

Thank you for joining us at our Annual General Meeting. This is the 11<sup>th</sup> time I have presented an AGM for the shop, but due to the extraordinary events of this year, it is the first time we have held our AGM online.

It is part of our statutory requirement to our shareholders to report our trading results for the previous financial year. It is also a requirement that our shareholders have an opportunity to be seen and heard.

Prior to the meeting we have given the opportunity for any shareholder who was unable to attend in this manner, to request a copy of our financial and chairs report and raise any questions in advance of this meeting.

We are also proposing to record this meeting this evening, to use to record minutes and provide to shareholders who were unable to attend. If you have any objections to this recording please can you advise now.

During the meeting we will present our financial situation and provide a report on our recent business activity. We welcome your thoughts, and I will ensure you are provided with opportunity to raise any questions you may have. However, as this is a meeting with a fair number of participants, we would be grateful if you could leave microphones off until prompted to switch them on. If you would like to raise a question during a presentation please use the chat function to let me know.

In order to record your vote for resolutions that are proposed I would again be grateful if you could use the chat function.

Before we begin, I would like to introduce our outgoing committee members.

Thank you to Maria who has prepared our financial reports and will present to you our financial position at 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020 this evening.

## **Agenda**

### **Accounts**

### **Resolution 1**

### **Chairs Report**

This is our annual opportunity to report to you our members on the financial progress of the business and the work undertaken by the shop committee and staff to support the business. It is also an opportunity for you, our members to ask questions or make suggestions to the committee.

In January this year we celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> year of having a community owned shop in Ashton Hayes, This is quite an achievement and one we celebrated with a glass of fizz and a slice of cake at the shop joined by many of our volunteers and customers as well as our local MP and his young daughter.

It is actually about 13 years since the idea of a community shop in Ashton Hayes was first suggested by our Parish council. With the PC support a group of volunteers came together to try and establish a community owned shop and formed the shop management committee.

Many months were spent, planning and preparing for our community enterprise, raising funds by issuing shares, negotiating leases, finding suppliers, planning the layout and recruiting staff and volunteers.

Our aim then as it is now was to provide ***To provide a shop run by the community that meets the needs of the community and provides a consistent offering and reliable service at a fair price.***

Today our management committee continues to support the community shop, with financial planning, project maintenance, and development of the business. Whilst the day to day operation is the responsibility of the Shop Manager, the role of the shop committee is to oversee the management of the business ensuring it remains viable as well as continuing to be an essential community asset.

This year we have two members who have decided not to stand for next year's committee. I would like to thank both Martin Colville and Carol Rowntree for all of their support on the Committee.

Martin was a founder member of this group and together with Kate Harrison and I was one of that small group of 6 who attended the very first meeting and helped establish a community shop in Ashton He has been with us from the start and his commitment to the community shop has been unwavering, For 8 years he opened and ran the shop every

Sunday morning, and can be relied upon for contributing with suggestions for improvement or development of the business.

Carol joined our committee 7 years ago. It was Carol's suggestion that we first establish a partnership with timebank to provide shopping support for our more vulnerable members of the community, a service that has expanded very rapidly with the support of the PC during the current crisis.

Thank you both for commitment, you will both be sorely missed on the committee.

During the last ten years we have hosted many other community enterprises who have visited us to learn how we were able to set up and grow a successful community shop in a small rural community. We have won several awards and featured in the local press and on radio and TV. We have also inspired other projects on our own doorstep, Ashton Hayes now boasts a successful sports and recreation facility, a community café and a carbon energy company, We have been able to share some of our profits to support other local projects

Over the last 10 years we have extended the offering that the shop is able to provide with a commitment to providing good quality goods and services at a fair price. A particular thank you goes to Deb and her hard work and commitment in supporting other local businesses and providing something a little more than your average village shop.

This year we have welcomed two new members of staff to our team Ann and Gillian but we have also said goodbye to Dawn who left us in the summer after 6 years of service. Thank you Dawn for your support and we wish you well in your retirement.

I would also like to recognise once again the importance of the support from our merry band of volunteers. As you can see from the figures Maria has presented This community shop is successful as it is supported with approximately 55 hours of volunteer support each week.

Again, many of our volunteers began working in the shop back in January 2010 and are still with us today. We are extremely grateful to your time and commitment over the last 10 years.

The AGM is a time to present last years financial position. However, I cannot finish this meeting without commenting on the unprecedented situation we currently find ourselves in.

In March this year we entered a period of lockdown that required many of our customers and volunteers to isolate at home.

Overnight about 20 of our volunteers were unable to continue to offer their support to the shop. However, it is a testament to the community in which we live that a raft of new volunteers stepped forward to support us to continue to serve our community.

With the support of the Parish Council who established the Bridging the gap service we were able to support those of our customers who were unable to shop for themselves and at the peak provided around 60 deliveries each week to our most vulnerable residents.

A particular thank you to Jane Colville for her drive and determination in establishing the bridging the gap services and to Geoff Stamper, Steve King, Aileen Parry and Phillipa Ward who co-ordinated the volunteer support. Thank you to all of our new volunteers who supported with managing queues outside the shop, taking orders from customers, Picking and packing orders and making deliveries, many of whom have committed to continue to offer their support

Thanks also to Mouldsworth Parish Council who have supported with the purchase of equipment required to adapt the shop, such as screens and extra printing equipment.

Thank you to all our store team members who went above and beyond at this difficult time, to make sure the shop continued to provide essential supplies to all our customers, Even offering pasta, flour and toilet rolls when all other major retailers and run short !!

We have welcomed many new customers at this time, and many have commented about what a fantastic range of produce we have to offer. We value this custom and hope to continue to support those new customers in the future.

As we look to the future, we hope to continue to offer a successful Community shop in Ashton Hayes, A shop that offers

- fresh local produce without the need to travel outside the village,
- a place to meet a neighbour or see a friendly face behind the counter,
- a place to learn about local events/news

Continued volunteer support is vital to the success of the Community shop We look forward to the next 10 years of trading, and to welcoming the next generation of supporters and volunteers ensuring this project remains a success.