

The Friends of Colyton Library (FoCL)
Minutes of Annual General Meeting 7th March 2016

1. Welcome and introduction: Jane Dauncey welcomed Mark Peasley (Devon Library Service area manager), Ciara Eastell having sent apologies, and Pene Davis (Seaton/Colyton Library Supervisor). Committee members introduced themselves, including Diane Dean, recently elected as one of the two trustees representing Friends' groups, and new Treasurer Jackie Moncrieff. Allan Kekwick was thanked for his many years as Treasurer.

2. Apologies for absence: Ciara Eastell, Kathryn and David Baxendale, Jane and Jon Beck, Steve Brinkler, Katie and Gerry Darby, Elizabeth Davies, Jenny Fielding, Lesley How, Noelle and David Ingham, Jane and Colin Preece, Mark Mann.

3. Minutes of meeting of 2.3.15: accepted, and signed by Jane Dauncey.

4. Matters arising from minutes: none

5. Annual Report for 2015: The report had been circulated prior to the AGM, and Jane Dauncey gave an update on action in 2016.

- The Driving Safer for Longer joint event with the WI had received excellent feedback, and Richard How was thanked for his suggestion.
- Not many events were held as working on changes to the library service took priority.
- Jane Dauncey and Diane Dean attended a recent meeting for representatives of all the Devon Friends' groups, where there was beneficial exchange of information, including a list of speakers.
- Jenny Field (membership secretary / events manager) regrets that family health problems have forced the postponement of the Literary Day until July 16th 2017. The children's events for 2016 will still go ahead.
- As a pilot site, work has been ongoing to transfer the building ownership to Colyton Parish Council, and to acquire a licence with the library service. The service for users will be unchanged.
- We now have charitable status, thanks to Roger Hutton's efforts, and Gift Aid is possible.
- The possibility of a patronage scheme was suggested, similar to that in Burton Bradstock (Dorset) where patrons donate a minimum of £25 per annum. Shirley Robinson said this sounded a good idea. Richard How said it was difficult to request donations without knowing what it would be spent on, it needs a specific project.

Roger Hutton explained the future financial arrangements. Libraries Unlimited will pay for staff, IT , books etc and provide a sum of £2,000 pa from which we will pay for maintenance and cleaning of the building, and for electricity. The present cleaner is to be kept on, and the planned installation of solar panels (for which substantial donations have been offered) will reduce power bills. The building has been inspected recently and is in good order, but it is intended to establish a “sinking fund” for future building maintenance. It is difficult to estimate how much we will be able to save. Jane Dauncey pointed out that it was fortunate that we start with a good nest egg (see Item 6). A show of hands confirmed that the majority felt it worth exploring patronage, giving the committee a full mandate to take it further.

6. Treasurer's Report and Receipts and Payments Account for the period ending 31.12.2015: Jackie Moncrieff presented the accounts. A surplus of £4,900 was carried forward. Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Richard How, seconded by Glennis Ashbolt.

7. Membership Secretary's Report: Sue Wilson read Jenny Fielding's report. Membership has dropped from 107 to 86, through natural attrition.

8. Devon Library Services staff:

Pene Davis read her poem “The Library Friends of the Rebel Town “ to thank everybody . Jane Dauncey asked permission to publish it in Coly Times.

Jane Dauncey outlined staff changes in the library, now linked to Seaton, and thanked Pene and her staff.

Mark Peasley, who is now stock-performance manager as a result of recent restructuring, said he enjoyed working with Pene, and thanked the Friends and Volunteers for their support to staff over the last year, for sustaining Library Extra sessions (of great interest to other Friends' groups) and for developing activities in the building.

Devon Library Service will formally transfer to Libraries Unlimited on 1st April. The name was chosen with a view to possible expansion to include other authorities. It will be a public service mutual, a company limited by guarantee, and will have charitable status. It will be independent of DCC, contracted to fulfil DCC's statutory responsibility to provide a library service, working in partnership. As a result of the 2014 public consultation, all 50 Devon libraries are to be retained, with no further cuts to opening hours. There are no plans to hand libraries over to communities, as in Dorset (and possibly planned for Cornwall).

The transfer involves much work eg setting up bank accounts, a different pension scheme for new employees. During the transitional period there will be joint arrangements, including IT. Officially, the launch will be on 23rd April (World Book Night). Accountability will be strengthened by the board of trustees, including our own Diane Dean and Ottery's Jonathon Stoneman. The new area manager (and Pene's line manager) will be Pauline Anderson. Financial benefits will include relief on business rates (80 – 100%), access to grants and Gift Aid on donations.

Jane Dauncey queried the length of the agreement – 5 years in the first instance.

Sue Wilson asked if there might be a backlash – less money for public services as a result of lower business rates. Mark Peasley responded that it would not have a great effect.

Mrs Head asked what had happened to the Music and Drama Library at Exeter – sets of scores are being returned from HQ to the Exeter stacks, and most individual scores are held in the stacks, only a small amount immediately available without ordering.

She also queried the whereabouts of the Local Studies Archives – they have joined forces with Devon Record Office in the Heritage Centre at Sowton Industrial Estate.

Diane Dean reported from a recent meeting that the council are keen to help us in succeeding. Roger Croad will be the commissioning officer.

9. Election of committee members

a. Chairman : Jane Dauncey stood down, willing to stand again. Sue Wilson proposed, Pam McCleneghen seconded her reelection. Jane returned to the chair.

b. Treasurer : Jane Dauncey proposed, Diane Dean seconded Jackie Moncrieff

c. Committee members: all were willing to stand again, and were proposed by Jane Dauncey, seconded by Cynthia Boyt.

Jane Dauncey extended an invitation to anyone else who wished to be considered.

10. Plans for 2016: Jane Dauncey read from the Annual Report.

She outlined the Ashburton books-in-pubs idea.

Cook book – proposed by Roger Hutton 18 months ago, coordinated by Sue Wilson but to date she has only received 20 recipes. A plea for more recipes was issued.

11. Any Other Business: none

The meeting closed at 8.10pm, followed by entertainment by Brian Boyt (extracts from Under Milk Wood) and refreshments.

Volunteer hours – 8 present: JD,DD,RH,JM,RM,JU,CG-W,SW
2hours 10 minutes
total 17 1/3 hours