



The Farnham Society

Minutes of the 74th Annual General Meeting held as a virtual event on Thursday 25 November 2021

Executive Committee Members Present:

Alan Gavaghan - Chairman
John Slater
Simon Bradbury
Paul Fry

Michael Blower MBE - Vice-President
John Cattell
Richard Hunt CBE

Members Present:

Cllr David Beaman
Gillian Ward
Yolande Hesse
Liz Wit
Catherine Soden
Michael Cubitt
Richard Stiff
Zofia Lovell
Frauke Stuart

Cllr John Ward
Ella Cattell
Tony Rooth
Linda Eades
David Lang
Martin Angel
David Cooper
Charles Stuart
Ken Kent

Apologies

Apologies were received from Ian and Hillary Burgess.

Documents for the meeting had previously been posted on the website for members to read and react accordingly. Reports were therefore not presented live, and comments were invited from members.

Comment: A comment from the floor was received that the documents should be in 'read only' format to prevent inadvertent or false alteration.

Post Meeting Note: All documents concerned have been converted to PDF and reposted.

1. Minutes of the 73rd Annual General Meeting Held on 30 June 2020

The minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated and were approved. No matters arising.

2. Chairman's Report

The Chairman's report had been published on the website; no questions were raised.

3. Financial Report

(i) Adoption of Inspected Accounts for Financial Year Ending 31 March 2021

The financial report and statement had been published on the website. The meeting approved the accounts for the year April 2020 to March 2021.

Comment: One comment was raised regarding the need to focus more heavily on 'Green Investments'. To be pursued at the next Executive Committee meeting.

(ii) Confirmation of Inspector of Accounts

The meeting approved Roger Smith of Milne Eldridge & Co as ongoing Inspector of Accounts for the current financial year.

(iii) Proposed Membership Fee 2022

The meeting approved maintaining membership fees at their current level.

4. Committee reports

As all Committee reports (Planning, Air Quality, Visits and Tours, Talks and Events, and Heritage Open Days) had been posted on the website, they were taken as read and accepted.

5. Election/Re-election of Honorary Officers

Chairman – Alan Gavaghan

Proposer: Michael Blower MBE
Bradbury

Seconder: Simon

Motion carried.

Treasurer – John Cattell

Proposer: Richard Hunt CBE
Motion carried.

Seconder: Paul Fry

6. Election/Re-election and Confirmation of Committee Members

Simon Bradbury

Richard Hunt CBE

Block proposal: *Proposer:* Michael Blower MBE

Seconder: Alan Gavaghan

Motion carried.

Election of New Committee Members

Paul Fry

Josh Godfrey

Block Proposal: Proposer: Alan Gavaghan Seconder: Michael Blower MBE

Motion carried.

7. Proposed Amendment to Society's Rules

As the document entitled 'Amendments to the Rules of the Farnham Society' proposing amendments to rules 2, 3, 6 and 10 had been put on the website, it was taken as read. The amendments were approved.

Comment: Under Rule 10 on the AGM, it was felt that it should state that the meeting may be on occasion held online as well as in person. This will be discussed at the next Executive Committee meeting.

Comment: Under Rule 10 (e) (iii) there was an appeal for nominations for Vice Presidents.

8. Any Other Business and Questions from Members

Willmer House: Willmer House requires repairs, notably to the parapet which is structurally unsound. A survey was commissioned by WBC some 3 – 4 years ago, Yolande Hesse tabled a copy. The cost of repairs is estimated in the region of £1M.

Waverley Borough Council is subsidising running of the Museum (this is the only museum in the borough to receive a subsidy) but they do not have funding allocated for the repairs.

There is a diversity of views as to whether the Museum should remain in Willmer House, or whether the contents and exhibits could be relocated to another (possibly more suitable) venue, with Willmer House being sold to a new owner.

Councillor David Beaman pointed out that there had been a consultation. Ella Cattell asked if The Farnham Society had been consulted. The Chairman replied that as far as he knew they had not. Richard Hunt CBE had spoken to the consultant, Steve Green. There has been input from various interested parties, a report is expected sometime in December. Ella Cattell asked if the Executive Committee would get involved.

Michael Blower MBE raised the possibility of using alternative lightweight material for parapet repair. This could be less expensive, the parapet is remote from the view of pedestrians, and this approach has been followed on other buildings in the town.

The Chairman raised the possibility of drawing together various interest groups (including FBPT) to look at Willmer House together with other historic sites, notably the Hale Chapels. This will be discussed at the next Executive Committee meeting.

Departing Committee Members

The Chairman thanked departing members of the Committee – David Howell, Michelle Quinlan, and John Slater.

He also expressed thanks to Helen Payne who, although not a member of the Committee, continues to provide administrative support particularly in the role of membership secretary.

Exhibition in 2022

In 1986 Michael Blower MBE took photographs of shop fronts in the town centre Conservation Area. Roy Waight has taken a corresponding series of photos recently. There are plans for an exhibition some time in 2022, featuring both sets of photos to demonstrate the change.

Vote of Thanks

Charles Stuart voiced a vote of thanks to the Chairman and all the Committee members for their dedication to furthering the interests of the Society despite the restrictions created by the Covid epidemic.

Close of Meeting

The meeting was ended at 11.50.