



THE KNOWLE SOCIETY

(A Company limited by guarantee)

An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) of the Knowle Society (KSoc) members on Monday 16th June 2014 in Knowle Village Hall at 8.00 p.m.

Trustee Directors present: Leighton Jones (LJ) (Chairman), Martin Warr (MW), David Watson (DW), David Bower (DB), Kate Stables (KS), Bill Bohanna (BB), Charles Robinson (CR).

Leighton Jones (Chairman) welcomed and thanked the 42 members attending the EGM. LJ explained that as far as the EGM is concerned, only members may speak and vote. LJ formally opened the EGM to consider the motion proposed by the TDs to raise the single and joint membership subscriptions by £2 each per year.

Before putting the motions forward, LJ explained the current situation of the Knowle Society:

- He noted the sterling efforts of MW to increase the membership over the last period which has meant we have not needed to raise the subscriptions accordingly.
- The Society's ongoing costs (newsletter, meetings etc.) have increased and the society has purposefully taken on these costs. In addition, one off costs such as the Diamond Jubilee celebrations, initial work for the registration of green spaces as village greens and launching the neighbourhood plan to enable us to influence the development in Knowle over the next 15 years have been funded by the Society. The sum of all these factors means that the society must increase its income significantly over the coming years in order to retain cash reserves.
- The Society is always looking at ways to reduce costs, and we will continue to do so. However, our cash reserves have been reducing over the last several years and have now reached the stage where we need to begin to build them up again.

Before LJ put forward the motion, the attending members were asked for any questions:

- Question raised that there are not many attending, and questioned if we are in a quorum? LJ confirmed that yes, we need over 30 for a quorum; MW confirmed 42 members attending.
- LJ appealed for volunteer tellers – Dave Pinwell and Sandra Lea were appointed.
- LJ put forward the Motion proposed by Knowle Society TDs: that subscription for single membership is raised by £2 to be £5 per annum and that joint membership is raised by £2 to be £7 per annum.
 - David Watson seconded the motion.
- At this point, LJ handed over the floor to Martin Warr who had indicated he wished to make an amendment to the motion. MW stated that the proposed increases equated to a 66% and 42% increase respectively. MW was concerned that the rises will have a detrimental effect on the overall membership numbers. MW explained that he has worked hard to recruit new members; and believes it more important to have additional members than raise the subscription rates.

- MW proposed that a £1 increase per subscription type would be more appropriate.
 - Robert Brooke - seconded the amended motion. RB further presented that he has been a K Soc member for more than 30 years, resident for 74 years, has relationship to the Chamberlain family and has been asked to represent 19 residents of Berrow cottage homes. He feels that the increase is too large (at 66%) but would support the increase by £1 as proposed by MW. RB considered that if most current members renewed, this would represent around £2500 and could be reviewed again in 2 years. RB feels that if too many of the current members consider that the increase is too large, K Soc will lose members. In conclusion, RB supports MW's amendment.

LJ explained the voting procedure, - the amended motion as proposed will be voted on first. The primary motion, as proposed by Leighton Jones will be voted on thereafter if the amendment failed to be carried. He opened the discussion to the floor.

Sandra Lea stated the last time the subs were increased was 10 years ago when she was Treasurer. If members wanted to keep Knowle as we would wish, then funds were needed to allow the Trustees to try to do so, and we should trust the Trustees to spend the extra funds wisely. She also suggested that if any members would struggle to pay the increase then help might be considered.

Bill Bohanna stated that he supported the amendment. BB considered that the Society must live within its means and therefore we may need to look at making cuts in other areas, or not supporting certain projects.

Val Murray stated that she knows of no other organisation that has such low subscriptions.

Mrs Watson acknowledged that the £2 increase is less than 10p per week and that, with additional benefits to the Society, the majority of people would not have an issue with the increase.

Robert Holgate voiced that we need to consider that the village greens project is being catered for – the deciding factor would be whether members want that, or not?

DW (the Society's Treasurer) – pointed out that the reserves have depleted significantly over the last 4 years and that an allowance of 10% (350 members) for potential losing members (in light of the proposed increases being approved) has been included in the calculations.

Motions

- LJ called the vote on the Amendment that the subs should rise by £1 - from £3 to £4 for Single Membership and £5 to £6 for Joint Membership: 8 voted in favour; 30 against the amendment.
- LJ called the vote on the Motion that subs should be increased by £2 – from £3 to £5 for Single membership and £5 to £7 for Joint Membership: 30 voted in favour; 9 against. LJ declared the motion carried.

LJ thanked the members for attending and closed the meeting.