

**MINUTES OF THE SAFFRON WALDEN DISTRICT SCOUT COUNCIL
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD ON 8 July 2020**

(SPECIAL NOTE: All face-to-face meetings were suspended during the COVID-19 emergency, so this year's AGM was held via video platform).

The meeting was opened at 19:30 with Stuart Molloy (Chair) welcoming all (31) to the AGM with special mention made of Paul Stennett (Essex County Chair) and Heather Asker (Saffron Walden Town Mayor).

1. Apologies for absence

Kemi Badenoch (MP), Bob Bye (Deputy County Commissioner), Colin Day (Uttlesford Council Cabinet Member for Communities, Youth and Community Safety), Andrew Taylor, Amanda Crabb, Eleanor Bailey.

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 9th July 2019 & Matters Arising

The AGM 2019 minutes (originally sent out two weeks after the AGM and subsequently four weeks before this AGM) were approved with no matters arising. (For: 16 / Against: 0)

3. Presentation of the Annual Report

The Chair, Stuart Molloy, presented the 2019-20 Annual Report (copy on website). He stated that, for the early part of the year, Scouting was delivering the best for its young members, but the subsequent chaotic and stressful start to 2020 had affected us all. On behalf of the Trustees for the Saffron Walden District Scouts, he thanked the Scouting Leaders and their assistants for their hard work in providing the operational structure to keep Scouting going and that, even with the socially distanced programs, he was hearing positive comments from parents, etc..

Behind the scenes, each Group Committee, its Trustees, have been supporting their leaders to oversee Scout finances and Scout wellbeing. Finances are an essential point of discussion for each set of Group Trustees, who decide on their own budgets and spending, and all appeared to be in good order.

Stuart said that we do not have a crystal ball for this year, but hopes that Scouting continues to give our young people purpose and, importantly, put a smile on their faces!

4. Presentation of the 2019-20 Financial Report

The Treasurer, Neil Storey, presented the 2019-20 Annual Financial Report. He stated that the District Accounts are an amalgamation of the main District accounts and those of three Explorer Units, Scout Network and the District Headquarters Building Account.

The Accounts have been independently examined and these have been made available on the website along with the Examiner's Report.

In summary, he mentioned:

- Net outflow of £4,592 resulting in closing balances of £60,230
- Timing differences on income and expenditure impacting the net in/outflow
- Target reserves of £49,000 resulting in an Excess Balance of £11,230
- (The 2020/21 budget has been set with the intention of having a further net outflow to reduce the above excess balance)
- Reserved Funds (included above) are £7,472
- Gift Aid receipts of £2,741 (for 2018-2020) have been received
- Accounts are now managed in QuickBooks
- The District bank accounts have been moved from Barclays to CAFBank

5. Approval of District Chair

The meeting approved the DC nomination of Stuart Molloy as District Chair. (For: 18 / Against: 0)

6. Election of District Secretary

The meeting elected Peter Wright as District Secretary. (For: 18 / Against: 0)

7. Election of District Treasurer

The meeting elected Neil Storey as District Treasurer. (For: 18 / Against: 0)

8. Nominations and voting for the elected members of the District Executive Committee.

The meeting re-elected Robert Flynn as a member of the District Executive. (For: 18 / Against: 0)

The meeting re-elected Neil Pottrill as a member of the District Executive. (For: 18 / Against: 0)

The meeting elected Kevin Rule as a member of the District Executive. (For: 18 / Against: 0)

9. Nominations for the District Representative to the County Scout Council.

No nominations were received

10. Appointment and Approval of Scrutineer for 2020-21.

Paul Horrigan was nominated by the Treasurer as Scrutineer for 2020-21; this was approved by the meeting. (For: 18 / Against: 0)

11. Explorer Scout Report

Simon Chivers, District Explorer Scout Commissioner, gave a brief summary of the Explorer Scouts activities over the year before the (Covid-19) lockdown. He stated that, as Explorers are very much face-to-face and activity based Units, it had been challenging for them to adapt to virtual meetings. He thanked the Explorer leadership team for their work in facilitating a stimulating youth-led program.

(See Annual Report for detail)

12. District Commissioner's Report

Mark Benfold, District Commissioner, gave a brief summary of the year's activities. He reported that the District was growing strongly and that we had record numbers of young people in Scouting. Last year there were over 1400 nights spent away from home by our young people with five Explorers attending the World Scout Jamboree in the USA in the summer of 2019, joining around 50,000 others from around the world.

2020 has seen some significant changes with the impact of the global pandemic. Our leaders have been amazingly flexible in their ideas and we have continued to see Scouting delivered through video based virtual meetings, Facebook challenges, activity based newsletters and other remote activities.

Mark thanked the team of leaders who had created and delivered the recent WILD Virtual District Camp. (A short slide show and video from the camp had been shown prior to the start of the AGM).

Finally, he gave thanks to the many external bodies that have supported us financially (Masons, Round Table and Uttlesford) and to all of the leaders, Senior Team, District Executive and County for their fantastic support over this challenging year.

(See Annual Report for detail)

13. Any other business

- **UDC Grant**

The Treasurer announced that this year's (2020-21) budget is being re-appraised with the addition of a £10,000 COVID-19 "Retail, hospitality and leisure" grant being received from Uttlesford District Council in May 2020 in respect of the District Headquarters Building (this was funded by the Government) due to the major effect of the pandemic on current activities:

- Some of the Grant has been allocated to cover vacancy costs (loss of rental income), running costs and future maintenance of the unoccupied HQ building.
- The remaining balance of the Grant is unallocated and it is intended for use to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on Scouting throughout the District.

- **What is the increased expenditure to reduce (reserves) excess likely to be spent on next year and where does 49k as reserve come from?**

Excess used to spend on district activities (e.g. WILD Jam Virtual District Camp) and help shield Groups from some of the National Capitation rises in the pipeline. (Refer to detail in financial report)

- **Will/can District help with Minibus Training/Test Costs for younger drivers?**

HQ will pay 50%, District 25%, Group 25%

- **(Paraphrased) Given the nature of the return, do we have any sense of when Groups/Explorers will return (and get back to F2F meetings)?**

County meeting(s) still to be held to determine common approaches.

- **Will PPE be provided/funded by the District?**

Not yet determined – see above re: ongoing discussions with others in County.

- **(Paraphrased) As the District has moved to the QuickBooks accounting package, is it recommended for all groups?**

The District had a complex, Excel based system to handle several sets of accounts (e.g. 3 Explorer Units, District HQ, Badge, etc.) and its Executive agreed to move to a commercial package to support future treasurer handovers and so reduce retraining. This was an individual decision and it is up to Group Executives to decide whether their accounts are complex enough to warrant such a change and also to absorb the increased costs.

- **(Raised by Mayor, Cllr Asker) Disappointing that you have not been able to get 2 under 25's on the board, how have you sold this?**

In this area, many young adults leave at 18 (e.g. to go to University, find work, etc.) and don't come back, if at all, until they have established careers and possibly families of their own. This is a problem of rural demographics and other organisations are experiencing similar issues.

- **Date of Next Meeting was set as Wednesday 30 June 2021**

The Chair formally closed the meeting at 20:30

Post meeting – Closing remarks from Paul Stennett, County Chair:

Paul said that this was the first 'Zoom' AGM he had attended and thought that it went really well.

He thanked the District for doing a good job in keeping Scout going in very difficult time over the Covid-19 emergency – especially with events like the 'WILD' camping weekend.

On the administration side, he congratulated the District on another membership number improvement in the last Census (31 Jan 2020) but also mentioned that there was a possibility that the date for the next Census would be brought forward to October this year! It was also likely that the expected increase in HQ (NOT County) Capitation would be ~£6 per head due to a jump in costs pre-Covid. He said that it would be a challenge to re-start Face-to-face Scouting and that there would be no 'race' to do this until clear guidance had been received from Government and common approaches agreed across the County.