

Rivington Unitarian & Free Christian Chapel
Congregational AGM 19.03.2017
Minutes

Those present: Alison Whitaker, Frank Ascroft, Dennis Crompton, Jacqueline Dagnall, Diane Fairclough, Paul Fairclough, Mary Horrocks, Peter Bearon, Judith Crompton, John Green, Linda Green, Vince McCully, Frank Williams

1 Welcome and Prayer: Alison Whitaker welcomed everyone to the meeting and said a short prayer.

2 Apologies: Marge Ainsley, Martin Brownlow, Olive Fisher, Ian Fisher, Richard Horrocks, Michael Hough, Olive Mayor, John Patefield, Chris Oldham, Carol Worsley, David Worsley

3 Minutes: The Minutes of the last AGM were circulated, read and accepted. Proposed: Linda Green, seconded Vince McCully

4 Matters Arising: The cheque in memory of Jane Barraclough was donated to Macmillan Nurses.

The minutes of this meeting will be made available as soon as possible and will be put on the website.

5 Chairman's Report: AW reported that it had been a successful year.

The 2016 Pilgrimage Service was led by Rev. Bob Janis-Dillon. Dot Hewerdine, the President of the G.A. gave the address. The lunch provided by The Bay Horse for over ninety people was served in Rivington Church Hall. The necessary change of venue proved successful, though it had involved us in extra preparations.

The Chapel Facebook page is proving to be a good way to advertise coming events and generally raise the profile of the Chapel.

There have been 10 naming ceremonies, but just one wedding and one wedding anniversary blessing. All initial inquiries need to be directed to Mary Horrocks, who is our Rites of passage contact. Frank Ascroft is looking into whether our charges need to be increased to take into account of the increased costs of heating in winter.

The new heating system is most welcome and the two of the old storage heaters have been installed in the kitchen and the upper vestry. The fund-raising concert held on 11th March had raised over £800 towards the cost of the heating installation.

We were saddened by the death in December of our long-serving organist and friend Roy Shepherd. Members of the chapel attended his funeral. The role of organist is now being shared by Tania Smalley and Martin Brownlow. Should neither be present, a set of CDs of hymn tunes is available.

Roy's death has meant that we have lost a long serving member of the committee. Also, Geoff Newey, a committee member since 2011 has decided to step down. He was thanked for the valuable contribution he made.

The newsletters have for many years been distributed by Lynne and Chris Houghton. They have asked that the task be taken over by someone who can attend Chapel regularly. MH has agreed to do this, and we will take the opportunity to check the current distribution list.

A sign writer in Blackburn has provided a quotation for updating the Ministers' Board. We will arrange for the work to be done in the near future.

AW will be this year's G.A. delegate.

6 Secretary's Report: Since the last AGM, Dennis Crompton has been acting as Minute Secretary and VM as interim correspondence secretary. VM has updated the GA record of Chapel information. Correspondence and pamphlets relating to mostly Unitarian activities are brought to our attention usually via the notice board. No expenses have been incurred.

7 Treasurer's Report: Income - £9,817.90. Expenditure - £9,112.15. Excess - £705.75. Assets stand at £39,666.31. FA continues to look out for better interest rates for deposit accounts. Contributions from collections have been more generous and Rites of Passage should also boost income. The Carol Service raised £393 from the 110+ people attending. The rise in the electricity bill may be explained by the fact that all the heaters were left on by mistake for a number of days. We donated to the Croston Flood Fund. The treasurer is much indebted to Peter Bearon for advice and his audit. Altogether this is an encouraging report. FA was commended for his efforts and the report was accepted. Proposed VM, Seconded Diane Fairclough.

8 Constitution and Membership: AW reported that the constitution had been amended to reflect the changes agreed at last year's AGM. The Committee proposed that the time scale for the notification of AGM and the nomination form for officers and committee members should be amended (the proposed changes are appended to these minutes). Approval of the amendments was proposed by PB and seconded by LG and was agreed unanimously.

AW had found a list of Chapel Members compiled in 2005 numbering 25 members of which several have since died or moved away. The current GA quota is based on a membership of 20. The list of members needs to be updated to include those who have joined the congregation more recently. This could result in an increase of up to 10, which would have a financial implication. It was decided that the Committee should check the list against the criteria for full membership of the Chapel and then adjust the quota accordingly.

9 Election of Officers: Chairman: AW - proposed: DF, seconded: John Green. Carried unanimously.

Treasurer: FA - proposed AW, seconded PB. Carried unanimously.

Secretary: there were no nominations for secretary, so DC will continue as minutes secretary and VM as correspondence secretary for another year.

10 Election of Committee: there were six nominations for the seven places on the Committee, so all those nominated were elected – Martin Brownlow, Dennis Crompton Jacqueline Dagnall, Diane Fairclough, Paul Fairclough and Mary Horrocks.

11 Election of Lay Person in Charge: VM left the meeting. The motion was put that VM should remain as Lay Person in Charge. Proposed: PB, seconded Judith Crompton. Carried unanimously.

12 A.O.B. PB suggested that the service before the AGM could be shorter so that the meeting could start earlier to allow more of the congregation time to attend. It was agreed that VM should take the service next year.

AW raised the issue of whether to have a service on the day of the Iron Man event (16th July). If traffic allows, a short informal gathering may be possible.

It was agreed that Chapel should be open for visitors before services over the summer months. A rota for volunteers will be put on the notice board. There is now a key for the Chapel with Jayne at the Tea Rooms which visitors could use.

LG suggested that we should send a letter of thanks and an appropriate gift to Chris and Lynne Houghton. The Committee will organise this.

13 Date of Next AGM: Sunday 18 March 2018

6.1 Election to the Committee: Before the first service of each financial year in February, the Secretary shall place on prominent display, a Nomination Form on which the names of persons nominated for election as Officers and Members of the Committee may be written, together with the names of those proposing and seconding their nomination. No person may be nominated without his or her prior consent. The Nomination Form shall remain on display for at least one calendar month. A notice announcing the displaying of the Nomination Form and the closing date for nominations shall be included in any Newsletter covering that period. Retiring Members of the Committee shall be eligible for re-election. If the nominations for any position to be filled exceed the available vacancies, the Secretary shall send a ballot paper to each Member of the Congregation not later than fourteen days at least one week prior to the Annual General Meeting, showing the names of those nominated and the number of vacancies. Each Member may vote for the maximum number of persons required to fill the available vacancies. The ballot paper shall be handed to the Secretary on arrival at the Annual General Meeting or sent to the Secretary beforehand by Members who cannot attend in person. The votes shall be counted and the results announced during the course of the Annual General Meeting. If two or more candidates for any vacancy receive an equal number of votes, the person or persons to be elected shall be determined by drawing lots.

If the number of persons nominated for the vacancies does not exceed the number of vacancies no ballot shall be held, but the candidates shall be declared duly elected at the Annual General Meeting.

The Committee shall have the power to appoint one or more Sub-Committees, providing that all acts and proceedings thereof shall be fully reported to the next following meeting of the Committee. The Sub-Committee will elect a Chairperson who is responsible for the report back to the main Committee.