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# 45th Annual General Meeting Minutes

Location: Waterford Suite, Christchurch Harbour Hotel  
Date: Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022  
Time: 11.00 am

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## 1. Welcome

The President opened the meeting by welcoming all members present.

## 2. Apologies for Absence

Six apologies had been received.

## 3. Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 (*Appendix 1*)

Unanimously agreed without amendment following a proposal by Mike Harrold; seconded by James Robertson.

## 4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

## 5. Treasurer's Report (*Appendices 2 & 3*)

Copies of the Treasurer's Report and Annual Accounts for the year-ending December 31<sup>st</sup> 2021, are attached. It was unanimously agreed that the accounts should be adopted following a proposal by Graham Newton which was seconded by Maurice Dowling.

In response to a question from David Sutcliffe, Graham Newton explained the purpose of the President's Discretionary Fund and the uses to which it would be put.

David queried whether section 5 of the club rules which already allows committee members to spend up to £50 in the course of their duties would suffice.

GN stated that section 5 was to do with the functioning of the club vis-à-vis expenses, whereas the £100 Discretionary Fund was more to do with accounting process and to enable the identification of a sum within the accounts that the President could use, for example, to pay for a charitable donation sent upon a member's funeral.

DS asked if the fund should, therefore, also be included in the rules.

The President agreed that this should probably be the case and advised the meeting that he was constituting a sub-committee to review the club rules in their entirety during the coming year, with the aim of presenting a clearer, more appropriate version to the next AGM for approval. Hopefully, this would put an end to the continuous drip feed of minor rule changes that we have seen over recent years.

### **6. Independent Examiner's Report** (*Appendix 4*)

The Treasurer drew the meeting's attention to the report, which confirmed that the accounts accord with the accounting records of the club and with the requirements of the Charities Act 1993. (The document was compiled by Mr. David Howell, the Independent Examiner.)

### **7. Subscription & Fees** (*Appendix 5*)

Graham Newton, Hon. Club Treasurer) presented the attached paper to the meeting and invited comments on his proposals for the changes outlined.

Mike Harrold endorsed the proposals stating that members had to accept that as prices rise, they must accept that fees too must inevitably increase. He also advised that it may be necessary to review the fees again at the half-year.

GN informed the meeting that hotel costs had been agreed for the year and that these were reflected in the proposals.

David Sutcliffe queried whether it would be possible to re-introduce the joining fee once abolished and was concerned that current members may feel aggrieved if they had paid such a fee while future members did not.

GN stated that the aim of the proposals was to be fair to all members, setting fees which reflect the needs of the club and the way in which it is funded. All events are now self-funded, as are meetings, so there is no need to charge new members an unnecessary fee to raise additional funds. The high initial costs on joining the club may serve as a discouragement and appear money-grabbing. Graham also advised that it was not the intention to re-introduce the joining fee but wanted to consider the permanent abolition of the fee as part of a wider review of the club rules.

Simon Weinberg thought the operating costs were fair and that the proposed approach was very egalitarian.

Graham Newton proposed that the recommended changes be introduced forthwith. The proposal was seconded by Harold Jones and passed with one vote against.

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### **8. Change of President**

The meeting welcomed Keith Puttick back after his recent illness. Keith thanked the members for their support while he was away and made particular mention of Richard Porter who had been called upon to step-in as President at a moment's notice. Keith formally handed over the chain of office to Richard Porter for the start of his year in office.

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### **9. Election of Officers and Committee for 2021** (*Appendix 6*)

Following a proposal by John Batchelor, seconded by Geoff Wilson, the officers listed in *appendix 6* were unanimously elected "en bloc".

Les Denmead has kindly agreed to act as Club Steward for a further year.

### **10. Appointment of Independent Examiner**

It was confirmed that David Howell was prepared to serve a further term as Independent Examiner. David's reappointment was proposed by Graham Newton, seconded by Chris Taylor, and agreed unanimously.

### **15. Any Other Business**

Andrew Harris asked whether individual photographs could be added to the members' directory. Richard Porter responded that he would review the matter but noted that all new members now provided a biography, incorporating their photograph, and that this was distributed to members.

John Jordan suggested that the committee contact Boscombe & Southbourne Probus whose directory does contain members' photos.

Roy Townshend advised that photographs of all members can be found on the club's website. Roy also mentioned that he was of the understanding that the Boscombe & Southbourne directory was not going to be produced in the future due to it being too expensive to produce.

There was no other business.

### **16. President's Closing Remarks (*Appendix 7*)**

Richard Porter closed the meeting with a report on the year, and by thanking the members present for their attendance.

# 44th Annual General Meeting Minutes (without appendices)

Location: Zoom Meeting  
Date: Tuesday, 2nd March, 2021  
Time: 10.00 am

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**1. Welcome**

The President opened the meeting by welcoming all members present.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

Three apologies had been received.

**3. Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 3rd March 2020**

Unanimously agreed without amendment following a proposal by Ken Heap; seconded by Richard Smith.

**4. Matters Arising**

The President identified 3 items (see *appendix 1*) within the previous minutes that had yet to be actioned by the committee and proposed that these be carried forward for consideration once face-to-face meetings could resume. The proposal was seconded by Brian Hollowell and unanimously agreed.

**5. Treasurer's Report (*Appendices 2 & 3*)**

Graham Newton emphasised that the annual accounts for the year-ending December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020, would be audited as soon as Covid restrictions allowed and would then be presented at a future meeting for approval by members.

**6. Subscription & Fees**

The annual subscription for new members is based upon the time of year they join, with the fee reducing in steps as the year progresses. (See *appendix 4*.) Graham Newton proposed a similar scale be used this year for all members, such that the fee levied is linked to the date when the Club resumes meetings at the Harbour Hotel. The proposal was seconded by Cliff Putterford and unanimously agreed.

**7. President's Report**

Maurice Dowling's report on his year as President is attached (*appendix 5*).

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## 8. Change of President

Maurice Dowling handed over the presidency to Keith Puttick.

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## 9. Election of Officers and Committee for 2021

Following a proposal by Keith Puttick, seconded by Maurice Dowling, the officers listed in *appendix 6* were unanimously elected “en bloc”.

Les Denmead has kindly agreed to act as Club Steward for a further year.

## 10. Appointment of Independent Examiner

It was confirmed that David Howell was prepared to serve a further term as Independent Examiner. David’s reappointment was proposed by Graham Newton, seconded by James Robertson, and agreed unanimously.

## 15. Any Other Business

Cliff Putterford informed the meeting that he had been in contact with the Harbour Hotel and that they advised that we should be able to recommence our meetings with effect from Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> July.

Andrew Harris queried whether membership levels would be maintained once the club resumed its meetings as people had found other things to do with their time during lockdown. He asked that the committee reconsider whether to utilise Zoom for monthly presentations to members in order to maintain contact. Andrew pointed out that after some initial reticence, a significant proportion of the membership of Boscombe and Southbourne Probus Club had successfully attended regular meetings in this way.

Andrew also asked the committee to consider re-commencing social events as early as May, rather than wait for the July meeting, as Government guidelines are likely to allow for outdoor meetings of up to 30 persons at this time.

Richard Smith wished to record his gratitude to Brian Hollowell for Brian’s help and guidance whilst the two have been working together as Social Secretaries. The meeting echoed Richard’s comments and thanked Brian for his excellent work on behalf of the club, over the past three years.

## 16. President’s Closing Remarks

Keith Puttick closed the meeting, thanking the 21 members present for their attendance via Zoom. A copy of Keith’s speech is attached as *appendix 7*.

## Treasurer's Annual Report

2021, like 2020 was significantly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. It is not only the immediate problems that we have faced trying to ensure that we keep safe, we have seen members struck down by other health issues for which quick medical intervention did not happen, we have had members finding that the time was right to relocate nearer to their families and we have seen members taking a cautious approach to attending meetings, preferring not to till the pandemic is less prevalent in the community. In short, our club is smaller now than at the start of the pandemic and attendance at meetings has dropped significantly from the low forties to the high twenties/low thirties.

All this has had a significant impact on how we shape our finances:

- Firstly, we have moved to being a cash-free Club with members' contributions being made by cheque or Bacs.
- Secondly, we have restructured the way we plan our finances so that, like the weekend away and our social events, the fee payable for our monthly meeting is set to reflect the cost of staging the meeting and lunch.
- Thirdly, to ensure that we keep our reserves at about the level advised by our IFE (Independent Financial Examiner) the committee agrees both the level of expenditure requiring cover from the Subscription and, also, how much members will need to pay.

You will see the results of this in the paper outlining the proposals for 2022 fees and subscription. We believe that this system is the fairest to all members and will keep our finances in a healthy state into the future.

Your committee has also made one more change for 2022, creating what we have called, "**The President's Discretionary Fund**".

At the moment there is no provision for any occasional payments based on need or goodwill. The Committee has decided that a ring-fenced sum, within the controls exercised by the Treasurer on behalf of the Committee and the Club, would be a beneficial and wise thing to create. From it would come payments to the chosen charity when a member dies. It has been the wish of some Presidents to give token gifts to the ladies at the President's Lunch, but this was not only dependent on the wish of the President to make such a gift, but also on whether he, personally, was in a financial position to do so. Cards sent in moments of sickness or bereavement by the President on behalf of the Club would also be a very appropriate use of this ring-fenced fund.

The Committee has decided that this would not be a separate account but would remain part of our main account, so the Treasurer would remain responsible for overall control of all the Club's income and expenditure. This Fund could be additionally "topped up" during a presidential term of office but only with the approval of the Committee.

Assuming that the proposed annual subscription level is agreed at the AGM, your subscription is due in the month following the AGM. If you pay by BACS our bank details are:

Sort code: 30-92-02  
Account name: "Probus Club of Christchurch" (*This is the name to put on all cheques too*).  
Account number 00137984.

The reference is your surname, your initial, probusmem e.g "bloggsfprobusmem" (to pay for the monthly meeting "mem" at the end of the reference is replaced by "mtg" and for a social event by "soc").

Also, it would greatly help me if those who pay for our monthly meeting by BACS could do so by the end of play on the Friday before the meeting.

Graham Newton  
February 2022  
(Hon. Treasurer)

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT - YEAR ENDING 31st December 2021**

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
<b><u>Income</u></b>		
Subscriptions & joining fees etc	995	1247
Lunches	4472	2563
Ties & Badges	24	0
Social events	4627	606
Presidents Lunch	0	2196
Club Weekend	9097	1410
In advance 2022/2021 Lunches	351	44
In advance 2022/2021 Social events	433	0
In Memoriam Fay donation	0 54	470 11
TOTAL	<u>20053</u>	<u>8547</u>
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>		
Ties & badges	98	0
Administration	360	476
Website	0	82
Lunches	4643	2608
Presidents Lunch	0	1983
Presidents Lunch 2022/2021 (deposit)	0	0
Christmas lunch 2022/2021 (deposit)	0	800
Insurance	88	86
Social Events	3784	745
Club Weekend	9097	1410
In Memoriam 1/3	50	550
TOTAL	<u>18120</u>	<u>8740</u>
Deficit/Surplus for the year	1933	-193
Balance B/F from previous year	2733	2926
Balance C/F to following year	<u>4665</u>	<u>2733</u>
Deficit/Surplus for the year		
<b><u>Represented by</u></b>		
Bank Account	4666.44	2706
Cash in hand	0	27
TOTAL	<u>4666</u>	<u>2732.62</u>

- Cash in Hand Fund closed 9th April 2021. £27.00 paid into Bank Account

**Notes to the Accounts**

1. These accounts have been prepared on the receipts and payments basis and include only amounts received and paid during the year.
2. **Ties and badges** Stock used for new Members and President's handover as well as sales to existing members.

Hon. Treasurer - Graham Newton

**Report of the Independent Examiner to the Members of the Probus Club of Christchurch.**

I have examined the Income and Expenditure Account relating to the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021, My examination did not amount to an audit but was carried out in accordance with the general directions issued by the Charity Commissioners for the independent examination of accounts for smaller charities.

Nothing has come to my attention in the course of my examination which gives me reason to believe otherwise than that the accounts accord with the accounting records of the Club and that such records accord with the requirements of the Charities Act 1993. I am not aware of any other matter to which attention needs to be drawn.

David B Howell  
26 Kingsbere Gardens  
Haslemere Avenue  
Highcliffe  
Dorset BH23 5BQ

3<sup>rd</sup> February 2022

## Subscription and Fees April 2022 – March 2023

### **Joining Fee = £15.00**

The current fee gives the first impression of membership of the Club being expensive and should be abolished – At a new members first meeting before the intervention of Covid-19 they currently pay the Joining fee (£15.00) + the annual subscription (£25.00) + the meeting fee (£22.00) = £62.00.

**Current Fee = £15.00 The Committee proposal for 2022-23 is that the fee be abolished with a trial for 2022-3 by setting the fee at £0.00**

### **Existing Member Annual Subscription**

Based on the fairest way to finance the club by having all meetings and events individually self-financing and using our annual subscription for other items of expenditure and to maintain a healthy but not excessive reserve.

- 1 Our reserves at the beginning of 2022 stand at £3,882 which means we are approximately £900 (£882) above our reserve range advised by our Independent Examiner (£2,500 - £3,000).
- 2 The predictive budget for items that will draw on our reserves and the annual subscription is as follows:

Purchases – badges ties etc	100
Administration	400
Website	100
Insurance	90
Free meals for prospective members and honoured guests (1 per month)	324
Contingency	86
TOTAL	1,100

- 3 We need to reduce our reserves by adjustment to the annual subscription. We can safely deduct £900 from our reserves, leaving us still in a very strong position financially. We will then only need to raise £200 from the subscriptions. With 40+ members we only need £5.00 per member this year. This will raise the required sum to bring our reserves to or near the ceiling of our range and also counter the “shock” of the meeting fee rise in January.

**Current Fee = £25.00 (temporarily for Covid reasons fee £20.00). The Committee proposal for 2022-23 is that the annual subscription be set at £5.00**

## **New Member Annual Subscription**

The current arrangement is that /new members pay all or a proportion of the annual subscription dependent on the date of their induction into the Club as follows:

April - June	full fee
July - September	75% of current full fee
October - December	50% of current full fee
January - March	no fee

The Committee proposal for 2022-23 is that there be no change to this arrangement.

## **Monthly meeting Fee**

- o Hotel Charge  
Set by the Hotel. The Committee does not anticipate that this will change 2022-23 and would negotiate hard if any attempt were made to raise it, including (yet again) looking at what other venue options there might be.

Current Fee = £22.00

- o Staff Gratuity  
*We have not increased this in the time that any of our committee members have been part of the Club.*

Currently £1.00 per member. The Committee proposal for 2022-23 is that the Staff Gratuity be raise to £1.50 per member.

- o Speaker Costs  
The fees requested by speakers vary but the going rate seems to be about £70.00. The meal offer is normal among Probus Clubs and we would not want the reputation of being a mean club – it would make our speaker secretary’s task much more difficult. So the cost to us is an estimated average of £93.50 (Speaker fee + hotel charge + gratuity) per speaker which requires:

23	paying the current fee (£4.00)
27	paying the proposed fee (£3.50).
32	paying a reduced fee (£3.00)
39	paying a reduced fee (£2.50) [This would reduce the current fee by £1.00]

Currently £4.00 per member. The Committee proposal for 2022-23 is that the Speaker cost element be reduced £3.50 per member.

Total Current Fee = £27.00 The Committee proposals for 2022-23, as outlined above means mean that, if agreed, there would be no change to the current fee

## **Attendance at Meeting without lunch**

Current Fee = £5.00 The Committee does not propose for 2022-23 any change to this fee.

## Election of Officers and Committee 2022-23

**The following members are standing for election:**

Vice President & Welfare Officer	James Robertson
Secretary	Maurice Dowling
Treasurer	Graham Newton
Social Secretary	Keith Rutherford
Social Secretary	Chris Mosley
Programme Secretary	Robin Haggett
Dining Secretary	Cliff Putterford
Press and Media Secretary	Graeme Gibson
Webmaster	Roy Townshend

Note: Les Denmead has kindly volunteered to act as the Club Steward

### Presidents Notes

Well what a year and one that I hope is not repeated to soon. You are all aware of the health issues that have plagued our Presidents year and we are all delighted to see Keith back with us in such rude health.

We end the year that has at last seen us return to some normality. For two years we have seen our lives put on hold. A period that has divided opinion and that has robbed us of two years, at a time of life when every year counts.

Over this period we have faced the covid epidemic and at last we are hopefully at the end. It has not been without it's problems with our policy with some having a different opinion. This your committee has respected. We had elected to follow government and hotel guidelines. For the majority of our members this has meant that we have had the opportunity of continuing with a social programme and again for those who have attended it has given some light at the end of a tunnel. I do hope that the members who felt unhappy about the lack of isolation can now return and enjoy the fellowship that is Probus.

Today marks the end of my apprenticeship and I must thank the committee for the support and guidance they have given. In particular my thanks must go to our secretary, David Dunsmore who has stepped down after sterling service. He has had the difficult job of keeping me onside and making sure I have had best advice. We also lost Richard Smith, our social secretary. He has quietly gone about his job with professionalism and aplomb. Both will be sadly missed.

Looking to the future we have a excellent programme with lots of variety guaranteed fun and excellent value. A committee based on experience and commitment.

You will recall that almost every AGM a change in the rules has always been on the agenda, except this one. We have been dealing with a set of rules that are very old and in some ways not fit for purpose. Rather than making a small change every year we are setting up a small sub committee to review the rules and bring the result to the next AGM for ratification. I would welcome a non committee member to serve on the committee and would be delighted if a previous president could offer sage advice to the group.

Membership is also high on the agenda particularly when you consider that in the last 5 years 25% of our members have left by death, moving or ill health. The continued introduction of new members is vital for the future of our club.

Another small change this year is the way we appoint our welfare officer. From this year the role will be undertaken by the Vice President. We see the advantages of this in that the VP will have greater contact with the membership in a year when (in normal circumstances) he would enjoy a quite year. The retiring president will still have a non officio place on the committee following his year in office.

Finally I am proud to hold the office of President and promise to fulfil this role to the best of my ability.