



FRENSHAM VILLAGE SHOP

COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY (CIC)

Serving Frensham and Dockenfield in West Surrey



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, 1st May, 2012, at 8pm

Church of the Good Shepherd,

Dockenfield

MINUTES

1. INTRODUCTION AND APOLOGIES

Present: **Committee:** Charles Maxwell (Vice Chairman), Patrick Rendell (Company Secretary), Sue Wicks, Nick Houston, Len Davis, Mayonne Coldicott, Kerry Weeks, Andy Barker, Seb Fox, Mark Walker, Harry Glover.
Shop Manager: Don Nel
Twenty six residents of Frensham and Dockenfield.

Minutes: Janice Davis

Apologies: David O’Gorman (retiring Chairman), John Nettell (Treasurer), Christine Oliver

The Vice-Chairman, Charles Maxwell, welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that David O’Gorman had decided to step down as Chairman. He had seen us through a very difficult period, with the move from the Portacabin into the new shop, and was now taking a well-earned rest. He wished to express our thanks for all his hard work.

This meant that we now had to elect a new Chairperson.

2. ELECTION OF THE NEW CHAIRPERSON

The Vice-Chairman, Charles Maxwell proposed that Sue Wicks be elected as the new Chairwoman. This was seconded by Mayonne Coldicott, and passed unanimously by the meeting.

He then handed over the conduct of the meeting to Sue Wicks.

3. MINUTES OF 2011 AGM

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on Thursday, 5th May, 2011, were unanimously approved by the meeting and signed by Sue Wicks as a true and accurate record.

4. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS.

In the absence of the Treasurer, Len Davis presented the attached Summarised Accounts and Notes.

Patty Davey said she felt that we should not lose sight of the fact that the aim of the shop was not to make large profits, but to provide a service to the community. Len agreed, but said it was also important that we did not run at a loss. In answer to a question he said that fixed assets stood at £15,400 of which stock was valued at £10,500.

As there were no further questions, he asked the meeting to approve the accounts. These were passed unanimously.

5. CHAIRWOMAN’S REPORT.

The new Chairwoman, Sue Wicks, welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that David O’Gorman had been our Chairman for the last 3 years. Having worked through a difficult but successful phase in the growth of the shop, he had now decided to retire. All of the committee wished to thank him for all his hard work and efforts in getting us where we are today. With some trepidation, she had agreed to take over as Chairwoman and she was pleased to say that Janice Davis had agreed to carry on as minutes secretary.

She went on to summarise the main events of the year:-

- **The move from the cabin to the new premises.**

This was project managed by Andy Barker, supported by villagers Mayonne Coldicott, Nick Houston and Harry Glover, and the actual move was achieved, over a weekend, by shifts of volunteers with wheelbarrows full of stock. She wished to thank everyone involved.

- **The shop launch.**

Sue and Don put together an opening event which was held outside the new premises on June 11th. Two star guests were invited, **Damon Hill, and Jeremy Hunt** who cut the ribbon.

- **Don Nel's accident**

Don, the Shop Manager, fell, and broke his ankle and was off work for 3 months. Everyone pulled together and made sure the shop ran as smoothly as possible. She thanked all those concerned, in particular Mayonne Coldicott, Valerie Bowers and Christine Oliver. Madeleine Pocknell took charge of contacting the volunteers and making sure the rota was filled. She is continuing in this role for which we are very grateful.

- **The sale of the cabin and the move**

Mayonne was in charge of the sale of the cabin and will give an update later. Andy Barker was committed to raising money through local grants for the move, and he will also update us later. Sue thanked them both for their efforts.

- **Changes that have occurred since the move**

1. A new bench in memory of Paddy Haines, who was our past Treasurer is now in place outside the shop. This was purchased with funds donated from the scarecrow weekend event.
2. We now have a "new" "**Edward VIIth**" **post-box** outside the shop.
3. We now take credit card payments.
4. Volunteers have smart aprons with the FVS logo.
5. There are over 40 suppliers compared to the 7 we had in the cabin.
6. Twenty-five active volunteers working on the shop floor all of whom have been fully trained on the new EPOS system.

- **EPOS and what it does for us**

EPOS is an Electronic point of sale system.

The **Fidelity** GPOS system that was finally selected was being used very successfully by a shop in **Plymtree** (Devon) and ultimately became the one recommended by the Plunkett organization. Nick Houston took this task on and has been project managing it.

The potential benefits of EPOS include, accurate and detailed records of sales; automatic record of VAT; integrated barcode reader and weighing scales; faster and more accurate till operation; and a wealth of easily accessed information in the back office to help manage the business more efficiently.

The system was delivered at the beginning of March, allowing time for data to be entered, screens customized, and volunteers to be fully trained before going 'live' on April 2nd. Whilst there have been many minor issues to resolve, the implementation has proved to be remarkably trouble-free. There is still some way to go before we have all product costs on the system and have a proven data maintenance procedure in place. This will give us accurate data on product sales and margins across all areas. As time goes on we expect to see the information derived from the system starting to improve our bottom line results.

Sue thanked Nick and his dedicated team for all their hard work in setting this up. She also, personally thanked Gill Nel who has been working in the background, and does a tremendous amount of volunteer work for us.

- **Newspapers**

Since the end of February Harry Glover has been implementing a 10 week newspaper trial. This has, however, meant we are now opening on a Sunday between 9 – 11am and on Bank Holidays. Harry will go into more detail later, especially with regard to support and commitment.

- **Long term plans**

1. **Staff changes:** Don is now working Monday to Friday full time in the shop and Saturday mornings in the Post Office. He is now able to focus more on the retail side.
Christine and Valerie are now full time in the Post Office.
2. **Frensham Fayre:** This is in June, and Don will be asking a select number of suppliers to attend and hold a tasting event.
3. **Marindin Hall:** Don is also going to be working with his suppliers to hold a tasting event at the Marindin Hall in September.
4. **Marketing plan:** This has been drawn up and will be implemented in the near future.
5. **Liquor license:** This has been extended to cover the new opening hours.

Sue concluded by saying that without a great team of volunteers working in the shop, dedicated committee

members, the shop manager, Don, the Post Office staff, Christine and Valerie, and not forgetting the most important people, the local community, we would not be where we are today. She thanked everyone for their continuous support.

6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Vice Chairman: Charles Maxwell
Company Secretary: Patrick Rendell
Treasurer: John Nettell
Minutes Secretary: Janice Davis

The Vice-Chairman and Officers were unanimously re-elected.

Proposed by: Chris Haines; Seconded by: Andy Barker

7. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

Andy Barker has resigned from the Committee.

The following Committee Members were unanimously elected:

Mayonne Coldicott; Len Davis; Sebastian Fox; Harry Glover; Nick Houston; Martin Wake; Mark Walker; Kerry Weeks.

Proposed by: Phillipa Hall; Seconded by: Ian Milne

8. MANAGING THE MOVE INTO THE NEW PREMISES

Andy Barker said that the estimated cost in December 2010 for the move had been £27,724 (which included VAT) and the actual cost was £25,525.66 (mainly exclusive of VAT). "The Friends of the Village Shop" had contributed a significant amount from various fund-raising events, and grants for equipping the new shop had been received from the Farnham Institute Charity, Surrey Hills Leader Fund and Surrey RASP. A sum of £3,533.00 had been received from the Frensham Scarecrow Festival. (60% of the money was raised by the local community and 40% from grants.) He thanked everyone for their support and also Nick Houston, Richard Potter and Harry Glover who had done all the fitting out of the new shop and saved us a considerable amount of money. Funding from the Frensham Fayre had paid for the EPoS system, and monies from the sale of the cabin had not been included.

9. SALE OF THE CABIN

Mayonne Coldicott summarised the sale of the cabin as follows:-

"In 2007 The Plunkett Foundation gave us the idea for using a shipping container as temporary shop premises. It served us well for 3.5 years.

In 2010, when preparing the move to our new premises, the Foundation advertised our unit equipped with counters, shelving, aircon etc. through their network of Regional Advisors, prompting the majority of the 24 serious responses. Enquirers wanted premises for everything from a village shop to a library and ship's chandlery, from as far afield as Southern Ireland and Yorkshire.

By August, of 3 villages in the frame, we agreed to sell to Kingsbury Episcopi, in Somerset for £17k. It was finally moved in December 2011, and opened for its first day of trading on 24th March 2012.

If you visit it now, it will seem very familiar to you. They refer to the shop as their Tardis, and are absolutely delighted about how it's becoming a community hub."

10. NEWSPAPERS - WHERE IS THE LOCAL SUPPORT?

Harry Glover reported on the FVS Newspaper and Magazine trial and gave some of the background involved:

He said that the shop had been selling newspapers and magazines on a 'sale or return' basis for a full 10-week trial, which had now been extended for a further 4 weeks. Before embarking on the trial, a survey had shown that the numbers of 'expressions of interest' looked promising, and the Shop Committee decided that it was worth trialling.

He went on to express his thanks (and those of Don and the Shop Committee) to the several volunteers who have made it all possible. Without their support, the newspaper trial would not have happened.

- **Newspapers**

There is a minimum Sales Value set by the wholesaler, which is equivalent to **£262 pw @ retail prices.**

(Newspapers only; magazines do NOT count towards this figure.) Weekly sales to date have averaged **£248**, so another £14 pw of sales are needed to avoid a penalty. (This shortfall equates (for example) to only 2 extra copies of the *Daily Telegraph* per day). Only once in 10 weeks has the 'target' of £262 /week been exceeded. The penalty is based on wholesale costs and to date would have averaged £11 pw.

- **How much profit is there?**

After payment of delivery charges, the profit works out at about 12½%.

- **What newspapers have we sold?**

Most of the national daily and Sunday papers, and in the first 10 weeks the two best selling daily papers have been the *Telegraph* and the *Mail*, which have sold in almost equal numbers. However, due to the higher cover price, the revenue from the *Telegraph* far outstrips that from the *Mail*.

On Sundays, there is a different picture with the *Sunday Times* being the best seller. It is now accounting for nearly half the number of papers sold.

- **Magazines**

A range of weekly, fortnightly and monthly magazines were stocked, but sales averaged only **£17 pw**. The very low level of sales did not justify the amount of hassle involved, and magazines have been discontinued.

- **Have we had an increased footfall?**

Don believes that footfall and turnover have increased, and says that sales of the *Farnham Herald* have increased by 50%. (Len said that the turnover figures do not necessarily confirm this).

- **Paperwork and volunteers**

The daily procedures have been completed by a number of volunteers, several of whom are able to fulfil the paperwork requirements unaided if necessary.

Despite an appeal for more help, no more volunteers were forthcoming. Harry will try an e-mail appeal using the Shop Volunteer list.

He concluded by thanking David O'Gorman for arranging the trial.

During the lively discussion which followed, there was a strong feeling that the sale of newspapers should continue, and that 6 months would be a fair trial period.

11. Industrial Provident Societies (IPS's) and Community Shops

The guest speaker, Helen Melia, who is the local representative of the Plunkett Foundation opened her talk by describing the work of the Foundation which supports community shops. She commented on the number of people present and said it was a tribute to the success of the Frensham Village Shop. She said most of the community shops supported one another and gave as an example the setting up of the Epos system.

The FVS is set up as a Community Interest Company (CIC), but 70% of community shops are set up using an alternative structure ie Industrial Provident Society (IPS). She went on to describe the advantages of IPS's in which every share-holder has a vote and the shares can be used as a way of raising capital (an alternative to loan-bonds). In the case of a crisis all shareholders could be called together. She was unsure how appropriate it would be for us.

In answer to a question from the floor she confirmed that FVS has joined the Plunkett Membership Scheme and receives support from the organisation. She also confirmed that the IPS organisations still had to pay Corporation Tax.

The Chairwoman thanked the speaker.

12. AOB

A question was raised regarding repayment of the Loan Bonds now that the shop was doing so well. The Vice-Chairman, Charles Maxwell, replied that holders of the 2nd tranche of bonds would shortly receive a letter giving the holders the option of either having their money returned or donating it to the shop funds. The financial state of the shop would then be reviewed to see whether it would be possible to offer the return of the 1st tranche of bonds.

As there were no further questions the Chairwoman thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting.