seconded by Bob Wood.

7. Election of Village Representatives

All the current village representative Trustees offered to stand. The following were re-elected: Tim Bowers, Allie Campbell, John Craven, Mick Chrome, June Hardy, Simon Holmes, Allen Jones, Gemma Lawson, Emma Lawer, Trevor Lawson, David Richardson, Warwick Spencer, Mike Walter and Bob Wood. Proposed by Warwick Spencer, seconded by Mick Crome.

There being no other business the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.30pm

Signed

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Robin Tomlinson, Chairman