

THE HARPENDEN SOCIETY COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday 23rd January 2017 at 7.30 p.m. at The Friends Meeting House
MINUTES

1. **Present:** Chris Marsden (CM), Phil Waters (PhW), Ron Taylor (RT), John Lowe (JL), Penny Ayres (PA), John Harris (JH), Alan Bunting (AB), Harry Downie (HD), John Davis (JD), Alan Jackson (AJ), Donald Robertson (DR), Mike Waddilove (MW), Paul Gardiner (PG), Alan Falconer (AF), Pauline Waddilove (PW), and Bob Fletcher (RF).
2. Apologies for absence were received from Jan Smith (JS), Tim Riley (TR), and Victoria Evans (VE).
3. Minutes of the meeting on 8th November 2016, previously circulated, were approved as a true record.
4. **Welcome**
 - (a) The Chairman welcomed Paul Gardiner(PG) and Alan Falconer (AF) to the committee.
5. **Treasurer's Report**
 - (a) HD had previously circulated the current accounts. HD reported that he forecast the Society would have a £2k surplus at year end. Income for the year was slightly down but expenditure was also down £4K.
6. **Secretary's Items**
 - (a) It was agreed that the topic of the 23 February public meeting could be the Neighbourhood Plan. RF will contact Carl Cheevers (Town Clerk) to explore this. **Action RF.**
 - (b) The topic for the 20 April AGM will be decided at the next committee meeting. An interesting topic is required. John Harris will see if the Chairman of the L&D hospital is available. **Action JH.**
 - (c) A debate took place on the proposed update to the constitution to allow corporate members to join the Society. After a vote it was agreed that charity/not-for-profit organisations would be invited to join the Society as Affiliated Members but corporate membership by commercial organisations would not be offered.
7. **Chairman's Items**
 - (a) PhW reported that there an exhibition of the current proposals for the new Sports & Arts Centre is planned for Feb 15 &16th in Park Hall.
 - (b) PhW outlined the proposal that the Health & Welfare and Education & Leisure working groups be expanded into four with the new groups becoming Health, Education, Sport and Arts & Leisure. As with the original groups a committee member will be responsible for each group bringing reports to the Society as necessary and leading on initiatives as required. In the area of sports activity, a new group is proposed to be formed of the sports clubs and interests in the town which can serve in the manner suggested whilst it is possible that a similar town wide group might be formed for arts and leisure activity.
 - (c) It was reported that Alan Jackson will move to take over the Arts & Leisure Group, his role as leader of the Community Safety Group being taken by Paul Gardiner. Alan Falconer will take over the Transport Group after Don Robertson retires from the committee at the AGM.
 - (d) The Chairman thanked Don Robertson for all the hard work he had put into the Transport Working Group.
 - (e) PhW reported that the Harpenden Trust had recently organised a meeting which brought together about 50 organisations to identify need in the town.
8. **Membership Secretary's Items**
 - (a) Nothing to further report for this meeting.

9. **Newsletter Editor's Items**

- (a) The Newsletter Editor's report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting.

10. **Publicity Officer's Items**

- (a) The Publicity Officer's report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting.

11. **Working Group Reports**

- (a) **Community Safety:** The Community Safety report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting.
- (b) **Environment:** The Environment report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting.
- (c) **Transport:** The Transport report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting.
- (d) **Education & Leisure.** PhW reported that tendering for the contractor for the new secondary school was now taking place. The new contractor, once chosen, will prepare the planning application.
- (e) **Health & Social Welfare.** JH reported that there was no mention of Harpenden in the Bedfordshire NHS Sustainability & Transformation Plan but that Simon Linnet (Chair of the Governors of the L&D Hospital) had responded to a letter from JH conceding that, with the benefit of hindsight, the STP document might have made "useful and honest reference" to Harpenden. He went on to confirm that there was no intention to abandon L&D services to Harpenden. Progress on the Red House/Stewarts is slow but steady with the outline business case being forecast for March 17.
- (f) **Built Environment.** The Built Environment report had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting. PW reported that there has been a pre-application exhibition in Southdown for a proposal to build 49 flats with parking on the site of Pan Autos. The vehicle repairs will be moved elsewhere. The site is next to Jewsons building supplies where large delivery vehicles block the main road frequently waiting to turn into the site and it backs onto the Dark Lane recycling depot. PW reported that it was considered that this site is unsuitable for residential use and the storage/ light industrial uses should be maintained. The planning application will be submitted in March/April this year. After a debate and a statement from JD that the town needs affordable starter homes it was agreed that this opinion should be re-viewed. **Action PW.**
- (g) **Economic Activity.** RT reported that a questionnaire was being developed to get feedback from the retailers about the Christmas promotion.

12. **Awards**

- (a) PA reported that 8 nominations had been received so far. The website will be updated so that residents can vote online. **Action RF.**

13. **AOB**

- (a) None.

14. **Dates of the next meetings:**

Committee Meeting dates: 20 March 17, 8 May 17, 17 July 17, 18 Sept 17, 20 Nov 17, 22 Jan 18, 19 March 18

Speakers meetings: 23 Feb 17, 20 April 17 (AGM), 21 Sept 17, 19 Oct 17, 7 Dec 17, 25 Jan 18, 22 Feb 18, 19 April 18 (AGM)

15. The meeting closed at 9.40 p.m.