

## **Brompton Regis Shop AMM - BR Village Hall - 25 April 2018 - 7.30pm**

The meeting started at 7.40pm

Those in attendance: Phil Barnard (Chair), Chris Pollard (Treasurer), Trish Kirkby (Shop Manager), Jenny Phillips (Committee), Jenny Stringer, Janet Neves (Committee), Peter and Babs Page, Dr Wendy and Rev Paul Kingdom, Jeannie Barnard, Molly (Committee) and Keith Routledge, Louise Knight, Jane Collins, Iain Joyce, Colin Berry and Su Elsdon (Committee/acting sec).

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the fourth Annual Members Meeting. All members attending were given copies of the Chairman's report and a financial report for the past year.

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from: Wendy Brett, Jenny Pattenden, Claire Pounder, Kim and Huw Williams, Jenny Jakeman, Donald Elliott, Eddie Neves, Kevin Laws, Sarah Merchant, Charlie Phillips, Bill and Jane Rees, Toni Jones.

### **2. Minutes of the last meeting.**

With apologies from the acting secretary for omitting Louise Knight as an attendee. Subject to that amendment, the minutes were approved. Proposed: Trish Kirkby. Seconded: Janet Neves

### **3. Chairman's Report**

The Chairman reported that for the second year running the shop continues to 'run in the black' attributed to the work of the Manager Trish and the team of volunteers. Wendy Brett and Jenny Jakeman were welcomed as new counter staff volunteers and Janet Neves as a new member of the Management Committee (Directors). He also thanked Peter Page, Charlie Phillips and Keith Routledge for their help behind the scenes.

The shop had not had to rely on grants for general revenue, claiming just under £200 from the Show Committee for capital expenditure, for which thanks were given. Easter and Christmas raffles were again successful, along with the Christmas shop morning and a hamper for the Show raffle.

The new shop calendar and cards proved successful with a request for more images for the 2019 version.

The chairman reminded everyone of the extended community benefits of the shop - as an outlet for the parish magazine, prescription collection point, cash-back facility, a central hub for the Show and as a general centre and resource for the community.

Membership of the Brompton Regis Shop Society has stabilised at approx 120, new arrivals benefiting from Jenny Phillips' 'welcome packs'. The shop is further promoted through the Brendon Beacon and shop notice board.

However, he gave a note of caution that shop sales continue slowly to decline, in a highly competitive marketplace. But the lower cost base should enable it to live with these threats, notwithstanding the continual need to boost sales.

He concluded with thanks to the Manager, volunteers, the Management Committee, Shop Society members, shareholders and customers who all enable everyone to benefit from the shop.

No comments were given from the floor.

#### 4. Treasurer's Report

Whilst sales continue to fall, the shop continues to operate with a surplus. Sales continue to drop from £63,000 in 2013 to £50,673 in 2017. Despite best efforts it has not been possible to stop the decline. However, through good buying policies and house keeping the shop continues to return a good gross margin of 24.5% for the year ending 2017. The previous year was 25.3% but it is still considered good for the enterprise. He passed on thanks and congratulations for this achievement.

In the past year no revenue grants had been taken and this could continue for the moment. Thus there was no other operating income. The Treasurer went on to detail some of the expenditure items:

Carriage and packing - delivery charges.

Wages - there had been a big drop in the cost of wages. In the first quarter of 2016 the shop was still employing Stephanie and a considerable redundancy payment was made to her. Since Trish came on board the wages figure was much reduced.

Rent and insurance - little could be done to reduce these, with no grants available.

Light and heat had increased although the figure was artificial since a rebate had come in late.

Jenny Stringer commented from the floor that these costs had still increased considerably, and this was put down to a very cold late winter. Costs were apportioned from the village hall as a total - with income from the solar panels likely to have reduced due to the weather.

Repairs and renewals - waste disposal came to £331 and Hobbs Electrical had several call outs and the freezers required maintenance.

Sundry expenses - the volunteers' supper with the rest attributed to key cutting, printer ink etc.

General Admin - a subscription of £75 per year to Plunkett - an umbrella advisory group for similar businesses which it was considered worthwhile to continue with. And an annual fee of £65.00 to the Financial Conduct Authority. It was also noted that credit card costs continue to increase.

Whilst the surplus was not as good as last year, it was still good news as long as sales continue. He stressed the need to continue to promote the shop to a wider audience.

*Comments were invited from the floor:*

Jenny Stringer suggested we have a permanent advert at the Lake. Luke and Chris Eyles were noted as potential contacts there (*Action*). Wendy Kingdom noted that the shop gets little passing trade and asked about the possibility of signage at Beech Tree Cross and from the approach via the lake. The National Park may prove difficult in implementing this, there was a considerable cost implication and any unauthorised signs would be taken down. Trish noted that since the shop was within the village boundary, no signs could be sited. Iain Joyce asked if signs could be put on Pulham's Mill land. Peter Page suggested the best option was to sign the shop from the lake (*Action*). Jeannie Barnard asked if a notice should be put in The George (*Action*).

The Rev Paul Kingdom wanted to know the current bank balance: £10,781.

Trish pointed out that the shop can now take contactless payments. She also noted that payments by debit card should not attract a fee since she believed such transactions were not charged for. The Treasurer said he would look into this (*Action*).

Babs Page queried what profits were made from sales of the shop calendar and cards. The Chairman responded that whilst some 20 - 30 calendars were not sold out of the 150 ordered, all cards were sold quickly. He noted that the overall profit was in excess of £300.00. Provisional plans have been made for 100 calendars for 2019 with a greater number of cards to be ordered. (50 Each of four designs had been ordered previously).

The Chairman concluded with thanks to the Treasurer.

## 5. Election to the Management Committee

Since no candidates had come forward, the Chair proposed a vote to continue with the existing Shop Management Committee.

Proposed: Jenny Stringer. Seconded: Babs Page with a unanimous show of hands.

## 6. AOB

Jenny Stringer queried whether Bawdens Bakery were continuing since it had been sold. Trish confirmed that it had been taken over, but the manager remained and no changes to their service were envisaged.

The Shop would continue to provide a grocery hamper for the Show's auction (*Action*).

Trish gave a vote of thanks to all volunteers without whose support the shop would be unable to function.

Peter Page expressed his gratitude from the whole village, to Phil Barnard, the Management Committee and volunteers who turn up religiously and stressed that it behoves us all to spread the word to help increase sales.

Jenny Stringer hoped that the recent snow, making the village almost inaccessible, may hopefully have encouraged more to realise the benefits of a village shop.

The Chair concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for their support and for keeping the shop going.

Next meeting: Wednesday 24th April 2019 at 7.30pm (the date is only provisional at this stage.)

The meeting closed at 8.10pm