

THE KNOWLE SOCIETY

(a company limited by guarantee)

Minutes of the 46th Annual General Meeting of the Society held on Monday 24th November 2008, in the Village Hall commencing at 8 pm.

1. Present

Gary Masters (in the Chair) and 61 other members.

2. Apologies

These were received from a further 7 members.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the AGM held on 26th November 2007 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

4. Chairman's Report

A copy of the Chairman's Report is attached to these Minutes. He referred back to the last Newsletter in which he had reported on the activities of the Society, and those of Trustee Directors. He welcomed the introduction of the Corporate class of membership and informed all present of the progress being made with the memorial to Dr Bower, it being intended to be incorporated within the proposed redevelopment of the Station Road toilet block which was a community project involving Knowle & Dorridge Rotary, Knowle traders and Solihull MBC and known as the Knowle Green Community Project. It is an on-going example of the Society's increased involvement in the Third Sector in accord with a Government white paper recommending such activities by voluntary and representative organisations of the community. All committees are very active and all Trustee Directors were present and available to discuss anything that Members present wished to discuss as appropriate. Particular thanks were made to Councillors as being available and able to attend meetings, Council officers being alongside and extremely supportive but no names were mentioned as there were just so many involved over the past 12 months. The Chairman gave thanks to his wife for her being so supportive during the year and thanks were given to all Members for their superb support and which hopefully will continue as without them there would be no Knowle Society.

5. Treasurer's Report and receiving of Accounts for the year ended 30th September 2008

Sandra Lea presented the Report & Accounts for the year ended 30th September 2008. They had been prepared in the required format thereby meeting the requirements of the Companies Acts and charity law. She outlined some of the major features including comparison with the previous year. Income from subscriptions and tax recovered had again increased and expenditure had been contained. The result for the period was a surplus of £2,495 (slightly down on 2007) and total Reserves for the Society (including the Eva Wootton Fund) of £17,606. Whilst the balance appeared large there were a number of items of expenditure which would shortly have to be met. The Accounts were formally signed off by Caroline Stewart on 17 November. The Members unanimously agreed to receive the Report and Accounts.

The new class of Corporate membership was discussed and Members were informed that this was to enable a firm to be a member in its own right. Each Corporate membership however, only carries one vote. The Charity Commissioners and other similar 'amenity' organisations together with the Civic Trust strongly recommend that an additional body of membership should be open to local firms and the Society's Constitution allows such category to be created. Accordingly it was recommended by Trustee Directors that the class of membership be adopted by the Society and its subscription should be set at five times the family membership rate which for the following year, would be £25. Comments from Members included that this was good value and a suggestion from the floor was that if membership was being sought from firms outside Knowle, their membership rate should be increased. The Members unanimously agreed to the proposals.

6. Election of Officers for the ensuing year

The following names had been duly proposed and seconded by Members:

Chairman	Peter Ewin
Deputy Chairman	Leighton Jones

Hon. Secretary	Andrew Marston
Hon. Treasurer	Peter Johnson

No other nominations were received and these Officers were elected to the positions shown for the next 12 months. They would also serve as ex-officio Trustee Directors.

7. Election of Trustee Directors

Two members, having completed their term and were willing to continue as Trustee Directors, had been duly proposed and seconded to serve by Members. They were:-David Bower and Gary Masters. In addition, two members had been duly proposed and seconded to serve as Trustee Directors. They were:- Janet Erzen and Charles Robinson.

No other nominations were received and as this number was less than the number of vacancies, they were declared elected. Each of these four members so elected would serve for three years.

8. Appointment of Independent Examiner

The Chairman announced that Caroline Stewart FCA had decided to retire as Independent Examiner of the Society's accounts and her work, being much appreciated, had been recognised by the Trustee Directors by sending her a card and a display of flowers.

Peter Johnson, as the new Hon Treasurer, first thanked Members for being elected and then advised the meeting that although the work of Independent Examiner had been carried out in the past free of charge, with the growth in the Society and two sets of requirements now have to be met to satisfy both the Charity Commissioners and as a limited company, it had been considered by the Trustee Directors that a more formal approach should be adopted in the future. Professional advisors are important to ensure the Society keeps abreast of new legislation from both aspects and a professional firm should be appointed for which payment should be made of their services provided.

The Dorridge firm of West & Co has agreed to act as Independent Examiners and their office can be used as the Society's Registered Office. Their one year appointment includes their check of the year's accounts, sign them off and attend the AGM to report to Members. Their fee has been negotiated down to a maximum of £400 plus VAT. The Proposal for their appointment being put to the meeting was unanimously agreed by the Members.

9. Any Other Business

No items were raised under this heading and the Chairman closed this part of the meeting at 8.48pm.

Notes on Notices given at the end of the AGM

The Chairman advised Members that a public open meeting of the NHS Care Trust has been arranged for the Chief Executive, Sally Burton, to address the community of their current policy and proposals for the future of the provision of healthcare in Knowle. The venue will be the Village Hall and the date, expected to be in February, will be announced shortly.

A long-serving member of the Society and noting in particular her unstinting service with the local history centre meant that Elizabeth Stanley received a special note of thanks from the retiring Chairman assisted by new Chairman Peter Ewin and was recognised with a small presentation.

In addition, grateful thanks were given with small presentations being made by the retiring Chairman, assisted by new Chairman Peter Ewin, to retiring Trustee Directors Sandra Lea, Colin Smith, Derek Mellor and Peter Ellis. In turn Peter Ewin gave thanks for his time and effort spent as Chairman over the past two years and made a small presentation to Gary Masters who retired this year although he remains as a Trustee Director.

Finally, with Leighton Jones being elected to three years as vice-chairman which precedes a three year term as the next Chairman and Derek Mellor retiring as Local History Group Chairman, the new Trustee Directors were introduced to Members as Charles Robinson taking over from Leighton as chairman of the Meetings and Social sub-committee and Janet Erzen taking over as Chairman of the Local History Centre.

As no other matters were raised the Chairman thanked those attending and the meeting finished at 9.15pm.