



Minutes of the yelabus Association Annual General Meeting

Held at The Tythings, Yateley
13.00, Tuesday 13th December 2022

Attendees:

John Ellis (Chair, Trustee), Gill Hennell (Trustee), Richard Whitbread (Vice-Chair, Trustee), Margaret Claydon (Trustee), Bill Hill (Secretary, Trustee), Sarah Currie (Operations Manager), Mo Ayres (Trustee), David Shafto (Driver), Paul Champney (Driver), Alan Peever (Driver).

Beverley Jones (RVS Operations Manager), Josh Leppard (Young Carers), Brenda Lane (user), Betty Spirey (user), Janet Larkin (user)

1. Welcome

John Ellis welcomed everyone to the meeting and highlighted that this would be his last AGM as Chair of yelabus.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Tony Spencer (via email)

3. Minutes of the last meeting

These were proposed for adoption by Bill Hill, seconded by Margaret Claydon and were then adopted.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Chair's Report

John Ellis presented the chair's report (copy attached). John highlighted the hard work undertaken by the volunteer Trustees and drivers. He thanked the county council and local councils for their continued funding support. John particularly thanked Sarah for all her hard work as Operations Manager.

During his report John discussed his reasons for stepping down from yelabus as both Chair and Trustee. He wished the charity every success in the future.

The meeting thanked John for all his hard work over the last 15 years.

6. Operation Manager's Report

Sarah Currie provided a report which is attached to these Minutes. Sarah thanked all the drivers and indicated that the demand for the buses is increasing and that she has

several new business initiatives being developed. Sarah thanked the drivers and the Trustees for the support in her new role.

7. Josh Leppard from Young Carers made a very interesting presentation on the Hart and Rushmoor Young Carers and the importance of yelabus in supporting their work. The Chair thanked Josh for the presentation, noting that it was a great example of two local organisations working together.

8. Annual Accounts

Richard Whitbread, in the absence of a Treasurer presented the annual accounts and his full report is attached. In summary, yelabus remains in a strong financial position despite the drop in revenue. Hampshire County Council will be reducing their funding of Community Transport which will result in an increase in hire rates.

Richard thanked our examiner, Ian Ellis and Ellen Lefevre for managing accounts and payroll.

The accounts were proposed for adoption by Margaret Claydon, seconded by Gill Hennell and the annual accounts for the year ending 30 April 2022 were formally adopted.

9. Appointment of Independent Examiner

Ian Ellis is retiring from his role as Independent Examiner. John Ellis thanked Ian for all his hard work. Alan Peever has agreed to take on this role.

10. Election of new Committee and Officers

A number of roles on the committee have become or are vacant. At the AGM Paul Champney and David Shafto agreed to join the committee as detailed below:

Chair – Vacant

Vice-Chair - Richard Whitbread

Treasurer – Paul Champney (new appointment)

Secretary – Bill Hill

Committee member (Fundraising) – Mo Ayres

Committee member (IT) – David Shafto (new appointment)

Committee member (YTC) – Gill Hennell

Committee member (YTC) – Tony Spencer

John thanked the new appointees for volunteering and explained that there is a probationary period before new appointees become Trustees of the charity.

11. Richard Whitbread thanked John Ellis and Margaret Claydon for their many years of service to yelabus and presented them with thank you gifts.

The meeting closed at 13:45

Yelabus AGM 2022 Chair's Report

Well all good things come to an end.

I have been involved with yelabus when it had a CAPITAL Y, along with Margaret and Mo. It would be remiss of me not to record the outstanding work Margaret has done for Yelabus and, with her departure, the last link with our founders is now cut. Can I ask you to acknowledge her sterling service on the Board, and particularly giving us her perspective of being a user of the bus.

Talking of links with the past, our original employee Tracey, who became our Operations Manager, decided to move on and we should acknowledge her service to the charity.

We were very fortunate to get Sarah to join us and she has brought her organisational skills and entrepreneurship to the Organisation, and I am sure she will drive the charity forward into new areas. Thank you, Sarah, for all the sterling work you have done.

Mo has continued to raise copious sums of money from locals, for which yelabus is extremely grateful. I know she will continue to be an amazing fund raiser and dread to think what secrets she must have about local people, in order to elicit so much money from them whilst still remaining within the law! We couldn't do this without you Mo.

I have decided to step down after around 15 years on the board - most of these years holding Officer roles, and the majority as Chair.

Volunteering brings many opportunities and experiences and volunteering with yelabus has definitely provided many of them for me!

It's given me more grey hair, and less hair, having pulled a lot out in our negotiations with Hampshire County Council over contracts and trying to get them to appreciate that one size doesn't fit all.

I'm very happy to have had the opportunity to speak at a County Council meeting and managed to obtain changes in the County's requirements, to reflect the needs in our organisation. This came about with the assistance of David Simpson and Adrian Collet.

I would like to point out that without Hampshire's support and that of Yateley Town Council (and to a lesser extent Blackwater and Hawley), yelabus wouldn't be able to assist the people and organisations that it does.

In 15 years, I have worked with four Yateley Town Clerks in number - only one more than the number of Conservatives leaders this year - from Lawrence to Julie. All have been extremely supportive. The logistical support and advice they and their staff have provided has been as valuable to yelabus as the money we receive.

In these strange times, when I had managed to avoid catching Covid for almost two years, Sarah and I attended an interesting meeting in July this year with another charity, but a day later the other attendee told us he had tested positive and both Sarah and I were subsequently laid low.

Talking of Covid, this showed the true value of yelabus, when it became obvious that we couldn't provide our usual service. A team led by our Secretary / Driver, Bill provided an invaluable service to our community by delivering medical supplies to vulnerable people.

Without our Volunteers either sitting behind a steering wheel or in front of a computer yelabus wouldn't be the organisation it is.

I would personally like to record my thanks to Bill, who since joining the Board and becoming Secretary, has shown the same degree of enthusiasm as he shows when driving the Young Carers and providing the Covid service.

Leaving an organisation is a difficult thing whether it's changing schools, moving jobs or house, but there is a time that's right and this is it for me and yelabus.

I have been doing voluntary work since I first can remember and the motivation for me has been to help the community and society, whilst enjoying what I'm doing.

Recently I haven't been enjoying it so much and in some ways I have begun to resent the time it has been taking - impinging on my time with Sally and our dog Mabel .

I think it's in the best interest of yelabus and me, to totally leave rather than just step down as Chair. Obviously, I'll still be an advocate and supporter of yelabus and who knows in a few years I might be offering my services again.

I wish yelabus every success.

Annual Operations Report 2022

A slow start to 2022, as expected, as we continued to overcome the pandemic, with many of our regular groups not reforming but new ones are beginning to form with new organisers taking the lead.

I joined in May had a huge amount to learn very quickly and with some learning curves, determination and perseverance, we have grown and continue to do so steadily.

For those that are unaware of our activity in the community, our passengers age range is from 7 to 96! We carry out 10-12 runs per month for young carers, this enables these young people, sometimes in very difficult living circumstances to take a break and get any additional support they may have the need for.

We operate weekly runs for local Shopping trips, coffee and lunch clubs and have some adhoc runs for special trips for some groups like guides, rotary club, groups of friends and resident groups throughout the year, Including trips to the theatre, garden centres and even to an airfield!

We have also stepped out of area to help a community group who couldn't be accommodated by their own local community bus service, once a month to various locations and more recently I am organising a trip for an over 55's complex.

We have increased numbers on regular services we provide and continue to push this forward with new registrations becoming a familiar weekly admin exercise.

Since May group hire has increased from 11 to 19 with more in the pipeline for 2023.

I find myself out on the buses, as regularly as the admin will allow me and by talking to passengers have worked out there is an even higher demand for day trips out that I intend to get involved in organising for the future, with our first trip to Fleet town taking place tomorrow with more destinations to come in 2023!

We intend to visit the 3 parish fairs in 2023 to promote yelabus locally and remind the community we are still here.

I'm excited at the idea of the website and facebook pages being fully functional as soon as possible and believe this is going to be made possible by having a new set of skills on the board.

A special thank you to our amazing drivers who as always go above and beyond in their roles as volunteers. We sadly say goodbye to Barry who is retiring after 15 years service to yelabus at the end of December, which gives us 11 drivers in total going into 2023.

Thank you to the board and trustees for their support as sometimes we all forget they are also volunteers.

Vice Chair report replacing a Treasurer's report

In the absence of a Treasurer I have undertaken the majority of what would be seen as Treasurer duties.

Treasurer's Report

The last two years almost exactly match the period during which covid impacted our operations with limits on the charity's activities reducing income and our ability to meet user demands. Both the Department for Transport and Hampshire County Council stepped in to provide additional assistance, for which we are extremely grateful, and this limited our financial shortfall on normal operations to £3520, representing a marked improvement on the £6668 loss incurred in the prior year.

Overall we remain in a strong financial position with reserves in excess of those deemed necessary to sustain our operations. The fundraising activities led largely by Mo Ayres help enormously and we already have £6287 put aside to part fund the next new vehicle we need to acquire. Both the VW and the newer Mercedes have seen lower usage in the last two years and as the VW has only completed 41,000 miles at 7 years old we can realistically anticipate it will last another 8 years (100,000 miles in total) so we have spent some money on some minor bodywork repairs to keep it looking good.

Looking at the 22-23 financial year it is unlikely that the charity will be able to achieve a financial surplus. A number of regular users in pre-covid times have not returned as the organisations have stopped their various gatherings. One key element which Sarah is pursuing is to encourage new hirers and this has to be given time to get the numbers growing. In 23-24 we are aware that Hampshire will be pursuing modest reductions in the financial assistance they provide in order to balance their books and that almost certainly means we will need to increase our hire rates.

I would like to thank our examiner Ian Ellis for his thorough review of the accounts and Ellen Lefevre for her unfailing ability to keep the accounts for us, for preparing and filing the monthly payroll and the quarterly VAT returns ensuring our legal duties in these areas are correctly discharged – something which is essential to our standing as a charity and without which the absence of a treasurer would be a real burden.

K R Whitbread
Vice Chair