

Hexham Rotary

Minutes of the Business Meeting held on 15th February 2021 by Zoom

Present; 20 Club Members- Roger Abraham, John Dumbrell, John Dunn, Rob Hart, Ben Herdan, Jan Herdan, Bob Hull, Peter Jewitt, Brian Massey, Stephen Middleton, Miles Middleton, Hedley Novis, Andrew Rigg, George Robinson, John Robinson, Sandy Rutherford, Michael Saxon, Peter Wood, Ralph Wrighton, Jim Yeomans.

Apologies from Richard Thornton, Max Hamps, Rita Marrison.

42. **The minutes of the Business Meeting** of the 19th October 2020 were agreed as correct and signed by the President.

43. **Matters arising.**

- a. It was noted that Club Council minutes are available in the Members area of the website and are password protected.
- b. The latest update to the Calendar is also on the website and has been circulated to members.
- c. It was noted the Bursary with Core Music has now been agreed and the £5000 will be spread over 5 years allowing 9 or 10 bursaries each year.

44. **President's Items**

- a. He announced that we had established a working relationship with Hexham Community Partnership (HCP). The Secretary outlined the support we could give and members were asked to comment. Bob Hull, a former chairman of HCP thought the help would be useful. The President also remarked that HCP were looking for a person with financial experience to join their Board and asked members if they could find a suitable person.
- b. The President referred to the Club Questionnaire and the Club Council's response. These will be discussed at a club meeting when we can meet in person.
- c. The President outlined a Zoom Guided Tour scheme that he had taken part in. The Tour costs an initial £100 plus £10 per person thus for a group of 20 it would cost about £15 per head. He asked if the club were interested. The group were polled and 12 were interested, 6 were not.

45. **Treasurer's Report.** The Treasurer reported the accounts to date had been circulated. He then outlined the following;

- a. Club Account:
 - i. The second half year capitation fee has been paid.
 - ii. Members were asked to approve in retrospect the payment of £107.90 to Zoom for a subscription service for the year at a discounted rate as to take advantage of the discount we had to apply by 1st Feb. this will enable us to manage our own meetings without relying on District support. George Robinson

suggested that the Charity Fund might pay part of the cost as it would be used to the Charities benefit. Members were polled and 4 voted for the Charity Fund paying part but 13 voted against. 15 voted for the retrospective payment with 3 against. So the money will be paid from the Club Account.

- iii. This was a first time for the use of the poll facility in Zoom and some teething troubles were experienced. These are summed up in a separate document going out with these minutes.

b. Charity Account:

- i. We have received £510.54 from the Christmas Appeal and £200 from the Hexham Courant advertising revenue; members were asked to approve topping up of £39.46 from the Charity Account to enable £250 to be paid to each of the three agreed charities – Gateway in the Community; the Torch Association and Chrysallis. This was agreed.
- ii. The Foundation Committee has raised the sum of £1,180.63 from the sale of Christmas Cards (and a small sum from the Babyface competition and the Not the Christmas Dinner); members were asked to approve a payment of £1,500 to Rotary Foundation (involving topping up of £319.37 from the Charity Account) as our annual contribution – this matches the average of previous years' payments. In addition, £626 was raised from the sale of crocus corms which is due to be payable to Polio Plus and we need to pay the annual £50 fee to Foundation for the Website template. These were all agreed.
- iii. This would leave £770.52 in the Charity Account (after the topping up payments as above), excluding the ring fenced amounts of Music in the Abbey - £100; Disaster Fund - £783.85; Herbie Appeal (linked to the postponed Jazz Festival) - £500. £200 has been paid to the Charlotte Straker Project as the President's chosen donation from the Charity Account.
- iv. The Treasurer will be making the annual Gift Aid claim to HMRC in April which should bring in over £400 – much down on last year (£781) largely because we claimed on the whole of the Fore Street collection in 2019 but the 2020 collection could not be held due to Covid.
- v. To provide an overview, he announced we have already donated £13,945 from the charity account this Rotary year (admittedly in large part thanks to the Links donation) and this will reach about £16,800 when we have distributed the Foundation, Polio Plus and Christmas appeal monies; this compares favourably with our average annual donations of £12,732 over the last six years. So, at least in terms of our giving profile, we can regard it as a successful year despite the

huge constraints of the pandemic.

- vi. Peter Wood thanked the President on behalf of Charlotte Straker for the donation of £200.

46. **Membership.** Brian Massey reported that there were a number of potential new members coming forward but most would wait until we are meeting in person to apply for membership.

47. **Emergency Disaster Fund.** Brian Massey reported that the Team has agreed to organise a fund raising Progressive Safari Supper Party just as soon as is feasible following the lifting of Covid restrictions . The attractions of this proposal are that it will be able to go ahead at very short notice at no cost to the Club and will be a wonderful opportunity for Rotarians and their partners to socialise again in person with the potential to raise in excess of £500 for the E.D.Fund. The team does have other plans which will however take longer to organise following the lifting of restrictions.

48. **Administration.** The Secretary reported that

- a. The fortnightly Zoom meetings have had the 40 minute restriction lifted by using the facilities supplied by District and the result has been favourably received. However using the District facility complicated matters and Zoom offered a 20% discount. This was available until the 1st February and after consultation with the President and Treasurer this was purchased. This upgraded facility can be made available to members for their own meetings.
- b. During Covid, he has been arranging the slots for speakers in conjunction with members who have found high level speakers we could not otherwise have had. We now have speakers planned up to the middle of May and will be looking to set up a Speakers Secretary and a booking system for the whole Club.
- c. Despite the excellent vaccination programme, it still appears that face to face meetings are a long way off, but, as soon as it appears feasible, the Admin Committee will explore ways of restarting our meetings. These will be weekly until the Club decides otherwise.
- d. The Arch was published on 1 February and the next edition is due out on 1 April. All members are asked to encourage members to contribute articles and photos.
- e. District have been running training sessions for members to access “My Rotary” and “Rotary Club Central”. Everyone is encouraged to access these training sessions which are available on the District website and to use the facilities provided.

49. **Service Projects.** Ben Herdan reported

- a. The main news is the launch of the Laptops for Kids initiative where our Club is stimulating donations of unwanted devices and working with

the Partnership that will see them renovated, repurposed and distributed to needy children through their schools. He donated two of his laptops and dropped them off at the Co-op in Corbridge (a photo of the event is available). The manager told him that 24 laptops had already been donated and sent on from the Co op to the Partnership which is responsible for renovation and distribution – a lot of this will have been as a result of our activity

- b. A document setting out the purpose of the scheme and how people could get involved through donations of equipment was circulated to all Club members with the request that they consider personal donations and also encourage others to do likewise. An abbreviated version was sent to all Clubs in our District under the signature of the District Governor, which should stimulate activity in other Clubs.
- c. Rob Hart achieved the placement of an excellent article in the Courant which you may have seen and he is also publicising it through Facebook posts.

50. Foundation.

- a. Rita Marrison & Sandy Rutherford reported that Foundation have no further events planned for this Rotary year but has re-booked for Feb 12th Feb 2022 the Vintage fashion show, with a 'Some Enchanted Evening' theme with evening dresses through the ages. This is to provide a Valentines Day feel to the event. It is booked at the Mart.
- b. Peter Jewitt is working with Ben Herdan to identify a project in Uganda which would attract both District and Global funding, as well as fundraising at a local level. Due to Covid, this project has sat on the back burner 2020/2021, but it will resume in due course.

51. PR. Rob Hart reported that;

- a. Following the talk and guidance from Charlet Phillips the Hexham Rotary Facebook page has been updated and he can now post Facebook messages ,photos etc.
- b. He has now produced some written Twitter guidance for any Rotarians wanting to venture into that medium.
- c. The publicising of the benefits to the recipients of the recent grants from Hexham Rotary is being done as and when the opportunity seems right.
- d. As can be seen from the supplement at Christmas, a good rapport has been established with the Courant.

52. A Project to supply hand cream to Hexham Hospital. Brian Massey proposed a scheme to donate jars of handcream to the Hexham Hospital as a way of acknowledging their work during Covid. He had discussed this with the Hospital and has their backing. The initial proposal had been circulated to the Club and a donor has funded the initial 150 jars. He therefore proposed that the club increase the donation to 200 Jars costing £630 with members who wished donating small amounts not exceeding the cost of two club meals to cover the cost. The Club would cover any shortfall and if there was a surplus it

would go into the general charity fund. A short debate on the funded occurred and;

- a. After a proposal from George Robinson it was agreed that the voluntary donations from members should approximate to a cost of two club meals.
- b. The Club approved the project. Members were asked not to make any donations until a note from the Treasurer and Secretary was circulated giving the details of how to pay.

53. **Any Other Business.** None had been advised.

54. The President announced the date and time of the next meeting as Monday 12th April 2021 at 6.30pm via Zoom after the AGM



15th Feb 2021

JL Dumbrell, Club Secretary



23 August 2021

M Middleton, President