



Date: Saturday, 11th September 2021

Time: 7:30pm to 8:30pm

Venue: Via MS Teams

Minutes

Item 1 – Welcome and Introduction

- Neil Ralph, the Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting including West Lancs County Commissioner (Craig Dewar-Willox). He informed the attendees that the meeting was being recorded and the items to be discussed were available on the Wyre Scouts website: <https://www.wyrescouts.org.uk/about-us/agm-2021/>. He asked that cameras and microphones be turned off, but if there were any questions or comments the Chat facility could be utilised.

Item 2 –Apologies for Absence

- Neil Ralph asked Margaret Forrest, District Secretary to highlight any key apologies, a full list will be made separately available with the minutes. Key apologies were received from Richard Charnock, County Chair (newly elected); Tracy Douglas, Assistant District Commissioner – Cubs; Carl Hankinson, County Chair (retired); Muriel Freestone, District Vice President; Councilor Andrea Kay, Wyre District Mayor; Richard Ramsden, District Vice President.

Item 3 – Multi Faith Reflection

- Neil Ralph invited Reverend George Ayoma, District Chaplain to share his reflection of the last year. He highlighted the event 20 years ago when the twin towers in New York were brought down and the number of lives lost. He continued to say the huge losses were still felt. These losses are the human lives. In scouting the most valued investment is human lives and what can be done to add value to a single human life. There was an announcement of a new programme for children aged 3 to 5 called Squirrels. He commended scouts in providing a commitment and determination to create an environment where young people regardless of home background or beliefs invest their early lives in building a safer, healthier, happier, world without excesses, but sustained by our better stewardship together. Neil, thanked George for his moving, powerful reflection for the start of this meeting.

Item 4 – Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting

- Neil Ralph informed the attendees, the last meeting was held on Saturday, 12th September 2020. These minutes were available on the website: <https://www.wyrescouts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/WDSC-2020-AGM-Minutes.pdf>. He informed the attendees that the minutes had been proposed by Jon Minshull, District Commissioner and seconded by himself that they were a true reflection of the last meeting. He asked the attendees to approve the minutes via online voting. The attendees approved the minutes.

Item 5 – Annual Report and Statement of Accounts

- Neil Ralph invited Jon Minshull to provide a summary of the **Annual Report** to the attendees which was available on the website: <https://www.wyrescouts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Wyre-Scouts-Annual-Report-2020-2021.pdf>.
 - Jon informed the attendees that the Annual Report was a chance to reflect on the last 12 months, which has been full of challenges. Scouts had gone online, delivered scouting albeit in a new way, but still new scouts had been joining in and new volunteers had been accepted with a new appointments process. Young people had been obtaining their top awards, and more adventurous activities had been in place allowing some to obtain their permits to run further events in the future. The perception of the district had been improved upon with a newly launched website, social media presence had been increased and the District Newsletter had been improved upon. Links between

groups had been improved upon also, all of these had been completed in a safe environment, with the Safety and Safeguarding achieving 100%, which was the first in the county. Jon thanked members of the Executive Committee and Trustees and he welcomed the new members who will be joining this committee. He said the Executive Committee supports him in achieving the [Vision](#) for the district. This year has been an extraordinary year, not only because of the pandemic, but also because it has been a year of change. This year a new committee structure had been mobilised, the governance had been reviewed to ensure it is fit for purpose. Group Executives had been supported including standing in when there was no Group Executive. The Charity had been reviewed to ensure the charitable purpose and grant fund applications had been started to ensure the future and make scouting more accessible. He thanked everyone for their achievements over the last year and for all the contributions received. He asked everyone to remember people who have been lost of the last year and remember absent friends who could not be here tonight.

- Jon continued to say, looking forward it looks like a very exciting year. During the next week, scouting COVID-19 readiness in England turns [green](#). This now confirms a return to normality which a number of groups are starting to do which includes camping, one group was doing during this meeting. There are a number of District Events being planned for the future and welcomed the formation of Squirrels. The demand for wanting to join scouts is increasing phenomenally which is one of the key things in the District's Vision. In order to achieve this increase, we need to continue to engage with our community and parents to recruit.
- Jon continued to say Wyre Scouts is an amazing organisation and is really proud to lead it. It is made up of fantastic volunteers and amazing young people. He thanked everyone for everything they do and everything they are going to do.
- Neil thanked Jon for this summary and for everything he did for the district and his leadership over the last year.
- Neil Ralph invited Colin Sills, Chair of the Finance and Fundraising Subcommittee to provide a summary of the Statement of **Accounts** to the attendees which was available on the website: <https://www.wyrescouts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/WDSC-Examined-accounts-Gebhard.pdf> He informed the attendees that the accounts are approved in advance of the meeting by the Executive Committee, however he welcomed any questions or comments via the chat facility.
 - Colin informed the attendees that the accounts cover the financial year to 31st March 2021. He continued to say he was involved in these accounts later in the year and thanked David Simpson, District Treasurer for all his hard work during the last year in keeping these accounts. The accounts had been produced in the same format as previous years and has been approved by the external scrutineer, Howard Gebhard & Co. Colin confirmed the district cash reserves dropped over the last year by approximately £5,000 which coincidentally was the same figure as the Scout Headquarters figure. He continued to say many usual expenses, for example, for District events have not been paid for over the last year as a direct result of the pandemic. He said the assets valuation is an insurance valuation, it is not the original cost, plus depreciation.
 - Neil thanked Colin for this update. He also confirmed no questions had been raised in the chat function.

Item 6 – District Chair Nomination

- Neil Ralph informed the attendees that the District Chair role is for one year and is nominated by Jon Minshall, District Commissioner. As a result, he stepped down from the role of District Chair and handed over to Jon.
- Jon thanked for all his hard work and leadership, especially during this exceptional time of change in a backdrop of a pandemic and said that he would like to nominate Neil Ralph for the role of District Chair for a second year. Neil asked attendees to vote to provide their views on this decision. The attendees accepted this decision during the online vote.

Item 7 – Election of the District Secretary

- Neil Ralph informed the attendees that the election of the District Secretary had been completed prior to the meeting where all members of the scout council had been invited to vote. The results of this election could be located: <https://vote.electionrunner.com/election/OB9QU/results> One nominee had been received by Margaret Forrest, where 59 votes for and one vote to Abstain had been received. Margaret had been voted back into the role. Neil thanked Margaret for all the work she had done

over the last year and looked forward to working with her for another year.

Item 8 – Election of the District Treasurer

- Neil Ralph informed the attendees that the election of the District Treasurer had been completed prior to the meeting where all members of the scout council had been invited to vote.

The results of this election could be located:

<https://vote.electionrunner.com/election/OB9QU/results>

The results of this election was that David Simpson would be re-elected, however since the voting was started, David had decided that he did not wish to continue with the role of District Treasurer. Neil thanked David for all his hard work over the last 25 years. He informed Neil that he initially took on the role when asked by the current District Commissioner to 'step into the role' for a year whilst they look for a replacement. Neil informed the attendees, as a result this role will need to be vacant for now as the process needs to be robust to ensure David's replacement is recruited in a fair way.

Item 9 – Announcement of Elected member

- Neil Ralph informed the attendees that the election of the elected members to serve on the Executive Committee had been completed prior to the meeting where all members of the scout council had been invited to vote.

The results of this election could be located:

<https://vote.electionrunner.com/election/OB9QU/results>

The results of this election was the following

- For 4 members:
 - For = 56 votes (93%)
 - Abstain = 4 votes (7%)
- Election of Trustees:
 - Nicky Dennison = 35 votes (29%)
 - Colin Sills = 33 votes (28%)
 - Majorie Crossley = 20 votes (17%)
 - Maureen Head = 20 votes (17%)
 - Alan Cornforth = 12 votes (10%)
- As a result, Nicky and Colin will be elected for a period of two years until the AGM in 2023. Neil thanked the two outgoing members of the Executive Committee, Marjorie Crossley and Maureen Head for all their hard work over the last year.

Item 10 - Members nominated by the District Commissioner to serve on the Executive Committee

- Neil Ralph informed the attendees that the District Commissioner can nominate members to serve on the District Executive Committee. He continued to say there is always more elected members than nominated members. There are currently 4 elected members which was confirmed above. Jon said last year he asked Rosemary Dyson and Andrew Graham to join the Executive Committee. Andrew has asked that he focus on the development of his scout group and as a result Jon thanked Andrew for all his hard work over the last year on the Executive Committee and the Assets Committee.
- This year Jon asked that three people were asked to join the Executive Committee. This would be Rosemary Dyson who would bring an abundance of knowledge and skills from a business background and a slightly outside view of scouting. Jon thanked Rosemary for all her hard work over the last year, and welcomed her nomination for a further year. He also nominated Lauren Rigby and Alex Campbell.
- Neil asked attendees to vote on these nominations. The attendees supported these nominations. Neil welcomed Rosemary, Lauren and Alex into the role. He continued to say that this result means the Executive Committee now have three 16 – 25 year old young people including Luke Thornton, District Youth District Commissioner. He was delighted and felt this was a real step forward.

Item 11 – Ex-Officio Members

- Neil Ralph informed the attendees that there are Ex-Officio Members on the Executive Committee. They are members because of the roles they have within the district. They are:

- Jon Minshull, District Commissioner
- Luke Thornton, District Youth Commissioner
- Andrew Truelove, District Explorer Commissioner
- Gareth Bates, District Network Commissioner

Item 12 – Appointment of Independent Examiners

- Neil Ralph informed the attendees that there is an Independent Examiner who reviews the accounts and confirms they are a true reflection of the district finances. He confirmed Howard Gebhard & Co. based in Blackpool have agreed to continue this as they have for many years now. Neil asked for any attendees to propose and second this item.
 - Proposed: Jan Townsend
 - Seconded: Len Wiseman.

Item 13 – A Celebration of Scouting

- Neil Ralph invited Craig Dewar-Willox, County Commissioner to summarise his view of Wyre Scouts.
- Craig provided a very positive view of Wyre Scouts. He felt that the district was moving in the right direction. Despite the pandemic, Wyre have not only improved over the last year, it had made giant leaps forward. He asked to pay tribute to the District Team and the District Executive for leading the district in such an ambitious way. He felt Wyre were leading the county in a number of areas. He thanked the district and in particular Jon in his leadership. He confirmed as scouting had moved to green it was time to move back to normality including camps, nights away, international travel and what scouting does best, in that 'coming together' and showing people have got more in common from all different backgrounds. He encouraged everyone to seize the opportunities available to allow any young person who wants to be a scout, to actually be a scout. He mentioned the 'want to join' options on the website has increased massively over the last year and encouraged these opportunities are grasped and taken forward. He reiterated that he was really excited about Wyre Scouts and cannot wait for the next year with everyone coming back together and seeing the various District events. He gave his biggest thank you very much to the district for all their hard work in the most challenging year, everyone has made a difference to young people. He said across Lancashire as a whole, West Lancashire has been the largest provider of youth services at a time when it was most needed.

Item 14 – Vote of Thanks and Meeting Close

- Neil Ralph thanked everyone who joined the meeting tonight and encouraged anyone to forward any comments to him from this evening. He said he was looking forward to meeting everyone at the various district events in the future.

Margaret Forrest
District Secretary

Care	Respect	Integrity	Cooperation	Belief
Programme	People	Perception	Places	
Protect	Recover	Grow		