

## **Minutes of Yetholm Community Shop Ltd Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021 at 7pm in Wauchope Hall Town Yetholm**

Mr Alastair Hirst welcomed all present to the first A.G.M of Yetholm Community Shop and introduced the present Committee:

at the table:

Alastair Hirst – Chair

Susan Stewart – Secretary

Kay Greenhorn – Treasurer

Neil McIntyre

Sarah Cater

and, at the door: Graeme Wallace, overseeing the admission of shareholder attendees.

**Present:** 37 shareholders who included the present Management Committee were present. See separate sheet for names of those attending meeting.

**Apologies:** 20 apologies had been received. See separate sheet for apologies.

All papers had been made available in advance, and copies were also available to those present at the meeting. Mr Hirst asked that if there were any questions they would be taken after the formal agenda had been completed.

### **Presentation of Management Committee Reports on the Society's performance in financial year 2020-21 and its plans for 2021-22**

These were presented to all, and the following points were highlighted:

Shop taken over as going concern on 22/3/21

Shelves had been restocked

New chillers and EPOS (Electronic Point of Sale) system installed.

Roof repairs had been carried out

Grants had been applied for, the two largest awards being from the Scottish Land Fund for the purchase of the shop, and the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund for the refurbishment – both with very challenging deadlines

Bank Accounts had been opened which had been a lengthy and complicated process in the pandemic conditions of the time

Ongoing work ensuring all product lines were put onto EPOS system

New contracts were set up with main suppliers this included utility suppliers.

Employment Contracts for staff

Dealing with Licensing authorities – alcohol and tobacco

Interim Management then Transfer of the Post Office Counter.

All of the above were beset by complications and delays due to Brexit and Covid 19.

### **Presentation of Annual Accounts for 2020-21**

These had been prepared by Douglas Home and Co and were available at the meeting for all present.

At this point there are only three months of trading within the period covered by these accounts.

Over this period as a whole there was a profit showing of £724 before tax.

### **Presentation of Management Committee Report on state of membership**

Meeting was informed that present number of shareholders was 214 as per report submitted and available at meeting.

### **Resolution to dispense with formal audit and appointment of financial examiner for 2021 – 2022**

The resolution for the above was put to the meeting and adopted on a show of hands without dissent: to dispense with the requirement for a formal audit and to appoint Douglas Home and Co as financial examiner.

### **Declaration of results of the election for the new Management Committee**

Mr Hirst asked Mrs Stewart to announce the results of the voting process which had been counted and verified by the independent scrutineer Ms. Romie Scott:

Ballot for membership of the Society's Management Committee:

Sarah Cater – 22 votes

Catherine Greenhorn – 32 votes

Alastair Hirst – 30 votes

Neil McIntyre – 31 votes

Susan Stewart – 35 votes

All the above were declared duly elected to the Management Committee.

Mr Hirst noted that this meant only one change from the previous Committee, as Graeme Wallace had intimated, he did not wish to stand for re-election. He was thanked for all his work and input over the last year. Sarah Cater had

joined the committee as co-opted member some months earlier but had now been elected to serve as a full member.

Mr Hirst intimated to the meeting that the nomination of individual office-bearers would, in accordance with the Society's Rules, be undertaken by the Management Committee at their next meeting.

### **A.O.C.B**

Nil noted

### **Questions from the floor**

The following questions were asked and responded to by a member of the Committee: -

#### **Could we be a click and collect point for parcels?**

At the present time we are constrained by what we can do by the Post Office. The Society's PO Contract states we cannot do this at the present time. Another shareholder commented that the insurance aspect here might merit consideration.

Was also highlighted to the meeting that the PO is a community service which at the present time is costing us money – staffing costs for hours that the counter has to be covered exceeds the fees the Society receives on PO transactions.

Was also reiterated that we had only taken over PO formally on 15/11/21 so there were a number of operating and reporting practices which we as a management group still required clarity on.

#### **Could we display and market a wider range of products – examples given were red topped milk and Windolene?**

This question was answered, and the following points were highlighted – if there is a specific product that was asked for either to the staff or committee then we will look at stocking this as we move forward. Items which have already been introduced include gluten free items, artisan bread and craft beers.

We are conscious of pricing competition (wines for example) and stock a large level of price-marked items in the shop.

#### **Could we publicise more of the services that the PO can offer?**

For example, payment of bills, including Council Tax and the ability to pay in cheques and withdraw cash through the PO.

Publicising these and other financial services were things that we were hoping to move forward on as we became more familiar with the fuller range of PO services available.

**Could we have a suggestion box placed somewhere in the shop?**

This was discussed and agreed as something that could be moved on with relative ease.

Concern also expressed by one shareholder that the immediate front displays you see when entering the shop are crisps, fizzy juice and sweets which perhaps did not give a very good first impression of the business.

Answered by generally agreeing with this and that this was not ideal, but we were constrained by layout and location of legacy equipment and fittings, and we intimated that refurbishment would bring many opportunities for development in this area.

**Could we clarify if there was an upper and lower age limit for volunteering?**

There is no upper age-limit, and we were in the process of investigating with SBC what the age limits were for volunteering opportunities for High School-aged young people. This role would be particularly beneficial to all at the weekends. Alcohol and cigarette sales could not be undertaken by anyone under 18.

**What was the relationship between the Management Committee and the paid shop staff and does the shop need a manager?**

This was discussed. Since the retirement of the previous manager a vacuum had certainly been created as many of the regular day-to-day tasks had fallen to the Management Committee members personally, although was explained that two of the present staff had taken on some of these roles.

At the present time there is no one person identified as the manager and the Committee were in the process of looking at advertising for a development manager to fill this need in the service.

**Question around accounts and what were figures based on from March – June.**

Replied by saying the figures were based on Covid takings but restrictions were lifted in May and the staycation and holiday lets and hotels had produced a positive uplift on takings over this short period of time.

We would have to wait and see what the actual effects of “normalised trading” were.

**Question about depreciation of building over 25 years.**

This was discussed and explained that accounting depreciation is a method used to account for the purchase cost of the building over time; it bears no relation to ‘market value’.

**Question asked about use of professionals and their subsequent cost?**

Explained that this point had been considered in monies applied for and raised to date.

**One question received by email re fruit and veg and its quality?**

Committee agreed that a better job could be done with storage and display of fresh items.

The new floor plan within the refurbishment plans would make this hope a reality and easier to manage.

Additional to this query was the EPOS system and products being easily identified by staff and volunteers when working at the till. This is work in progress and items are being added and updated regularly on system.

**Do we have regular meetings with the paid staff?**

Meeting was informed that the first formal meeting with all staff was due to take place the following day. One-to-one meetings with staff had all taken place, and issues identified were being worked on including more written communication.

Two shareholders thanked all of the Management Committee and everyone behind the scenes for all their hard work.

There being no further questions Mr Hirst closed the meeting at 8.40 pm and thanked everyone for their attendance.