

The Cookham Society

(Registered Charity No: 257224)

Minutes of the 53rd AGM of The Cookham Society held at the CIM at 7.30pm on Thursday the 5th March 2020.

Present: 28 Cookham Society members including 10 Committee members: Mr J Bowley (JB), Mr T Denniford (TD), Mr M Chapman (MC), Mr O Wardell Yerburgh (OW), Mrs L Penston (LP), Mr D Scarff (DS), Mr M Springate (MS), Mr B Perry (BP), Mr J Kitching (JK) and Mr B Weare (BW). In total, including the committee members, the attendees are analyzed as follows:

Cookham Village attendees: 3

Cookham Rise attendees: 11

Cookham Dean attendees: 9

Maidenhead attendees: 5

Prior to the formal business of the meeting there was a talk by Paul Seddon entitled "Cookham from the Ice Age to the Domesday Book."

1. Notice convening the meeting

The chairman, TD, opened the meeting, welcoming those present and issued an invitation to all to join the committee members for refreshments at the end of the meeting.

The notice convening this meeting had been dispatched in early February 2020 by electronic mail to all members. The remainder had been sent by post. The details of the meeting had also been published on the Cookham.com website, and the Society's Facebook Page. TD asked if this could be taken as read. This was accepted.

2. Apologies for absence

Mrs L Peters, Mr N Singeisen.

3. Minutes of the 52nd AGM

The minutes were unanimously approved by the meeting as a true record and were duly signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Reports of the Officers

Chairman: TD Gave a resume of the Society's activities for the year, emphasizing the importance of our role as Planning scrutineers. He noted that the Society had decided not to award a design prize this year, as no entry compliant with the principles of the VDS had been received.

Membership: OW reported that the Society's membership stood at 1,262 people and the move to put everyone on a yearly standing order membership continued.

It was gratifying to note that many members had opted to make their standing orders for a greater sum than the basic membership fee each year.

Planning: DS reported that there had been 209 planning applications in our area, a quarter of which were for tree work. The Society had submitted written representations on 29 applications and on 2 appeals and had spoken at three Development Control Panel meetings. The Society continued to remain particularly vigilant against threats to Green Belt and Conservation areas. The Society had made representations to the BLP proposal and had been frustrated by the lack of progress. The Society had taken an active role in the development of a management plan for Battlemead Common and continued to sit on various other bodies representing Marsh Meadow, rail passengers, residents below the flight path, the NT and Open Space.

Secretary: The Society held 7 committee meetings in 2019 and one AGM. A Cookham-wide newsletter was sent out in January and a members-only one in May. The Society attended Cookham Dean Fete in September and the Society Facebook page now had 375 members.

6. Trustees' Reports and the Accounts for 2019

Accounts:

MC said that copies of the accounts had been distributed. He said that there had been no unusual and significant outlays, that costs had been kept under control and that he continued to be concerned about the very high costs of mailing. He noted that on the 31st December the Society's bank accounts stood at £53,900, a similar sum to 2018. The outlook for 2020 looked stable and the Society continued to hold funds of £1,364 on a trustee basis for two village interest groups. Efforts continued to reduce the level of subscription arrears. Reserves were being kept between £50,000 and £60,000, a level considered suitable as a contingency fund, if a major planning issue arose.

Planning:

The Society continued to monitor planning applications and the BLP continues to be delayed. The Society has decided not to make a Design Award this year.

Environment:

The Society had made representations about Battlemead Common and were able to secure the creation of a new permissive path on farmland south of Cookham.

Events and Publicity:

The Society had appeared at Cookham Dean Fete, published two newsletters and the website and Facebook pages are kept up to date.

The accounts were proposed for adoption by Jim Peck and seconded by BW. It was approved unanimously.

TD proposed that Andrew Bridgen, of Bridgens, Watkins and Wainwright examine the accounts. It was seconded by Christine Denniford and approved unanimously.

There were no additional questions.

7. Election of Officers and Committee for the coming year

Chairman: TD was proposed by BW, seconded by LP and duly elected.

Officers: Vice-Chair and Secretary: LP was proposed by JB, seconded by DS;

Treasurer: MC was proposed by LP, seconded by JB;

Membership Secretary: OW was proposed by RS and seconded by TD. All three were duly elected en-bloc.

Remaining committee members: FB, EP, DS, BP, BW, were proposed en-bloc and unanimously re-elected.

8. Election of President

JB was proposed for re-election by LP and seconded by BW. He was elected unanimously.

9. Rule C

No business proposed for discussion.

10.AOB

Mike Copland asked what the Society was doing to combat climate change. DS said that although this was really a national issue, the Society did what it could to combat flooding and to support public transport.

Jim Peck asked if the Society still sat on the MMPA and he was assured that was the case.

John Zealley asked if the Society were mindful of John Lewis's stewardship of local land. DS said that John Lewis had been helpful over flooding, providing staff for the Causeway and had opened up membership to the Odney Club to some residents of the village. TD said the Society would continue to monitor the John Lewis field in particular.

There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 8.50pm.

LP 20.3.20