



## Minutes of the yelabus Association Annual General Meeting

Held at The Monteagle Community Centre, Yateley  
12.00, Tuesday 17th December 2024

### Attendees:

Richard Whitbread (Chair,Trustee), Bill Hill (Secretary,Trustee), Lorraine Davies (Operations Manager), Mo Ayres (Fund Raising, Trustee), Paul Champney (Treasurer,Trustee), Greg Easterbrook ( Trustee), Alan Peever (Driver/ Independent Examiner), Micky Stewart (Driver), Phil Ellis (Driver), Michael Head (Driver), Jim Callaghan (Driver),

Beverley Jones (RVS Operations Manager), Josh Leppard (Young Carers) , Lindsay Graham ( Young Carers), Gill Gibson (MHA), Anne Wright (Fiske Court), Pauline Jackson (Fiske Court).

### 1. Welcome

Richard Whitbread welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### 2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Steven Boakes (Driver), Gill Hennell (Trustee), Steven Munden (Driver), Sue Vincent (HVA)

### 3. Minutes of the last meeting

These were proposed for adoption by Paul Champney, seconded by Mo Ayres and were then adopted.

### 4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

### 5. Chair's Report

Richard Whitbread presented the chair's report (copy attached). Richard highlighted the hard work undertaken by the volunteer Trustees and drivers. Richard particularly thanked Sarah and Lorraine for all their hard work as Operations Managers. Richard also thanked Colin Hennell for his many years of service and reported the sad death of Eddie Brown.

During his report Richard covered the issues of future funding from HCC and reassured the meeting of the financial stability of yelabus. Richard thanked Yateley Town Council for their continued support.

Richard thanked all our clients for their continued support.

#### 6. Operation Manager's Report

Lorraine Davies provided a report which is attached to these Minutes. Lorraine thanked all the drivers and mentioned the recruitment of a number of new drivers. The demand for the buses is increasing, particularly in the Group Hire sector. The new yelabus excursions are performing well. Lorraine thanked the Trustees for the support in her role.

#### 7. Annual Accounts and Treasurer's Report

Paul Champney presented a summary of the key elements of the annual accounts and his full report is attached. In 2023/24 yelabus achieved its budgetted end of year results. This was driven by increasing turnover but offset by rising costs associated with the vehicles and salaries. The final year end outturn was assisted by a one off grant from HCC associated with COVID recovery. YTC continued its support to yelabus and Paul thanked the council. Paul also thanked Mo Ayres' excellent work as fund raiser who provided over £3.0k of funds during the year.

Paul thanked our examiner, Alan Peever and Ellen Lefevre for managing accounts and payroll.

The accounts were proposed for adoption by Paul Champney, seconded by Mo Ayres and the annual accounts for the year ending 30 April 2023 were formally adopted.

The officer's reports were proposed for adoption by Mo Ayres and seconded by Micky Stewart.

#### 8. Election of new Committee and Officers

The following were voted unanimously onto the yelabus Trustee committee for the year 2023/24:

Chair – Richard Whitbread

Vice-Chair - Vacant

Treasurer – Paul Champney

Secretary – Bill Hill

Committee member (Fundraising) – Mo Ayres

Committee member (IT) – Vacant

Committee member – Gill Hennell

Committee member (YTC) – Greg Easterbrook

Independent Examiner (not on committee) – Vacant

Richard thanked the committee members for volunteering .

#### 9. AOB

There was no AOB

The meeting closed at 12.47

# Yelabus Chair Report 2024

In a few minutes our Treasurer will review the financial position for the year which ended on 30 April 2024 but as Chair I would like to talk in more practical terms of events over the last 12 months since we met at this time last year so we are talking about two slightly different periods.

There have been some personnel changes. Very recently and with much regret on both sides, I am sure, Colin Hennell, who has been a very long standing volunteer driver stood down although I believe he even undertook some trips after he had “theoretically” stopped! We must also report that another driver of 10 years’ of experience, Eddie Brown, has recently passed away. I am pleased that we have some new volunteers driving for us and we will always welcome more offers of assistance.

Close to 100% of our operations depend on volunteer drivers and without their contribution nothing would ever move. All committee members and passengers are grateful for the time they contribute and their ability to take our vehicles and passengers safely around the area.

As Operations Manager we thank Sarah Currie for her two years in that role leaving in early May as she had seen us through a difficult period of regrowing following the impact of covid. Sarah was replaced by Lorraine Davies who joined us in April and so were able to ensure a smooth transition. The Operations Manager is the single individual who keeps the charity moving, acting as the “Queenpin” liaising with the hirers, the driving team, the vehicles, the vehicle maintainers, other suppliers and the committee to ensure that all runs smoothly and to ensure any problems are resolved in the event of any unexpected events. I thank Lorraine for her first few months and hope that she can continue to provide that unique link between our customers and our buses.

Among the Trustees we bade farewell after many years to Tony Spencer and more recently to David Shafto who continues as a driver, whilst welcoming Greg Easterbrook to the Committee. We remain in need of more volunteers for the Committee to ensure we have a wide range of skills and knowledge.

I should also thank the other committee members, in particular Bill and Paul who are also members of the driving team for their time and contributions.

Looking ahead for the next 12 months we will face the usual operational challenges but we also know the financial scenery will change in connection with Hampshire County Council. They have been providing about 25% of our income for many years. We understand that they have significant financial pressures and earlier in 2024 they were contemplating withdrawing all support for Community Transport with effect from 1 April 2025. Following a wide ranging consultation there are new plans in place. The date of change will now be 1 September 2025 and we are expecting to receive a tender document for a new contract for around 70% of the previously available funds – so that will be a significant reduction. The Committee have to consider both the position if winning the tender (but have less income) and equally the situation if we are not successful bidders and lose all of the income.

We currently anticipate that if successful we can continue to operate yelabus as now but that our hiring charges are likely to rise by more than inflation to recover the lost income. Were we

not to win the tender then we believe that yelabus can continue but might need to look more radically as to how that can be achieved.

More significantly both in terms of hard cash and continuing support I must state that without Yateley Town Council that we could not continue. The Town Council go above and beyond in helping us operate, providing facilities and assistance without question. Thank you to the Councillors and to the Council Office team for all of this.

In the light of the anticipated loss of revenue we are looking to find ways of growing income from other sources and more hires will we hope be key to that aim.

And as ever to make the next year a success we need to recruit drivers, hirers and others who can help make the wheels go round and word of mouth recommendation is always the best – so tell you friends and colleagues about us and spread the word.

## Annual Operations Report 2024

Having only coming into the role in April this year, 2024 had already had good start and during this year we have successfully continued to seek new customers who could benefit from our services. We have seen an increase of 17% in numbers of passengers carried, a 5% increase in miles travelled and an 8% increase in hiring income.

Our volunteer driver numbers have increased after a successful Facebook campaign, we now have another 4 drivers, making a total of 19 drivers. This should make covering our runs easier, as well as enabling us to offer more availability for our group hires. Sadly we have lost two drivers this year, Eddie who passed away recently and Colin who has retired from driving after a long 20yrs service with us. A huge thank you they will both be missed by all our passengers.

Unfortunately the buses made more trips to the garage than we would have liked during the year, but it is our policy to keep them in excellent condition and to resolve all faults as quickly as possible, for the benefit of our passengers.

The users of our Yelabus service are largely made up of local groups, care homes and similar organisations. One of these organisations are Young Carers, who we provide runs approx 10 times a month for. 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 schools, groups of friends and resident groups throughout the year.

The yelabus excursions remain popular with our passengers who have managed trips to various places of interest. With some financial support from the Yateley Lions and this venture continues to grow.

The number of new registrations to use our weekly shopping services has increased, and this is something we are looking to increase further with visits to local retirement homes and advertising in local businesses and on social media.

Here are a few interesting figures from January to the end of November:

Mileage – VW - 6,794 & MERC – 6,056 Total of 12,850

Passenger numbers – 7,614

Total litres of fuel – 2,708.26

Longest single trip – 158 miles

A special thank you to our amazing drivers who as always go above and beyond in their roles as volunteers, and also to Maureen Ayres for her incredibly hard work as our lead fundraiser, her passion and energy is incredible.

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

Lorraine– Operations Manager 17/12/24