



HOTRA 2019 Annual General Meeting

...was held in the Stade Hall commencing at 7.00 pm on Thursday 9th May

In the absence of HOTRA President the Right Honourable Amber Rudd M.P, Cllr Sinden, Mayor of Hastings and Speaker of the Cinque Ports presided.

Chairman Dick Edwards opened the 520th meeting of HOTRA, welcomed the assembled members and introduced Cllr Sinden.

Minutes of the 2018 AGM

The minutes of the 2018 were passed as a true and accurate record without opposition. Proposed by Peter Driver. Seconded by Jill Bradley.

Attendance

56 people signed the attendance sheet and 10 apologies were received, including from our president, the Right Honourable Amber Rudd MP

Accounts, Reports And Elections

- **Annual Accounts** in the absence of Phil White, Treasurer, Chairman Dick Edwards presented and explained the accounts. Stephen Mason proposed acceptance. Barbara Young seconded. Accepted without opposition. Dick thanked Dirk van Dijk for his work as independent examiner of accounts.
- **RESOLUTION** Dick Edwards proposed an increase in subscription rates from £10 per person to £12 per person with effect from January 2020. A proposal from the floor of an increase to £15 was passed by a show of hands.
- **Chairman's report** Chairman Dick Edwards presented his annual report for 2018, which dealt exclusively with the Isabel Blackman Centre and its closure by ESCC after a sham consultation. He spoke passionately about the history of the IBC and its value to the Old Town. He paid tribute to the generosity of the Blackman family in providing the centre. He outlined how ESCC had decided to close the centre, and the steps taken by HOTRA and Hastings Voluntary Action to prevent this. He explained that IBC has been registered as a Community Asset and the implications of this. He suggested that the community should be given the opportunity to run the IBC on a charitable basis. As an initial step he proposed a friendship club to provide lunches three days a week for the Old Town's most vulnerable old people. The cost of proceeding initially will be £80,000, but this can be offset by renting a flat at the centre, and by renting the premises for meetings and activities. There were questions from the floor about the details of the scheme in particular about getting pro-bono legal advice, and about crowd-funding the scheme. Acceptance of the report was proposed by Michael Plumbe and seconded Tania Charman. The report was approved unopposed
- **Elections** The officers — Richard Platt, Secretary, Phil White, Treasurer, and Dick Edwards, Chairman — indicated their willingness to serve for another year.
The Management Committee comprises 6 with up to 2 co-optees. Mary Phillips, who has

represented the West Hill Community Association at recent HOTRA committee meetings volunteered to join the committee. Tania Charman proposed admitting her; Marriane Smith seconded. Passed unopposed.

- **Examiner of Accounts** Dirk van Dijl has agreed to conduct next year's independent audit.
- **Any Other Business**
- Brigit Barry asked the management committee to draw up a paper on how to cope with Hastings' ageing population.
- Anthony Mair drew attention to falling standards of sweeping and weeding. James Bacon explained the problems with the cleaning contractors, Kier. Their contract has been terminated and the cleansing contract is soon being taken in house. Biffa will be emptying bins. He hoped that this will improve the situation within a couple of months. There was an animated discussion with many questions from the floor about this issue. Nigel Sinden and James Bacon responded.

Guest Speaker

Penny Shimmin, chief executive officer, Sussex Community Development Association, spoke about their history, work and plans.

She explained the work of SCDA in responding to community needs. 58,000 people used their services last year. They are a charity with 130 staff and 650 volunteers, some of whom worked at the IBC.

She continued by outlining the strands of their work, including: welfare to work; advice and information; supporting BAME groups and victims of hate crimes; mental health support services through Counselling+; community development work.

She said SCDA is committed to working with local organisations such as HOTRA to replace the services that were formerly supplied by the IBC.

Penny answered questions from the floor.

The meeting closed at approximately 8.10pm