
Abthorpe Broadband Association Limited

Bringing Broadband to the community

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Held in the Old School, Abthorpe

19:30 27 January 2016

Draft until approved by the AGM.

Present

The officers of the Association, Eric Malcomson (Chairman), Keith Fenwick, Richard Tomalin and Peter Watkins were present with David Symmers (treasurer) and 30 members of the Association.

Opening of the Meeting

The Chairman of the Association noted that a quorum was present in line with the articles of association of the Company and duly declared the meeting open. The agenda had been circulated prior to the meeting and was available during the meeting and so the business therein was conducted as follows;

Acceptance of the minutes of the AGM held 22 Jan 2015 at Lois Weedon and the EGM held 24 Feb 2015 at the New Inn was requested and duly provided. The Chairman signed both as a true record.

Reception of the Financial Statements

Keith Plant resigned as treasurer on 30 June 2015. The Chairman acclaimed the work that Keith had accomplished, particularly dealing with DEFRA, over the period of the BDUK funded and State Aid approved project to lay fibre-optic cables and install infrastructure for delivering superfast broadband. Eric Malcomson acting as interim treasurer presented the accounts for the year to 31 March 2015 and advised the meeting that the year had been an interesting exercise in financial management. A total of £108,658 had been granted by BDUK, being 50% of pre-contract identified project expenses. The Association had spent over £250,000. Loans provided entirely by members had enabled the project's success and the smaller loans were expected to be paid back by the end of 2016. About £25,000 of loans would be carried until 2017. Once loans were paid back, there will be the question of what to do with profits. David Symmers, our appointed treasurer from January 2016, fielded several questions from the members.

Chairman's Report

The Chairman commented on the completion of the BDUK project and indicated that where neighbouring communities proved themselves enthusiastic, ABbA was able, when time permitted, to help. Woodend, Helmdon, Adstone and Whittlebury had been helped in this way. The chairman reported that the backhaul was running about one-third capacity in the busiest periods in the evenings. A copy of his full report was circulated.

Officers of the Association

Messrs Philip Berry, Keith Fenwick, Eric Malcomson, Richard Tomalin, David Toman and Peter Watkins continue as Directors of the Association and Mr David Symmers takes up the role of Treasurer.

Reports from Directors

Peter Watkins gave some explanation of the performance of our superfast network, indicating downtime over the year to be less than one-quarter of a percent. Keith Fenwick reported that there was a need for additional volunteers particularly for Helmdon and Richard Tomalin asked that members phone our helpline rather than making personal calls because it is more likely to be picked up and that the help line has a recorded message when there is a known problem. He also pointed out that our on-line library contains documents dealing with broadband speed and troubleshooting internal WiFi problems.

Call for Volunteers

The Chairman explained that there was a need for a campaign to recruit more volunteers and that the expertise required was varied – installations, troubleshooting, network administration, website support and development, research projects and IT support for schools. Several people expressed their willingness to join and a promise to organise a campaign in March was made by the officers.

Any other business

There being no other business the Chairman thanked Joyce and John for providing the refreshments and closed the meeting. There followed general discussions.

Signed: _____ Eric Malcomson (Chairman)