

THE GARDENERS REST COMMUNITY SOCIETY LTD



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
25 March 2023
At the Gardeners Rest

PRESENT

Alison Whitaker
Andrew Dawson
Andy Chaplin
Andy Crowther
Anil Ganesh
Barry Calder
David Hattersley
David Welburn
Dominic Ridler
Eleanor Stillman
James Stillman

Janet Crowther
Janet Ridler
Janet Smith
Jason Winter
John Scholey
Josette Knowles
Kirsteen Booy
Lawrence Whyte
Louise Swift
Mark Beckles Wilson
Mark Hewerdine

Mike Evans
Maureen McCredie
Nigel Williams
Peter Johnson
Peter Smith
Rosalind Stillman
Ruby Kempka
Sam Gregory
Simon Rose
Susie Casson
Tim Stillman

PRE MEETING NOTE

The Chair explained that, under the Plunkett Foundations Model Rules for Community Ownership which are effectively the constitution of the Gardeners Rest, a quorum of 10% of the membership, ie 40 members, had to be present for the AGM to proceed in its usual form. The meeting voted *nem con* to suspend this rule temporarily to allow the AGM to proceed. Any decisions made and resolutions made would be subject to subsequent approval by a further meeting.

I INTRODUCTION BY THE CHAIR

Before anything else, I must talk a little bit about a recent event I am sure you are all aware of. Many of us will remember the Gardeners Rest from before it was a community owned pub, when it was run by Pat and Eddie. As I am sure you all know, Eddie passed away last week. On a personal note, I remember Pat and Eddie from the Wortley Arms and, possibly the East House although I struggle to remember much of the detail of the evenings I spent there many years ago. They always ran special pubs. The ongoing success of the Gardeners Rest is very much built on what they had established here. I think that we should all be grateful for what they left us.

We shall be having a special musical event here on Sunday 16 April to celebrate Eddie's life. I am sure that it will be busy but it would be good to see as many of us here as can make it.

2 MINUTES OF THE 2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING(S)

- 2.1 The minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 26 March 2022 and the AGM ratification meeting of 8 October 2022 were agreed as true records.

3 PRESENTATION AND ADOPTION OF ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

Andy Chaplin presented the annual accounts which have been agreed with the Society's Independent Examiner, subject to a final calculation of Corporation Tax.

The meeting agreed *nem con* that these should be adopted.

4 CHAIR'S REPORT

I'll try to keep my report brief as always (round of applause).

Over the last year, there have been a few changes to the way we run the pub which you are probably not aware of.

Jan Brears who has been dealing with our bookkeeping on a voluntary basis since we got started, sometimes under quite difficult circumstances, has stepped down as a director. We should all be very grateful for her unstinting service to the pub.

Maureen who you may know as a familiar figure behind the bar is now doing the bookkeeping and a fair bit of the day-to-day admin which Jan and Andy Chaplin used to do.

Many thanks too to the other directors – Andy, Andy, Andy, Dom, Janet and Paul – who do so much of the behind the scenes work here.

Trade is broadly encouraging – volume of sales up 6% on last year since January. The relentless stream of price increases makes it tricky to keep prices up to date with costs and we are part way through yet another full review of our prices. We have a budget for the financial year now which we monitor every month. It is dry stuff sometimes but it is vital for our survival as a viable business.

We continue to monitor our costs very closely. Although we are on a fixed energy tariff until mid 2024, we are only too aware that we need to reduce costs in that area. We are currently looking at the idea of putting photovoltaic solar panels on the roof, for instance. Some of our cellar cooling equipment is pretty long in the tooth too so that is something else we shall need to look at.

Having said all that, the Board is pretty confident that we are in as good a position going forward as any pub can be at the moment. As ever, it is a privilege to be involved in running the Gardeners. I really think we have something to be proud of here.

5 ELECTIONS TO THE BOARD

Paul Truin has served on the Board for three years and so is required to stand down but is willing to stand for re-election.

The meeting approved Paul's re-appointment to the Board *nem con*.

Andy Parsons who has been with us a co-opted director for a few months is standing for election for the first time.

The meeting approved Andy's appointment to the Board *nem con*.

Lawrence Whyte has applied to join the Board.

The meeting approved Lawrence's appointment to the Board *nem con*.

6 APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS

The Board proposed the re-appointment of CJ Woodhead as the Independent Examiner for the current financial year.

The meeting approved this proposal *nem con*.

7 SHARE INTEREST RATE FOR 2021-2022

In the light of the pub's financial performance, the Board recommended interest for this period should be paid to members at a rate of 1.75% for all investments, as allowed for in the accounts.

The meeting approved this proposal *nem con*.

8 MEDIUM TERM PLAN

There was a discussion of the Board's draft medium-term plan which had been circulated before the meeting. The following points were raised:-

- No mention of Freeman College programme and other social inclusion initiatives.
- Review opening hours, particularly on Mondays for Sheffield Morris. Fund taxis to allow staff to get home after later closing. (An operational issue emerged here, which Shaun is addressing - staff are starting to clean up ahead of closing time which can make customers feel uncomfortable.)
- Reducing energy costs etc vital - several members brought this up.
- Extra publicity etc is all very well but bringing more customers to the pub can cause friction with musicians. Some of the customers who come in before or after visiting the Cutlery Works were felt to be unsympathetic to music.
- Possible we should be putting a sign on the door when music is on?
- The Gardeners is a pub, open to everyone. We should make sure that we do not create an exclusive environment.
- We should be using Instagram as this is favoured by younger customer. Perhaps we should have an Instagram ambassador to do this. James Stillman did this when he was working for us.
- Review zero/low alcohol offering - already underway.

9 FURTHER MEETING

The Board will consider arrangements for a follow up ratification meeting and notify shareholders in due course.

Mark Beckles Willson
26 March 2022