

FRIENDS OF OIGNIES TWINNING ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF AGM held Saturday 14 October 2017

Present: Derek Thomas, Anne Johnson, Susan Quas-Cohen, Ian Hamilton, Chris Clegg & Members

1. Notice of Meeting: Sent on 19 September 2017

2. Apologies: Karen Done, Ian Calvert and Sue Hodgkinson. Matthew Stone (Mayor & FoO President), Paul Lewis, C&M Kitchen, S&J Dakin, T&E Fell, J&S Jacobs, J&V Marriot, A&J Collier, A&Y Ribot-Smith.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting: The Minutes and Treasurer's Report of meeting on 16 October 2016 were read and approved.

4. Chair's Report: Derek began by welcoming everyone and thanking them for taking the time to come this evening. It has been a busy year with its share of highs and lows. We were greatly saddened by the passing of Syd Neale early in the year, and Jane McGrother on 24 March. We also received news from Oignies of the sudden death of Jean-Marie Korba a week after their visit to Buxton.

On a happier note, we welcome Emily Johnson born on 3 March to Jenny and Luke, and in Oignies Nathan Cieslak was born on 2 July to Suzanne and Eric.

We were also pleased to welcome new members Helen, Peter and Georgina Bloomfield, Andrew and Jane Collier and the Ribot-Smith family Alan, Yvette, Nadia and Sophia. Also a new member this evening, Sarah-May Matthews.

Derek thanked the Committee for their fantastic support during the year. They, together with the enthusiasm of new committee members and co-opted member helpers throughout the year meant that not only were we able to fully fund the weekend programme for the visitors but also to partially subsidise the costs for our hosting members.

The twinning weekend in Buxton, although not without incident behind the scenes, proved a tremendous success and was immensely appreciated by the visitors whose overall comment was that we had "raised the bar".

The Committee work hard to put on fundraising events throughout the year, which are crucial to keeping the Association's account healthy. A special note of thanks was made to Sue Quas-Cohen and Karen Done who oversaw the revamping of the Dickensian Market stall admired by all last year. The Dickensian Christmas Market will be held on 25 November in the Pavilion Marquee and this year's stall will have a more "Christmassy" theme with the production of festive craft items. Can we please ask for your support either by donating suitable gifts or by helping on the day. Please contact a Committee member if you feel able to help.

Looking forward, the visit to Oignies next year is 25-29 May and will be the 50th Anniversary of the Twinning. We will be setting aside funds to support this special event and we have jointly agreed with the French Committee to commission a memorial to remember the foundations of the Twinning and past members of both Associations.

Derek gave special thanks to new Committee member Chris Clegg for the creation and launch of our fabulous new website. Articles and ideas will be gratefully received.

He thanked each member of the Committee for their efforts in keeping the Association going for another year, including Karen Done, Ian Calvert (Perce) and Sue Hodgkinson who couldn't be here tonight. Also special thanks to Anne Johnson who is stepping down as Treasurer after 22 years, although she will still remain on the Committee. Anne was presented with a bouquet of flowers.

5. Treasurer's Report: Anne presented the Balance Sheet for 2016/17 showing a good balance in hand of £3552.41.

It was unanimously agreed to adopt the Balance Sheet.

Thanks are to be conveyed to Peter Cochrane for auditing of the accounts.

Anne reminded Members that the £15 subscriptions are now due and she would be happy to receive any tonight.

There were no questions.

At this point the Committee stood down pending the election of a new Committee.

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6. Election of Scrutineers: The meeting agreed that none were needed.

7. Election of Officers: **President: His Worship The Mayor**

Chair: Derek Thomas was nominated and seconded. No other nominations and elected unopposed.

Vice Chair: Ian Hamilton was nominated and seconded. No other nominations and elected unopposed.

Secretary: Sue Quas-Cohen was nominated and seconded. No other nominations and elected unopposed.

Treasurer: Peter Bloomfield was nominated and seconded. No other nominations and elected unopposed.

8. Election of Committee: Anne Johnson, Ian Calvert, Karen Done, Sue Hodgkinson and Chris Clegg were proposed and duly elected. Chris Clegg will take on the role of **Publicity Officer**.

No further nominations for Officers had been received.

The newly elected Chair and Committee reconvened.

9. Proposal to Increase Annual Subscription:

Derek stated that the annual subs had remained constant at £15 ph for some time, whilst the two-year cost to the Association was now £100 ph. The balance being from donations and fundraising. Whilst acknowledging that not all members were fully acting, it was now felt appropriate to increase subscriptions to £20 ph, as from September 2018.

There were no questions and the vote was carried unanimously by all those present.

10. Proposal to waive the requirement of Auditor:

Thanks were given to Peter Cochran who is retiring after many years as Auditor. A 'thankyou' present will be sent to him.

Whilst it is not necessary to maintain the post of Auditor it is felt essential that the accounts are independently scrutinised. It is proposed therefore that the Treasurer will continue to maintain the books on a daily basis and Peter Quas-Cohen, a Chartered Accountant, will scrutinise and prepare the annual accounts, subject to a vote. If accepted then the Constitution will be changed to reflect this.

There were no questions and all present were in favour. The proposal was carried.

11. AOB: None received.

Derek thanked all present for their attendance and involvement in the meeting.

Graham Oakley thanked the Chair and Committee for all their hard work over the past year.

Meeting Closed