

**INGATESTONE & FRYERNING COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION CIO**

**REGISTERED CHARITY No.1161482**

**DRAFT MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2021-22**

**Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2023 at 7.30pm**

**PRESENT:**

Pete Batchelor	(PB)	Trustee
Jim Donnell	(JD)	Trustee on behalf of IMOG
Jenny Fowle	(JF)	Trustee on behalf of Young Expressions & Treasurer
John Galvin MBE	(JG)	Trustee & Hon. Secretary
Lilian Hunter	(LH)	Trustee and Chairman
Tom O'Connor	(TOC)	Trustee
Teresa Ravenscroft	(TR)	Trustee
Paul Wisbey	(PW)	Trustee

Claire Staples Centre Co-ordinator

and 35 additional members

**1. Apologies:**

Apologies were received from the following:

John Cloke & Noelle Hones  
Maggie Galvin  
Tony Collins  
Keith Brown (not read out at the meeting)

**2. Minutes of last AGM**

The minutes of the 2020/21 AGM held on Wednesday 23 February 2022 were agreed.

**Proposal to accept**

*Proposed:* Bernard Palmer *Seconded:* Janet Collins

**3. Matters arising**

There were no matters arising from the 2020/21 AGM.

**4. Annual Report of the General Committee**

**Chairman's report**

Lilian Hunter welcomed everyone. Her report follows, in full.

I am pleased to welcome you here this evening and report on a more normal year than I did last year. Thank you for coming to hear what has been happening during 2022. I would like to give a special welcome to Janet Collins representing the Fryerning Parish Room

First of all, I would like to pay tribute to our excellent committee of Trustees. We now have a representative of all four of our affiliated groups and they swell the ranks of members, all with different talents , willing to do their best to make this a successful and thriving Community Centre. We also have a hard working and dedicated office staff, who keep things running smoothly and organising events with great skill. We have support staff who ensure that everything is working efficiently and reaching all Health and Safety standards. We also have kind volunteers who step in when extra help is needed.

Our Health and Safety policy was reviewed in March and plans are afoot to arrange First Aid training for some members of staff and frequent hall users. Sadly, we had to cease our Blood Donor service due to their increasing requirements and demands which we felt we could not fulfil.

Peter and his staff continue to provide an excellent service and have retained the 5-star Brentwood Council rating for kitchen hygiene and I am pleased to say we have signed a three year contract with Peter to carry on running the bar and wish him success in these difficult times and we will continue to work with him for everyone's benefit. We were sorry that Joy decided to leave after so long assisting Peter, but she decided to spread her wings and go to work for an airline. We wish her success. The coffee kiosk continues to attract passers-by and regulars alike. Our seating area is very popular, enhanced by our decorative planters – soon to be showing our recently planted show of Spring flowers. Our hanging baskets have also been particularly beautiful this year and received commendation at our Summer Horticultural Show– perhaps partly due to a new watering system, bought with part of a grant received from Brentwood Borough Council. New blinds and a zoned sound system in the bar ceiling were also paid for from the same grant. We have also replaced a boiler in the kitchen, had the bar seats cleaned and bought 7 new tub chairs. We also bought new steps for getting onto the stage to replace our old, heavy wooden ones.

We had part of the rear car park resurfaced and trees and shrubbery cut back in that area. The card only payment has been working well and requests have been made for telephone payment also, which I am pleased to say has now come into operation. The tennis club has planted flowers bordering the car park and they look very attractive.

There has been general upkeep around the whole building and a review of equipment updating with a view to cutting down on the cost of utilities used in the running of this big building. It is work in progress and we are looking at the roof with a view to repairing and insulating it and also strengthening it with the aim to install solar panels when it is possible , as we have discussed over many years.

Classes and events have resumed in the hall including Zumba , power hoop , aerobics and Pilate .There is an over 60's lunch every Thursday and Peter's famous fish and chips are available on a Friday . The Tuesday coffee morning continues to be very popular. We have a regular monthly film show, with a varied selection of films such as Top Hat, Dark Waters, and a Xmas Carol. Our attempt to cater for children during the school holidays with matinees was not a success but our afternoon shows are popular. We celebrated our late Queen's Platinum Jubilee with a tea and entertainment on June 2nd. Sadly, we also commemorated her death by opening the hall to the public for her on screen State

funeral ceremony on 19th September. We held our usual Xmas tea again this year which was quite well attended.

The tribute Nights have proven to be very popular, and tickets are sold out quickly. We had "Take That" in March. Unfortunately, the George Michael tribute was cancelled but our next is "Pure Queen" on March 4<sup>th</sup>. We had an Artisan Market run in conjunction with the Parish Council in March and again in November. They brought people into the village and improved the footfall in the village and so helped our local shopkeepers. We also held a Xmas Market with Rotary on 11th December. At the last minute our regular Father Christmas went down with laryngitis, so a substitute had to be found quickly – but all ended well and the Market was its usual success.

We were very pleased to have a formal opening of our Snooker room after work was completed resurfacing the tables and improving lighting. This work was done using a donation from Rotary and we thank them for their continued support. There are now teams competing and free lessons are available for beginners -ladies included – and it is good to see yet another facility available for members and friends.

John and I attended the AGM of the Fryerning Parish Room on 30th January and were pleased to hear from their Chairman, Keith Brown, that all is progressing well. Fryerning Parish Room belongs to the IFCA but is run by an FPR committee and Keith said he was pleased that a new 5-year agreement has been signed so that they can continue to provide this important community asset. FPR is very popular for children's parties but with a strong marketing programme now have some new user groups.

Because of the closure during lockdown FPR were able to benefit from Government grants and so are in a strong financial position. They have also held fund raising events such as a St George's dinner, and popular Father's Day barbecue. Cost cutting efforts have included LED lighting, heating controlled through the booking system and water saving taps. Their business plan, which was produced at the beginning of 2022 shows that the income was well ahead of budget and that there are positive signs for the coming year.

Keith paid tribute to his committee with three of the long serving members standing down and four new members stepping into place – all with their own particular skills and expertise. He also thanked the IFCA office staff for their support in managing their bookings and their accounts.

It is very gratifying to see the progress over the years in the upkeep and care of this splendid old building and we in IFCA wish them continued success.

These are difficult times for all of us and IFCA has taken a very cautious approach this year with our plans for developing our Community Centre but with commitment from all involved I am sure we will be able to continue to grow this very important and unique village facility.

## **5. Accounts of the IFCA CIO 2021/22 (report presented by Jenny Fowle)**

### **Report follows in full**

You should all have a copy of the accounts in front of you. I just want to spend a bit of time talking you through the main financial highlights this year. I will also say a bit about

what has happened since September 2022 and I'm happy to answer any questions at the end.

The accounts were prepared in house, a joint effort between Karen and me. Karen has spent some time automating the production of the accounts which has made the job so much quicker and easier this year – thank you Karen! We had a first draft of the accounts within 4 weeks of the year end which must be some sort of record. We again asked Jan Stobart from RCCE to perform the independent examination of the accounts which took place in December. Jan found no issues to report and commented that the “underlying records, audit trail and internal controls are all excellent”. My thanks again to Karen, and to Claire and Jacky for all their hard work keeping everything in the office in such good order.

If we now look at the accounts, pages 1 to 4 of the report contain the Trustees Report, where you will find quite a lot of detail about the activities, achievements, and financial performance of IFCA. Lilian has already mentioned the main highlights, so I am just going to focus on some of the numbers, to give you a flavour of how the charity has fared in the last financial year.

Page 5 is the Independent Examiner's Report, signed by Jan Stobart, where, as I already mentioned, we have been given a clean bill of health.

Then if we turn to page 6 you can see the income and expenditure account, I will highlight to you the main points here:

- total income has increased substantially to £159,391 compared to £130,265 in 2021. The 2021 income was very much affected by covid, and we were reliant on grant income of £51,475 to help us through. It's particularly pleasing to note that in 2022 our income has recovered and is now back to pre-pandemic levels, with grant income contributing less than £10,000. The main source of our income is “charitable activities”, this is broken down on page 10, note 4. From here you can see that all four main income streams performed significantly better than in 2021 with lettings and rent receivable in particular recovering to normal levels once covid restrictions were lifted.

- if you now turn back to page 6 you can see that total expenditure has also increased compared to last year (2022 £128,673, 2021 £90,170) reflecting the fact that it costs more to run the building when everything is open again. You can see the breakdown of expenditure in note 8 on page 12. There are 4 items I'd like to talk about which have significantly increased since last year.

- Firstly, staff costs have risen by approximately £9k – there are several reasons for this, but most of it can be attributed to an increase in the hours worked in the office.
- The second item I want to talk about is light, heat and water, which has increased from £14,441 to £22,960. Everyone knows about the energy crisis, but we have actually been protected from this as for the whole of 2022 we were on the same fixed rates for energy as in 2021. The increase is therefore purely down to increased usage due to the Centre being open for the entire period. We will not be

cushioned from the energy crisis in the next financial year, but I will talk about this later when I talk about our future plans.

- The third item I want to mention is repairs and maintenance, which was £25,156 in 2022 compared to £12,044 in 2021. If you look at the breakdown of this on the next page, you can see that car park maintenance was a lot higher in 2022 as we spent around £8.5k on resurfacing works.
- Back to page 12 the final item I want to highlight is card processing fees of £6,340 in 2022 compared to just £933 in 2021. Included in this category are PayPal fees and card machine fees but the vast majority is related to the car park because all car park payments are now paid by card, whereas in the previous year we still accepted cash. We therefore expect card processing fees to remain at this level every year from now on.

- back to page 6 again, you can see that our net income for the year is £30,718, compared to £40,095 for 2021. This is a very positive result and has enabled us to meet all our obligations, including paying another £23k off the long-term loan – more to come on this topic.

If you now turn to page 7 you will see the statement of financial position. I only want to highlight a couple of things here, which are:

- at 30<sup>th</sup> September we were holding a significant amount of cash in the bank (£96,440 compared to £87,694 last year). Of this balance, approximately £32.2k belongs to Fryerning Parish Room, with the remainder £64.2k belonging to the Community Centre. During the year we chose not to overpay the loan balance despite rising interest rates, as there was a lot of uncertainty about our future cost commitments in relation to future energy bills and potential major works needed – I will talk more about this when I talk about our future plans.
- the bank loan, which is secured on the land and buildings, is included in creditors falling due in less than one year and more than one year, and the total balance at the year end was £59,833 – you can see the breakdown of this in note 16 on page 15. The balance is falling by around £20k a year and if we keep our monthly payments the same it would be cleared by July 2025 at the current rate of interest.

Which brings me on nicely to some breaking news. The trustees have always had a strong desire to overpay the loan but recently we have held back as we know that our energy costs are going to rise once our fixed rate contracts end, and we also know that we need to keep some cash in reserve in case of emergency works, for example we know that our roof is coming to the end of its useful life. With regards to energy costs our gas is fixed until July 2024 but our electricity contract ends on 31<sup>st</sup> March this year. So next week we will be entering into a new fixed rate deal for electricity, and we are fortunate that we are getting quotes at around 32p per kw which is much lower than they were late last year when they were over £1 per kw. Although this is substantially more than we currently pay it is affordable. So now that we have more certainty around energy costs, we can estimate our cashflow for the remainder of the year. The cashflow projection shows that if we paid off

the whole balance now, we would still have a cash balance of over £30k, and clearing the loan would save us over £5k in interest. So, at the meeting this week the trustees agreed that, once the new energy contract is agreed, we will clear the loan in its entirety. To be debt-free will be a momentous achievement, especially considering the perilous financial position the charity was once in, as many of you will remember.

That's all I want to say about the finances - does anyone have any questions on the annual report, or anything that I've said about our future plans?

### Questions

1. What are the implications in terms of paying off the loan with regards to potential future roof improvement works. How would IFCA look to finance this once cash reserves are used to pay off the loan?

JF indicated that works required to the roof would be in excess of the cash reserves being used to pay off the loan and IFCA would look to apply for some form of grant funding towards the cost of the works. Assessment for grant funding often only looks at assets and does not take liabilities into account, so any future grant application is likely to be more successful if we reduce our cash reserve. It may also be the case that we seek to take out another loan later down the line but in the short term, we will benefit from saving the interest on our current loan repayments.

2. What is the interest rate on the current loan?

JF – 7.32% / base rate + 3.32%

3. Can you please explain the breakdown of items in section 4 – “Charitable activities Income”?

JF explained:

Lettings – hall hire

Billiards & snooker – income from snooker room lights and pool table

Rent receivable – rent from various tenants

Car park income – income from car park machines

In summary it has been another successful year for the Association, and I propose the accounts are now adopted by the members.

### Proposal to accept

*Proposed:* Lee Stevens *Seconded:* Kate Condren

### 6. Election/Appointment of Members to the General Committee to serve as Trustees

JG indicated the trustees who served in 2021-22 financial year were; Pete Batchelor, Jim Donnell, Jenny Fowle, Lilian Hunter, John Galvin, Tom O'Connor, Teresa Ravenscroft and Paul Wisbey.

Then followed an explanation that there are two types of trustee; those who stand as individuals and those nominated by one the affiliated groups.

#### **Nomination of affiliated Groups**

Adrian Bonnett has been nominated by the Tennis Club to serve for a term of three years.

- No vote needed.

#### **Re-appointment of one-third of existing trustees**

We have eight trustees who have been appointed or re-appointed in the last two years. Following the death of Des Felton a year ago there is only one trustee who needs to be re-appointed this year – i.e our Chairman Lilian Hunter.

- *Proposed:* Janet Collins *Seconded:* John Cavill

#### **New Individual members**

No nominations received.

This is the first time for several years that we will have trustees from each of the four affiliated groups and the first time in many years that we have a very healthy nine trustees in total.

### **7. Election of Honorary Officers**

7.1 LH read out the nominations for the position of Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretary.

7.2 Hon. Treasurer

Nominee: **Jenny Fowle**

- *Proposed:* Bernard Palmer *Seconded:* John Cavill

7.3 Hon. Secretary

Nominee: **John Galvin**

- *Proposed:* Jacky Craythorne *Seconded:* John Cavill

### **8. Appointment of Independent Examiner:**

Following the successful Independent Examination carried out by Jan Stobart from RCCE, JF proposed that RCCE be reappointed as our Independent Examiner.

- *Proposed:* John Galvin *Seconded:* Tom O'Connor

The reappointment was agreed.

### **9. Resolution to amend the constitution**

JG explained:

On the reverse of the agenda we have set out a resolution to reduce the quorum needed for future General meetings of members from 25 or 5% of adult members to 20 or 3% of adult members. This is simply because each year we struggle to get 25 people to the AGM. While we would rather bribe you with free wine we feel it

nonetheless necessary to make this resolution to ensure the AGM and any other key meetings can proceed.

The Constitution may only be amended by a resolution passed by a 75% majority of votes cast at a General Meeting of members.

**Proposal to accept**

Vast majority for and no votes against.

**10. Update on events and activities**

JG provided a brief update on events and activities and reiterated a few points previously mentioned.

- We agreed a new arrangement with FPRA until 2027 to provide operational management of Fryerning Parish Room in accordance with an agreed business plan
- **Ingatestone Community Cinema** has been screening films every month usually on the third or fourth Thursday afternoon of each month. The next films are; Airplane on 16<sup>th</sup> March; The Mission on 27<sup>th</sup> April and Belfast on 18<sup>th</sup> May.
- **MC 7 Dixieland and Swing Band jazz evening** on 25<sup>th</sup> March
- IMOG production of **Spamalot** on 20<sup>th</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup> April
- Watch this space as we are looking into possible event to celebrate the **King's Coronation** in May.

**11. Any Other Business (for which due notice had been given)**

No formal AOB had been notified to IFCA in advance of the meeting.

**Other questions/issues:**

Bernard Palmer enquired what type of jazz will be at the jazz evening on 25<sup>th</sup> March. Pat Dedman (the organiser) was in attendance and so provided some further detail.

Liz Bown requested a microwave at the coffee mornings as sometimes the coffee isn't warm enough. It was confirmed that there was in fact already a microwave in the tea bar.

On behalf of members a vote of thanks was offered by Bernard Palmer to the Committee for its presentations.

**The meeting closed at 8.18pm.**