

Buxton Civic Association Limited

Minutes of the 45th AGM

Held at Poole's Cavern Visitor Centre on 23rd June 2014

In Attendance

Paul Dinsdale (Chairman)	Angela Wills	John Hollis	Simon Fussell
Lesley Middleton	Steve Orridge	Olive Middleton	Hilary Lawrence
Paddy Gore	Iain Parker	Tim Middleton	Mel Stevens
Jonathan Davy	Joan Rushton	Judith Milling	Alan Thompson
Roger Floyd	Alan Walker	Martin Wragg	Eric Thompson
Malcolm Bradbury	Hilary Graham	Peter Phillipson	Peter Barratt
Keith Wood	Freddie Willis	Geoffery Willis	Margaret Schofield
TB Cowlisshaw	Anne Willey	John Crowther	Pat Thompson
Martin Willey	Bill Fiddy	David Pritchard	Ann Gutteridge
Brian Lawrence	June Noble	Joan Robinson	Lyn Noble
John Gillett	Maggie Hale	Mike Monaghan	Mary Monaghan
Zena Bishop	Michael Bryant	Charles Jolly	Brenda Bryant
Susan Anfield	Peter Wright	John Anfield	Janet Byers
Shelia Beagles	Thelma Fraser		

1. Apologies

Mr Dinsdale welcomed all the members present to the 45th AGM of the Buxton Civic Association and thanked them for signing the attendance register. He then asked Mr Wragg to read out the apologies for absence, which were as follows;

Dr PH Astill	Mrs M Astill	Mr JNC Boardman	Mrs Boardman
Mr KG Parker	Mrs Parker	Mrs J Ramczyk	Mr M Wilde
Mrs LM Brookes	Mr PK Brunt	Mrs EE Carlile	Mr T Johnson
Mr DA Jones	Mrs A Jones	Mrs M Kako	Mrs S Law
Mrs RM Pugh	Mr TK Robinson	Mrs OP Robinson	Mr D Swift
Mr P Thornley	Mrs J Thornley	Mrs H Armitage	Mr J Rawicz-Szczerbo
Mrs JM Low	Mr PJ Low	Mr PH Ramczyk	Mrs P Hobby
Mr P Stacey	Mr B Shawcross	Mrs B Shawcross	Mr RL Cooper
Mr T Shaw	Mrs S Shaw	Mr Alan Roberts	Mrs K Roberts
Mrs J Grice	Mrs P Hoskin	Mrs H Taylor	Mr J Morton
Mrs A Morton	Mr JG Turner	Mrs JG Turner	Mrs LG Cooper
Mr LM Cooper	Mrs L Hill	Mr R MacLean	Mrs K MacLean
Mr Lower			

1.1 Introduction

Mr Dinsdale requested that members wishing to ask questions or take part in discussion identify themselves clearly in order to assist with the taking of Minutes.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the 44th Annual General Meeting of the company held on 23rd June 2013 had been distributed with the agenda in advance of the meeting. Mr Dinsdale asked those present if they had received the minutes and were happy to adopt them as a true and accurate record of the meeting. This was proposed by Mr Noble and seconded by Mr Middleton. The minutes were duly adopted by a unanimous vote of all those present.

Mr Dinsdale then asked the meeting if there were any matters arising from the 2013 AGM minutes. There were none

3. Directors' Report

3.1 Chairman's Report

Mr Dinsdale then presented the report of the Directors. The full text of his presentation is annexed to these minutes.

3.2 Woodlands

At the point indicated in his notes Mr Dinsdale invited Mr Phillipson to deliver the report of the Woodlands Group.

Mr Phillipson began his presentation by describing the damage done to the woods during the winter storms. Using photographs he showed the scale of the damage and in particular to the oldest tree in Corbar woods. He used this as an example of the importance of deadwood to a healthy woodland not only by providing a habit for fungi and a wide and diverse range of invertebrates but also by creating a gap in the canopy, critical to the regeneration and future health of the woods. The gap enables a diverse range of plants and young trees to flourish. Storms are therefore an essential part of a healthy woodland.

The Templemoor development has been completed and the developers Persimmon had planted the agreed strip of land adjoining the woods there with a range of plant, tree and shrubs that are native to the area.

The programme of path repairs continues. Corbar now has a new path that takes walkers around the edge of the bluebell wood. Signage has been used to keep people from creating additional paths through the bluebells.

Further work is being done to repair the Ring of Trees route in Corbar and Grin Low. A programme of repairs to the extensive dry stone walls that are in the woods is also being implemented.

Grant funding is being sought to enable us to put a series of sculptures using dead trees in Grin Low. The sculptures have been designed to reflect both the natural and man-made influences that have created the woods.

As part of the long term management plan for Grin Low, a Bird Management Grant from the Forestry Commission and the RSPB, has been applied for. The grant will help with the work on the top edge and developing the rides. The aim is to create a shrub layer transition which will provide a valuable habit for birds and insects. It will involve some felling but is a key part of our strategy to increase the biodiversity of the woods.

Clearing the glades of shrubs and woody growth continues on an annual basis and is key to the maintenance of the wild flower glades.

Mr Phillipson thanked the volunteers for the work that they do under the direction and supervision of Mr Walker, the BCA warden, and the continuing support of the woodland group.

In conclusion Mr Phillipson advised members not to be alarmed if they saw members of the woodland group wandering around the woods with red tabards on. This was part of a plan to provide guidance and information to people who use the woods.

3.3 Environmental

Mr Dinsdale then introduced Dr Monaghan, director with responsibility for the Associations environmental policy.

Dr Monaghan explained about the environmental impacts that BCA has in all its activities and went on to tell the members about the award of the Peak District Environmental Quality Mark to the Buxton Civic Association. BCA is the largest and the most complex of the organisations that have achieved the award. The process was involved and complex and in addition to an onsite

audit involved the completion of a detailed and lengthy application. Dr Monaghan explained it was of great credit to the work that Alan Walker and his staff have done in making the BCA and all its diverse activities as environmentally sustainable as possible. The Board had supported this with the introduction of an environmental policy and an annual action plan some years ago.

Dr Monaghan quoted from the citation;

"It was clear during the assessment that Buxton Civic Association has a strong commitment to environmental and social issues, as well being passionate about the conservation of their SSSI cavern and woodlands, which are managed to achieve favourable condition. Access for all is also central to their ethos, with some excellent work undertaken to allow less able people to enjoy both. High energy use is a significant environmental impact for the cavern and LED lighting has been installed to address this."

Referring back to the Environmental Action Plan for 2014, Dr Monaghan explained that the BCA were seeking to implement a rainwater harvesting system for using to flush the toilets. Finding a specialist provider was proving difficult and he asked that, if any members had any recommendations that they could make, they could contact Mr Walker and give him the details, which would be extremely helpful.

3.4 Community Affairs

In the absence of Mr Wilde, Chair of the Membership Group, Mr Dinsdale gave a report, the text of which is included in the appropriate place in his notes attached to these minutes.

3.5 Cycle Trail

Mr Dinsdale invited Mr Wragg to give the meeting a brief update on the progress of the Cycle Trail.

Mr Wragg reported that PDNPA and DCC had applied for and been awarded a £5m grant

The Path will take a slightly different route to that which was originally promised due to HSL reneging on their commitment to permit the trail to use the private road from Ladmanlow to Parkers Crossing. Instead cyclists would access/exit the old mineral railway line at the Parks Inn and connect with the centre of Buxton via an alternative route from Harpur Hill. Walkers would be directed onto a public footpath between Ladmanlow and Parkers Crossing which would be improved. DCC was also working to identify a route south from Bakewell to continue the Monsall Trail to Matlock .

The plan is to deliver this by the end of March 2015.

Lyn Noble asked about Woo Dale. Mr Wragg confirmed that there were issues as the path was to go through an SSSI. Natural England did not want to engage in a discussion at this point. The proposal was still live but would not be implemented in this phase of the programme. It was intended that this be included in the next phase when further grant funding becomes available.

3.6 Planning

There was no formal Planning Report, but Mr Dinsdale informed members of the recent changes within the Association's Planning Group, and that this Group was currently re-assessing its terms of reference and investigating possible ways of canvassing the opinions of the membership on potentially contentious Planning Matters.

3.7 Corporate Affairs

A Corporate Affairs Report is included in the Chairman's Report which has been annexed to these minutes.

3.8 Accounts for the Year ended 31 December 2013

In the absence of the treasurer, Mr Dinsdale gave a brief summary of the Association's current financial position. This has been included in the Chairman's Report that has been annexed to these minutes.

3.9 Archives

A report on the progress on the Association's archive is included in the Chairman's Report which has been annexed to these minutes.

3.10 Publication of BCA History.

A progress report on the publication of a book recording the history of the Association, to commemorate its fiftieth anniversary, is included in the Chairman's Report which has been annexed to these minutes.

3.11 Newsletter & Website

The Chairman drew attention to the excellent and on-going work by Directors Alyson Phillips, Tim Middleton, and Mike Wilde, on the Association's Newsletter and new Website.

3.12 Appointment of New Directors

A report on the appointment of new directors is included in the Chairman's report which has been annexed to these minutes.

At the conclusion of Mr Dinsdale's report he asked members for questions.

Mr Anfield, a member of the BCA for 30 years, raised the issue of the Cowdale Quarry planning application. He alleged that HPBC have now indicated that the application is beyond their competence and that DCC will now be the determining body. Mr Anfield then outlined his concerns with the planning application, which were firstly the extraction of limestone from a quarry that was disused, and secondly the impact on the residents of Cowdale both in terms of the development and the operations. He requested that BCA changed the way that it dealt with difficult planning applications in the future.

Mr Dinsdale replied that there was no easy way to canvass the whole membership and of course there was always a wide diversity of views. Mr Dinsdale told the meeting that the Board would

be delighted to consider and discuss any ideas that members may have on this matter and would be happy to convene a members meeting specifically to discuss this topic.

Mr Floyd commented that when Mrs Lawrence was chair of the planning group, BCA's representations did not actually take sides over an application, and this had become recognised practice over the years. The difference between the current group and the old one was that the current planning group had actually supported the Cowdale application. There was no need for the group to have done this. There was a change between the second and the third application and the outcome was that we could be left with a ruined environment. Mr Dinsdale pointed out that Inspectors at Appeals are strongly influenced by precedent, and that the industrial heritage issue was the only one recognised to have outweighed the potential creation of employment. Mr Floyd stated that the Developer had offered monetary remuneration to BCA to manage and maintain woods on site, and made an offer of a substantial financial contribution to the Association.

Mr Dinsdale stated that he was not aware of any approach or offer by the Developer regarding the current Application..

Mr Floyd replied that it was during the Appeal on the previous Application that an offer had been made.

Mr Dinsdale replied that the previous Appeal had been dismissed, and that the informal approach that had been made was never pursued. Since then there has been no approach by the Developer.

Mr Dinsdale replied that it may be appropriate that future representations made by the Planning Group did not express overt support for an Application. This would, however, also imply that BCA would not overtly urge the rejection of an Application either.

Mr Byrant, on behalf of the Planning Group, added that when the Group came to look at the fresh Application they had to look at it in the light of the judgement that had been made under the previous Appeal process. He was now glad if it was going to be determined by the County rather than HPBC dealing with the matter again.

It was suggested that BCA's planning representations support its purposes and values, rather than considering the totality of issues concerning Applications.

Mr Dinsdale commented that the Association's credibility would suffer if its representations were predictable and inflexible. He noted the huge volume of documentation that supported complex Applications, and assured members that the Planning Group looks at an application in great detail before coming to its opinion.

Mr Floyd Maintained that BCA should forcefully put its own opinions forward, and that these should represent, and be informed by, the purposes and values of the Association.

Mr Dinsdale and Mr Floyd agreed that it would be appropriate to have a dialogue with members to investigate ways in which members could express their views before representations were made on contentious applications.

Mr Dinsdale confirmed that the membership would be hearing from the Board in due course, regarding suggestions to address these issues.

Dr Bradbury commented that he had come to the meeting because he and others were absolutely shocked at the news that BCA had submitted representations in support of the Cowdale application. He had been requested to ask the question why BCA which had won an award for its support of the environment was so out of line with all other similar organisations. Mr Dinsdale replied that BCA was not without credibility in environmental terms and such concerns have influenced the Planning Group's scrutiny of the application. In his view, the Association's credibility and independence would suffer if it simply echoed the view of other consultees. However, he affirmed that the Board wants members to be happy that their views have been taken into account and represented fairly.

Dr Bradbury made an offer of help and support to help come up with a solution to this problem.

Mr Dinsdale welcomed this offer.

4. Re-election of the Directors

At this point in the meeting Mr Dinsdale handed over to Mr Wragg. Mr Wragg explained the procedure that at each AGM one third of the Board must retire by rotation, i.e those that had served the longest since last appointed/reappointed. This excluded those Directors who had been co-opted. There were ten Directors so that three would retire and seek re election under the procedure. Those to retire were Dr Monaghan, Mr Phillipson and Mr Robinson. Dr Monaghan and Mr Phillipson both wished to seek re-election and had the support of the Board.

Mr Robinson had indicated that morning that he did not wish to seek re-election.

A vote was taken with the following results.

Dr Monaghan was re elected with 2 abstentions

Mr Phillipson was re elected with 3 abstentions

5. Appointment of new directors co-opted during the past Twelve Months

Mr Longden was elected unanimously

Mr Davey was elected unanimously

At this point, Mr Dinsdale invited Mr Floyd to propose Mr Brian Lawrence for election to the Board. He gave a resume of Mr Lawrence's qualifications.

He believed that Mr Lawrence could make significant contributions to BCA in some specific areas and gave a brief resume of his CV.

Mr Lawrence had 30 year's experience in business, had been with the Royal Sun Alliance Assurance company for 23 of those years and had considerable experience of Managing Risk and Human Resources. Retiring from RSA after 30 years, he pursued an academic career at Nanyang University in Singapore. He attained very high academic standards, being widely published in

books and journals. Given that BCA is continually required to access the risks to the public in the woods and to staff he would be a valuable addition to the board.

His nomination was seconded by Mr Wright.

Mr Lawrence was asked to add a few words and commented that he had been heavily involved with the Red Cross in Buxton as a first aider supporting amongst other things the Four Inns Walk. He felt that he had his roots in the town and surrounding countryside.

The nomination was put to the vote. He was elected with 2 votes against and 6 abstentions and was duly elected.

6. Appointment of Auditors

Mr Wragg explained that Smith Cooper had been auditing the Association's accounts for ten years and were very experienced and well qualified to audit charity accounts. It was the recommendation of the Board that they be re-appointed. A vote was taken and Smith Cooper were re-appointed unanimously.

7. AOB

Mrs Lawrence thanked the people that she has worked with over the years and said how much she has enjoyed her time on the Planning Group. She felt that the Planning Group had, of all BCA committees, the most influence over the years. In particular she wished to thank Mrs Hilary Armitage, Mr Bryant, Mr Wright and Mr Robinson for all their help and support over the years. Without all their efforts BCA would not be the organisation that it is, and be so highly regarded by HPBC. She also thanked the Chair for his kind remarks.

Mr Willis proposed a vote of thanks to the Directors and staff for all their hard work and dedication during the year.

The meeting was declared closed at 9.10 pm