



The Friends of Abingdon  
Civic Society

**DRAFT**  
**MINUTES OF THE 70th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON**  
**WEDNESDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2014 IN THE UNICORN THEATRE**

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Tom Bewley, Glynne Butt, David Clark, Bruce Hunt, Carolyn King and Tony Legge.

There were 35 members present.

2. **The Minutes of the 69<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting** held on the 12 June 2013 were unanimously accepted as an accurate record of the meeting, and the Chairman signed them as such.

3. **Matters arising from the Minutes of the 2013 AGM:** None.

4. **Chairman's address:** this was circulated to all those present..

5. **Annual Report for the year 2013** The Executive's formal report had been provided to members. Its acceptance was proposed by Bobbie Nichols and seconded by Helen Bush and was carried without dissent.

6. **Treasurers Report and Accounts:** The Hon Treasurer presented the report and accounts for the year to 31 December 2013.

The major financial event of the year had been the Executive's decision to transfer a major part of our reserves from our CCLA deposit account into two CCLA investment funds: £30,000 each into the COIF Charities Investment Fund and the COIF Charities Global Equity Income Fund. After about 6 months, the increase in the value of the investments was a good deal better than the 0.5% per cent that would have been earned if the money had been left in the deposit account. In line with normal accounting practice, the value of these investments was shown at cost in the accounts as it fluctuates daily - down as well as up. Should the value fall below the cost value, this would be shown in the accounts.

The accounts showed an increase in income of some £8.5K and in expenditure of about £7.5K, compared with 2012. Much of this was due to the Handel opera staged in May 2013: income and expenditure on this and other social functions were roughly in balance, leaving around £3K of other increased income, almost exclusively from wedding receptions which had brought in £11K during the year. Unfortunately this level of income was not set to repeat in 2014.

In response to a question from Anne Dodd, the Treasurer said that the reduction in wedding bookings might be due to the recent increase in charges: while the rates were still in line with the market, people had become accustomed to the lower rates. It was hoped that this would be a temporary effect. The Chairman added that planned improvements to the facilities in the Buildings should also help.

Philip Kenrick asked why historic figures were used for the valuation of the Buildings: should they not be written down to zero or omitted from the accounts? The Treasurer replied that this was the practice which had historically been used by the Friends and he did not think it was appropriate to change it at this stage.

Mr Kenrick also asked about the accounting treatment of the Curator's remuneration and whether the Executive were giving any thought to what would happen when she retired. The Treasurer replied that since the Curator was our only employee, it would not be appropriate to explicitly publish details of her remuneration. The Secretary said that the Executive were reviewing succession arrangements but since the Curator had not expressed an intention to retire imminently it was not appropriate to discuss them publicly at this stage.

Viola Crowe proposed the motion that the Treasurer's report be accepted, Caroline Bullock seconded it, and it was carried without dissent.

**7. Election of Officers:** the following had been nominated by the Executive Council

Chairman: *Michael Matthews*  
Treasurer: *John Burren*

Vice Chairman: *Sylvia Bird*  
Secretary: *Hester Hand*

Election of these four officers was proposed by Viola Crowe and seconded by Lesley Legge and was carried without dissent.

The Chairman announced that he planned to retire at the 2015 AGM.

**8. Election of the Executive Council:** our Rules require that 5 Executive members have to stand down at each AGM and are eligible to stand for re-election if they wish. Pat Bryden, Glynne Butt, Bruce Hunt and Bobbie Nichols, had indicated a willingness to stand for re-election. This was proposed by Michael Matthews and seconded by Hester Hand and was unanimously agreed.

Alan Bryden had also stood down, but was not seeking re-election and no nominations had been received for a replacement. The meeting thanked Alan for his contribution to the Friends during his 4 years on the Executive.

## **10. Any Other Business**

**10.1** Bryan Cozens proposed that the meeting should express their appreciation of Jenny Berrell's excellent work as Curator and Viola Crowe proposed a vote of thanks to Pauline Burren for the very enjoyable outings she arranged. Both were agreed.

**10.2** Anne Dodd asked the Friends to continue their efforts to ensure that the developers of the Old Gaol honoured their commitments in relation to public access to the site and preserving its appearance. The Secretary assured them that the Executive would do this: they were keeping pressure on the developer via the District council and receiving some support in this from Councillors for the area. Matters under discussion included the agreed access routes through the site and the replacement of trees along the river frontage.

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There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20.10 and was followed by an excellent presentation from Roger Thomas on "*People and Places: Heritage Protection in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*".