



President: The Mayor of Hastings

Chair: Sarah Forrest

Minutes of AGM held on Friday 20 August 2021 in Stade Hall

Dick Edwards welcomed everyone, especially ex-Mayor Cllr. Nigel Sinden standing in for the current Mayor Cllr. James Bacon.

The new Chair, Sarah Forrest, read out the following message from Cllr. James Bacon:

“Hello everyone,

I am sorry I can't be with you tonight as Mayor of Hastings, President of HOTRA and as one of your Old Hastings Ward Councillors. Thank you to our immediate past Mayor, Cllr Nigel Sinden, for Charing the meeting today.

Since being elected in May 2016, it has been an absolute honour to represent you as one of your Ward Councillors. I remember very clearly my first HOTRA AGM, how welcoming you all were to me then and how supportive you have been over the past 5 years. Thank you for this. Politics can often be seen as an arena for conflict, but in the Old Town, it has been quite the opposite - a collaborative effort to improve the lives of those in the Old Town.

As Ward Councillor, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the whole of the HOTRA committee for their incredible work on behalf of Hastings Old Town. In particular, thank you to Dick and Jill for their hard work and dedication over many years and keeping the committee going through a very difficult time. I wish you all the best in your other endeavours and I wish HOTRA all the best as you embark in an exciting future ahead. Councillor Hilton and I will continue to work hard on your behalf and work with HOTRA to ensure the Old Town is best place to live and that our community continues to thrive.

As President of HOTRA, I would like to thank everyone for being such an active residents association in our beautiful seaside town. You are an exemplar to the rest of the Borough. It is an absolute privilege to be part of such a hard working and forward thinking organisation and I hope to be with you all very soon.

Since getting married in the Old Town last month, I am off next week on a short honeymoon with the new Mrs Bacon but I look forward to seeing you all out and about in the Ward when I am back.

Have a wonderful AGM and please do continue to keep in touch with any issues which come up in the Old Town. Myself and Julia will do our best to resolve these issues and we will continue to work together for you.

Take care and stay safe”

Apologies: Cllr. James Bacon, Phil White, Hazel Lloyd, Mary Phillips, Shirley Hawley, Prof. Michael Hunter, David Woolf, Andrew & Michelle Bower, Richard Stevens, Ron Bennett.

Minutes of the 16 September 2020 AGM: accepted. (Copies were not reproduced to save printing costs. 1 member requested a paper copy).

Annual Accounts and Membership Report

In the Treasurer's absence Dick invited comments on the accounts detailed on the handout. The current bank balance is £1,035. There are currently 88 members, 53% pay by cheque, 12% by cash, and 35% by bank transfer. The Accounts were accepted. Thanks to Phil for his work as Treasurer.

Report from the Independent Examiner of Accounts, Dirk van Dijk

Unfortunately, this was unavailable due to internet problems. It will be emailed to members shortly.

Chairman's Report

This was reproduced on the handout.

- **Isabel Blackman Centre:** Dick gave a brief history of the Centre, whose acquisition for and by the community is a great achievement. He asked for members to comment on what they want to see there by going to the website www.ageuk.org.uk/eastsussex/our-services/ibc Suggestions from the floor included a piano, floor plan, wedding hire, and request for paper comment forms. An application has been made to the Community Ownership Fund for the £150,000 needed for repairs.
- **Business Plan:** to include Swan Gardens and Southern Water's recent unacceptable sewage leak at Bulverhythe. HBC and the Environment Agency will be charging SW for their involvement. An action group demonstrated there on 20 August and HOTRA should support them.

Elections

The ballot was not held as the numbers nominated did not exceed the seats available. The new Committee is:

Chair: Sarah Forrest

Vice Chair with responsibility for the Isabel Blackman Centre: Dick Edwards

Treasurer: Phil White

Minuting Secretary: Jill Bradley (as the proposed candidate withdrew, Jill offered to continue on a temporary basis)

Management Committee: Ann Novotny, John Reynolds, Raquel Lebron, Ady Malam, Sam Taylor.

Co-opted Members: Shirley Hawley, Mary Phillips. (Both Ward Councillors are invited to attend)

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Numerous issues were raised over the closure of the path by the boating lake and the new rides. Cllr. Bacon will be asked to investigate on his return.
- Miniature railway level crossing warning boards are a hazard. Cllrs. Bacon and Hilton are requested to look at this.
- Chairs and tables spilling over into George Street restricting access to cars and pedestrians. Another task for our Councillors to look into. Cllr. Hilton asked anyone who has particular issues to get in touch.
- Email addresses for issues covered at the AGM will appear in the next newsletter.

DE thanked everyone for attending, and the AGM finished at 8.15pm.