



## Newbury Probus Club

### Minutes of Committee Meeting

Held at 12 Longacre, Newbury at 1400 on 22 March 2022

Present: Richard Jones (Chairman)

Nick Battle, Paul Bryant, Russ Burrows, Wynn Anderson

#### 1. Apologies for absence

1.1. Richard Willis, Geoffrey Addis

#### 2. Approval of last minutes

2.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 9 December were accepted.

#### 3. Matters arising

3.1. All actions had been discharged.

3.2. The lunch price had increased in March though the Committee wouldn't be surprised if there was another increase in the light of the increases in food and energy costs in the current inflationary surge.

3.3. Richard reported on friendly relations developing with the Chairs of Hungerford, Kennet Valley and Basingstoke Probus Clubs. This could provide an opportunity for gaining additional participants, and thereby sharing some of the fixed costs more widely, for visits and events. Russ commented that it would be useful to know if those Clubs also had a one year tenure of chairmanship as he would not wish any such relationships to wither with changing individuals.

3.4. Paul reported that since the lifting of Covid restrictions monthly attendances had fallen as a proportion of the overall membership though it was encouraging that on average there were a couple of guests per lunch. Some of the decline in attendance was due to known longer term health issues and concern over Covid infections may well be inhibiting others.

3.5. The website was up and running ([www.Newbury-probus.club](http://www.Newbury-probus.club)) and we should be encouraging its use as the place to go to for information about past and upcoming Probus activities. Clearly this will only happen if the site is regularly updated and arrangements needed to be put in place to facilitate this. Russ commented that he would prepare a report of the Cheltenham Theatre Trip that he was attending the following day. The website could act as a useful addition to the traditional method of recruiting new members and Wynn agreed to draft up an advertisement for the local press which would draw attention to our existence, he would then send it to Nick who has a contact within the NWN publication team. **ACTION - Wynn and Nick**

#### 4. Chairman's Report

4.1. Although Covid still rears its ugly head, we have maintained steady progress and our meetings have been proceeding very much as normal, albeit attendances are still a bit on the low side. We have managed to get The Chequers to hold their modest price increase firm for the rest of this year which should please members, although the extra £1 coins to be collected will create a bit of a headache for Paul and Colin after the nice round easily collectable £15.

- 4.2. After-dinner talks at the January, February and March meetings were given by fellow members. These are always very popular and we should ensure these continue. More guests are attending. They are our seed corn, so members need to invite their friends and colleagues along to our lunches.
- 4.3. We are now getting to the stage where we need to establish the Committee for 2022/3 and we will be looking for new members to be part of this and also to fill any other roles to ensure the continued smooth running of the club.
- 4.4. However, it has been a very sad time with two former members and Roger Grannum passing away. Also our sympathies go to Jim Turner whose wife Janet died very recently.
- 4.5. Our website is now up and running thanks to the working party for getting it established. We now need to ensure that it flourishes and is used by our members as well as attracting new members.

## **5. Treasurer's Report**

- 5.1. Nick reported an improvement in the health of the club's financial position since the December meeting due to the refund from Warners from the last Spring Break and the non-publication of Probus News. The current position to the nearest pound in the Club's accounts are : No 1 account £2005, No 2 account £9765. Additional expenditure may be expected due to the Spring Break.
  - 5.2. Nick had circulated some thoughts on the need to regularise the recording of attendance and payments for visits and events such as the celebration dinners and the spring break.
    - 5.2.1. In the past payments had been made by cash or cheque to the organiser but with payments by bank transfer being preferred by the banks and some individuals neither the organiser nor the Treasurer had a complete view of the funds involved until the event was over.
    - 5.2.2. Nick envisaged using a shared form or spreadsheet between the Treasurer and organiser with an agreed format for identifying individual bank transfer payments to each event.
    - 5.2.3. The Committee agreed that the changing payment environment needed to be addressed and Nick agreed to draft up a suitable format for Committee and event organisers' comment.
- ACTION - Nick Battle**
- 5.3. Nick reported that he had sold 20 Probus ties to members and that he would soon need to order more pins for giving to new members

## **6. Future activities**

### **6.1. Spring Break**

- 6.1.1. Glenn is managing the 2022 Spring Break which will be at the Alvaston Hall Hotel, Cheshire from 25-29 April and 27 attendees are confirmed.
- 6.1.2. Glenn has also indicated that he and Sophie would be prepared to organise a break in 2023.

### **6.2. Committee Dinner**

- 6.2.1. Russ confirmed that the Dinner would be going ahead at Esseborne Manor Hotel on 8 April. Menu choices will be made on the night from the a la carte menu and Russ circulated copies of the menu and wine list. It was agreed that Nick would pay the bill using the Club's Debit card and that Committee members would reimburse club funds with their share of the costs.

### **6.3. Summer Celebration**

- 6.3.1. Russ reported that he has booked the Donnington Grove for the evening of 22 June and a £300 fee for room hire has been paid. He has engaged the JAM duo who will play piano and cello as the entertainment and he proposes to charge £37.50 per head which would mean the club

would break even with 50 attendees. A flyer would be circulated to members before the next lunch and menu choices and payment will be needed by the end of May. The club will be charged for any cancellations after this and therefore members would not be reimbursed should they cancel after this time.

#### **6.4. Trips**

6.4.1. The trip to Everyman Theatre at Cheltenham is going ahead on the day after the Committee meeting. Following member's responses Simon Carter has good list of potential visits but has not made any further commitments at the moment.

#### **6.5. Walks**

6.5.1. The walks programme will continue with the new default date being the third Thursday of each month. 12 attended the March walk around Chieveley and Simon has a programme of walk leaders through to the end of 2022.

#### **6.6. Bowls**

6.6.1. Richard J has circulated a note that we won the recent mixed triples match against Hungerford. As our own stock of bowlers is low, we still have to recruit bowlers from elsewhere. However, for this match we had the chairman of Basingstoke Probus playing for us.

#### **6.7. Speakers**

6.7.1. Though Geoff was not present he has a plentiful list of potential speakers for future lunches.

#### **6.8. Members' welfare**

6.8.1. Discussion confirmed that it is the role of the past-Chairman to act as the primary interface with the Committee on members health and welfare. Sensitivity is needed and care needs to be taken that any declaration of ill health to the membership at large should not be intrusive.

6.8.2. Members should still inform the Membership Secretary if they are unable to attend a specific lunch due to ill health though it is recognised that those with longer term conditions would normally be picked up through the Committee monitoring.

### **7. Committee membership for 2022-3**

7.1. Richard commented that, provided the members agree at the AGM, Nick Battle's' nomination as Vice Chairman would mean that there would be a vacancy for a Treasurer from July and also a vacancy as visits organiser was needed to replace Simon Carter at the end of the year.

7.2. Russ reported that he had received a positive reply from one member to his invitation to be nominated. Richard had reviewed the membership and had identified a number of people to approach with a view to asking if they would be prepared to serve as Committee members, if not for the next year then in the future. Individual Committee members were assigned specific people to contact.

### **8. Any other business**

8.1. Paul said that he had acquired three lever arch files from Dick Godfrey's time as a Committee Member for which he had no use. He asked if anyone was maintaining an archive of Probus documents. Russ reported that he had received a couple of lever arch files when he took over as Secretary from Glenn and these included minutes back to 2010. He had passed these files, together with electronic copies of all documents he had produced in his tenure as Secretary, on to Richard Willis. The history of the club had been captured in 'The story of Probus' produced by John Wright for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration and this too had been passed on to Richard.

8.2. Russ suggested that he take the files and use them together with other information to produce an occasional series of 'nuggets from the archives' for publication in the members' section of the website.

**ACTION - Russ Burrows**

8.3. The meeting closed at 1630 next Committee Meeting is arranged for Tuesday 7 June.