

EARLAMMS

Community Café, Shop and Gallery

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Thursday January 24th 2019

Agenda:

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Chairman's Report
4. Financial Report
5. Any other business

The Chair, John Novak, welcomed all, explaining that the Annual Report, available for all attendees, was an overview of the year. Full reports for all shareholders were available on request.

12 shareholders attended, of whom 6 were management members.

Apologies were received from 10 shareholders.

The Chair gave a verbal overview of his written report.

The original goals set out for Earlams continue to be achieved, however there is disappointment that while a high proportion of local residents recognise this, there is still only a modest number who support Earlams through regular purchases or volunteering.

The management team having reviewed the mission statement, continue to give more emphasis to developing further social inclusion and promotion of wellbeing. Workshops and social activities have been well attended and work with other agencies has supported the young and adults with additional needs.

A Defibrillator for community use has been purchased by local organisations and other donations and CPR training is to be offered.

Reorganisation in the shop and the construction of the Cabin has enhanced the visual aspect of both the shop and cafe.

Liz Jones, Jan Dixon and Helen White were thanked for their continued leadership of the teams in the Shop, Cafe and Gallery.

The employment of a manager to have overview of the whole establishment has been deemed necessary and has had a positive effect upon the smoother running of Earlams.

The fiscal aspect of Earlams has been an important factor in the overall management. In response to much research completed by our treasurer, Liz Jones, it is definitive that we cannot achieve charitable

status with our current structure. This will be an important area to address in the forthcoming year if we are to be financially prudent.

In July we were asked to consider being proposed for the Queens Award for Volunteers by the Lords Lieutenant's Office. Having received a visit as part of the process, we await the outcome which should be in May 2019.

The Chair went on to remember those who have been very important to the ongoing success of Earlams but who sadly are no longer with us. This was echoed by Simon Poyser and other attendees.

Comments from the floor.....

It was observed that involvement of villagers could be enhanced by regular newsletters and investigation into what products etc were wanted in the shop, for example.

The village has been leafleted about events, research into what was wanted in the shop and the need for volunteers but had received little response regarding the latter. It was accepted that regular newsletters may be one way forward.

A comment was also made questioning the shortened overview of the Financial Statement. In reply, it was stated that it was not compulsory to show all the figures for the AGM but full financial figures were available to take away on request.

Simon Poyser questioned the difficulty with charitable status. He felt it should not be happening, since the original setting up, with advice from the Plunkett Foundation, indicated that Earlams could have Charitable Status. The treasurer, Liz Jones, however has received replies from HMRC, the Inspector of Taxes saying this is not feasible, the bank also advised that charges cannot be waived under current status. The Chair commented that the management team will be taking further professional advice.

Simon Poyser will email the information he has regarding this to the Chair so that the management team can research further.

Earlams, as it had been reorganised (ie sharing of the spaces by the 3 aspects of the organisation) was recognised as a positive step by Ian Jones. This was agreed by others.

Financial Report

Peter Weigh, a co-opted member of the management team at present, commented that, whilst the accounts showed a very small loss we had, in fact, made a trading profit of around £10,000. The opportunity had been taken to depreciate the new cabin by that amount to eliminate Corporation Tax liability and the accountant had confirmed this was in order.

Nonetheless, going forward the Inspector of Taxes has confirmed that we do not have charitable

status and are therefore liable to pay tax on any declared profit. We will therefore be seeking to change the legal status of Earlams to obtain charitable status. Legal advice will be sought. Nothing could be guaranteed at the moment and the management team will keep members informed on progress.

Further questioning regarding charitable status and a full description of the financial situation was asked for by some attendees. The full financial statement is available. As was already stated by the Chair and Peter Weigh, the organisation of Earlams will be looked into.

AOB

The present management team have one more year before re-election. John Novak welcomed anyone who would like to join the team. Andrew Hewitt felt he might be willing to join later on in the year.

Peter Weigh, a co-opted member of the team, was proposed to become a full member. Liz Jones proposed. Dorothy Oldham seconded. This was accepted.

Denis Champ had concerns on two fronts. The website, he felt was disappointing and needed updating. Also the food hygiene rating was disappointing.

It was recognised that the website needed updating. Time, energy and skills were sometimes against the team.

The Food, Health and Hygiene Officer had been invited back but had not responded as yet. With a manager in place now there was much more consistency and improvement generally.

Barbara Mills, a shareholder, had made repeated attempts to obtain a Tax Certificate for her shares but had received no luck. Vince Pagent, Vice Chair, apologised for this. It had been looked into but was proving awkward. It would be now seen as a priority.

John went on to explain that the Earlams Discount Card had been withdrawn and replaced by a Loyalty Card which seemed to be working more successfully.

Andrew Hewitt thanked the team and volunteers for their hard work. This was echoed by Simon Poyser.