

SOMERSHAM COMMUNITY LIBRARY (FOSL)

MINUTES FROM THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Monday 29th JULY 2019, 7:35-8.10pm

Present: Elsa Evans (Chairman), Dawn Cave (Secretary), Julyan Hunter, Denise Calvert, Lesley Minter, Monica Scobey, Hal Bates, Judith Bullard, Margaret Barfoot, Lorraine O'Brien, Lizzy Quinn and Brenda Broadbank

1. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING ADDRESS

The Chairman of Somersham Community Library, Elsa Evans, welcomed attendees.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were presented on behalf of Maureen Cullin, Jean Stanton, Anne Pawson, Paul McCloskey, Lavinia Blackwood, Rob Downing, Barbara Hulme and Pat Oxley.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Chairman briefly summarised the content of the minutes of the previous AGM, copies of which were circulated at the meeting, with copies also being available in both the public folder at the Library and on the Library website. The minutes were unanimously accepted as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman, with the following correction:

Item 6: reference to financial year end should be 31st May.

4. MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman highlighted the following issues from the 2018 AGM minutes:

There was considerable focus a lot on the work that had gone in to the Junior Library and Reading Challenge in 2017/18. There was also a commitment to use the Library more for events and community activities, not just book borrowing.

A number of operational issues had also been reviewed, including a plea for volunteers to help with the Dewey Classification system for Adult Non Fiction. Fortunately Lorraine been fully trained and was now doing this, and could deal with books through the full process. The cataloguing team had also expanded. Lesley

managed Junior Non Fiction, Jean Draper took care of Adult Fiction, and Julyan Hunter took care of Junior Fiction.

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Elsa highlighted that Somersham was a community managed library entirely run by volunteers, and paid tribute to volunteers for their contribution and support. She paid special thanks to Denise, who welcomes and inducts new volunteers. Denise had also initiated a number of social activities such as the successful Sunday Drop-in, and also the new Coffee & Cake Club for volunteers on the first Wednesday morning of the month, which she was running with Margaret.

Many of the Library's activities could not be done without the fund raising team and their efforts, which provides the income to deliver those services. Glenda headed up the Fund Raising team, running activities such as the successful Joint Quiz run jointly with the church.

The Library maintained good partnership arrangements with local schools. Whitehall School pupils (Reception and Years 1 and 2) visit once every half term, with Pam Williams and Julie Robinson leading on this. Pam and Julie work with the school to see what authors and themes the school was exploring that particular term. The Whitehall School pupils found this very enjoyable. The Library had a long term relationship with Somersham School, who came in once a term. This year all pupils from St Helens School in Bluntisham had visited the Library on World Book Day, with the Library hiring a coach to shuttle all classes to and fro. The pupils and teacher had really enjoyed their visit, and this had also boosted membership.

Carrie W has been responsible for creating the marvellous displays in the Library for 14 years, and was looking for assistance in this activity in future.

Special thanks was paid for those involved in the Junior Library, especially the Story Time group - Pam W, Cathy S, Pru L, and Julie R. This was about more than just reading stories to the children, but involved artwork etc. It was also an opportunity for the mothers of young children coming to the village to meet other families.

Fortunately, the information for this year's Reading Challenge had been received earlier, so the Library was better prepared. About 30 children had signed up already, and it was hoped that they would carry through and finish the Challenge. The medal presentation would be in September. The theme this year was Space.

In order to support the Children's Library, the Management team had consciously made a decision to invest in Children's books. These comprised of books from reading lists from the Schools, most of the Reading Challenge books, and also good bargains that Julyan found.

Borrowing of library books had reduced slightly. In 2018/19 it had reduced by 5% compared to 2017/18, but this was not seen as a cause for concern. In addition to book borrowing, the Library was used increasingly by community groups and for other events e.g. the Library hosted an session by Cambridge Water where they offered advice to tenants on new regulations. Age UK had also been using the Library to offer Community Hub sessions on a monthly basis. More recently, the Library had hosted a public engagement event on proposed development in the village. Requests to use the Library were all considered by the Management Board on a case by case basis, to determine if they were useful for the community. There were no hire fees for using the Library, but those organisations were asked for a donation, and were usually quite generous. The aim was not to compete with other facilities in the village.

Judith B advised, as Clerk to the Feoffees Charity, that the Charity donates money for various projects in the village, and urged the Library to approach the Charity for specific project. Elsa thanked Judith, and advised that the Library had benefitted from the generosity of the Feoffees Charity previously.

It was noted that the Somersham Reading Group been using Library for meeting for years, and each member made a small contribution each time it met.

About a third of the Library's total income came from fundraising activities, but because of the healthy Bank Balance, there had been a greater focus on raising the profile of the Library.

Hal had resigned from the Management Board after many years as Vice Chair, and Elsa thanked Hal personally for his involvement and contribution, and his ongoing involvement as a volunteer.

Special thanks was also made to new volunteers who had started within the last year, including Sheila, Henny, Elaine B, Barbara F and Sophie.

6. REPORT FROM TREASURER

Unfortunately the Treasurer was unwell and unable to attend. The accounts for 2018/2019 were not available as there had been a delay from the Auditor. There were no issues with the Accounts, it was just that they had not been fully signed off by the Auditor yet. Those present were requested to agree that as soon as they were available, the Management Committee had a mandate to sign them off. **All present agreed.**

In 2018/2019, expenditure was slightly more than income, but this was a deliberate strategy – being a charity, FOSL cannot have too great a reserve. The expenditure had been on worthwhile activities such as Children's book buying, and the Management Board were still comfortable with the financial situation.

7. RETIREMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTORS

In accordance with the retirement cycle in the Constitution, one-third of directors have to resign each year. This year there were 12 Members of the Management Board. Hal had resigned during the year, and Rob had been co-opted. Elsa, Barbara and Pat would retire, being the three members who were longest serving, along with Rob. Pat and Barbara were not present but had confirmed that they were happy to be re-elected. Along with Rob, all four were unanimously reappointed.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was a question as to whether those using the library, especially commercial organisations, were given an indication on how much they might offer as a donation. Elsa advised that they were, and a donation of between £25-50 was suggested for a commercial organisation, whereas charities or community based organisations using the Library were not expected to donate as much.

Noting the reference in the 2018 AGM minutes to replacement windows, a Member asked whether any progress had been made on this. Elsa explained that previously, £10,000 had been set aside for the boiler replacement. As the new heating system did not cost as much as anticipated, the reserve was now being set aside for the window replacement, which was expected to be the next big maintenance job. No further progress had been made on this though as the state of the windows was still satisfactory. Judith advised that the Feoffees Charity were happy to contribute.

It was observed that for the Reading Challenge in particular, some volunteers were not comfortable with dealing with large numbers of children and their carers, and had little training on this. It was noted that last year's Reading Challenge had been poorly organised, in that the information had not been sent to libraries until after the Reading Challenge had started. Fortunately, for 2019, more information had been available in advance. It was suggested that dealing with children and their families was part of the library experience which volunteers should expect. Denise had sent out the information about the Reading Challenge to volunteers numerous times, and anyone who had not received the information, or who was unsure on anything, should ask Denise. It was noted that Lizzy's email was probably not up to date, and it was agreed to follow up on this. **Action required.**

Difficulties with the Intruder Alarm had been a particular issue recently, and a few companies had been invited to provide quotations for the provision of a new Intruder Alarm and ongoing maintenance. The Management Board had opted for

Libra to replace the system, which included replacing the keypad and regular servicing. Once that had been completed, all volunteers would be informed.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance, and the meeting closed at 8.10pm.