**Newbury Probus Club**

**Minutes of Committee Meeting**

**Held at Holt House, Blindmans Gate, Woolton Hill. RG20 9XD at 1400 on 8th December 2022**

Present: Russ Burrows (Chairman)

Nick Battle, Paul Bryant, Richard Jones, Richard Willis, Tony Hulett, Geoff Addis, Rod Edmonds

1. **Apologies for absence**
   1. All members present.
2. **Approval of last minutes**
   1. The minutes of the meeting held on 14th September 2022 were accepted
3. **Matters arising**
   1. Research is still taking place regarding the microphone system used during lunches especially the use of a lapel clip microphone.
4. **Chairman’s Report**

The Chairman reviewed the last quarter and thanked Nick for arranging a successful evening for the night before this meeting. Unfortunately he had attended three funerals in the quarter, one member and two wives. He was pleased that we had managed to recruit replacements for the Speaker Secretary and the Examiner of Accounts but noted that further replacements will be needed by the AGM.

1. **Secretary’s report**

Richard reported that in the last month the web site had received 13 hits (7 new and 6 returning). At present he is looking at some changes / modifications to provide suitable viewing on mobile devices where there have been problems with the present site. He will also include lunch menus and walk organisers for 2023 together with speakers for the first 3 months of 2023.

The global probus newsletter for December has been received and sent to all members.

A photograph has been received for the successful lunch at Newbury College which will be added to the website and a written report is awaited.

Richard is still to contact John Rance with passwords to allow him to assist with the development of the website.

Regarding the Backing up of all electronic information for the club Richard has researched suitable hard drives etc. It was agreed that a device be obtained, but GA had suitable equipment surplus to requirements and the secretary to liaise with GA in the new year to get the system set up.

The chairman’s briefing for the monthly lunch is difficult to construct when items are not forthcoming – this item to be discussed later in the meeting.

1. **Treasurer’s Report**

The treasurer reported that the finances were in a good position and that the digital management of accounts is now well bedded in with no problems. The proposal from the treasurer for some rationalisation of the two bank accounts was approved and should be in place immediately in the new year and ready for the next event which will be the theatre trip to the Mayflower for ‘Titanic’.

RJ pointed out that no event should be run at a loss.

A new examiner of accounts has been appointed for 2022/23 accounts.

The treasurer has some future plans for financial management of the club which were deferred until the next meeting.

1. **Membership secretary report**

Membership has dropped from 65 to 62 with the loss of Jon Howes (left area), John Clark (ill health), Mike Hughes (Died) and Reg Piper (Ill Health). We have welcomed John Hughesdon. We do have two or three prospects. So as Paul reported last time, we are struggling to keep numbers up.

Lunch attendance has remained in the high forties. It is difficult to get the numbers right with an average of three apologies after the Thursday deadline but so far the Chequers have been flexible and have not charged for no-shows.

We have enjoyed 16 lunches at the Chequers and the food quality has remained good. We have come to the end of the current menus and we have requested a further 6 months of menus and sent the members suggestions that attracted 10 ideas.

1. **Speaker secretary’s report**

GA reported that with one exception the visiting speakers we have had over the last few months have provided an informative and interesting conclusion to our meals. Additionally we have had interesting presentations from members. Paul Shepherds talk about H bombs and Hula girls and Roger Heafileld’s talk about Wiltshire Air Ambulance were both well received and members were generous in their donations given toward the Air Ambulance service.

He also advised that speakers’ fees are rising.

GA has arranged speakers for the next 2 months:

January David Stiles talk entitled ‘My piece of string and the H bomb tests’

February Peter George, a retired director of Hogg Robinson who will be telling us about the company’s involvement with providing support to the Falkland Islands.

Neil Stewart will take over this role at the start of 2023 and GA wished him great success in the role. RB thanked Geoff for all his hard work during his time in office.

**9. Activities Organiser report**

RE reported that after the Christmas period he would be requesting quotes from bus companies for the trip to Titanic. Once this has been obtained he will be finalising cost and circulating to members requesting confirmation from those who wish to attend. He also outlined ideas for future trips that will be researched: Air museum, Museum of Iron age, Salisbury theatre, American museum and theatre in Bath.

1. **Probus bowls organiser report**

RJ reported that the Probus club played West Berks on November 10th and lost badly 98-34 despite having

a good Probus members turnout i.e we did not have to ‘borrow’ too many players.

Our next match is in March against Hungerford Bowls Club.

The singles Championship (Hadwick Shield) will be played in the new year and we will be using the same format as this year’s contest which proved very successful. However our stock of bowlers is diminishing with the loss of 5 bowlers, for various reasons. He proposes therefore to start a recruitment campaign to get some more members on board.

The cost of the bowling for 2 matches and our own internal competition is £50 per year and will next year have a budget allocation within the accounts.

1. **Christmas Celebration Report**

This was a good evening with 51 members and guests attending. NB was thanked for his organisation of the event and choice of entertainment for the evening.

1. **Chairman’s briefing for Lunch meetings**

At present this is taking a large amount of time with information coming from various people, RW to create a proforma (similar to that used previously).

**13. Enquiry Handling via Adverts and / or Web site etc**

These will normally be directed to the Secretary since this is the contact Telephone number on the website, Once received these will be passed to Membership secretary and the Past Chairman, such that invitations may be made to the lunch and these numbers included in calculations and total sent to the Chequers.

**14. New members and use of Adverts.**

The cost of an advert is approx. £75 and it was agreed a range of publications be reviewed including Penny Post, Round and About. A Flyer had been sent to RJ for distribution at Deanwood Golf Club and West Berks Indoor Bowls Club. Additional Flyers could be available to any other member wishing to use them.

**15. Greeting guests at Probus Lunches**

When a potential member contacts us via the website or advert then he should be met by Past Chairman before attending the lunch.

**16. Committee vacancies**

The following vacancies have been filled:

Speakers’ secretary – Neil Stuart

Examiner of Accounts – John Hughesdon

These roles to commence in January 2023.

A few more Committee members are required to fill general vacancies. It was agreed that members be approached with a view of joining the committee. This is now becoming a matter of some urgency.

**17. Rewarding Committee service**

There is nothing to report on this item and no actions are required.

**18. Members welfare reporting**

The committee reviewed the current status of sickness and confirmed that it is part of the Past Chairman’s pastoral role to bring such information as he feels appropriate (bearing in mind members’ privacy and confidentiality) to the committee’s attention. It was agreed that we should continue with the policy of not going into details at the monthly lunches.

**19. Spring Break – Standing item**

No actions required.

**20. Any Other Business**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 3.55pm.

**Next meeting to be on Thursday 9th March at 2pm**