



The East Lancashire Masonic Charity

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the East Lancashire Masonic Charity held on
Tuesday 17 September 2013 at 6.30pm at Middleton Masonic Hall,

Present

RWBro Sir David Trippier, President
VWBro DN Thornhill, Vice President
WBro P M A Rose, Chairman
WBro M W Davis, Chairman, Committee of Benevolence
WBro RW Flitcroft Honorary Secretary
WBro JS Brownson, Honorary Treasurer
WBro A D P Smith Chairman - Hewlett Court Management Committee
WBro E Cheadle Chairman - Community Fund Committee
WBro W R Waite Non-executive Director
WBro P J Price Non-executive Director
WBro BF Sigsworth, Provincial Charity Steward
WBro BJ Carter, Provincial Almoner

The total attendance of 63 members represented 50 Lodges and 34 Chapters. Also in attendance were Julie Ward, Director of Operations, and Tim Elston, Auditor.

The President, RWBro Sir David Trippier, opened the Annual General Meeting of the East Lancashire Masonic Charity at 6.30 pm, and offered a warm welcome to all the Brethren and visitors in attendance. He gave his thanks to WBro Chad Northcott for his expertise in once again providing photographs and printing the 'glossy' Report. He also added that at the end of the meeting there would be a report of the current situation concerning the negotiations for development of Freemasons Hall, Manchester.

The President then asked the Hon Secretary to explain the signing-in arrangements to representative Members, and the availability of copies of the Annual Report, following which the President explained that in advance of the formal business of the AGM a presentation would be given. This presentation is on behalf of an organisation that has benefitted from donations from the Community Fund. He then invited WBro David McGurty, on behalf of East Ribble District, to introduce the speaker.

WBro McGurty on introducing Bro Scott Miller of North West Blood Bikes explained that an application had been made for support in purchase of a second hand police motor bike. The Community Fund Committee was happy to support this very worthwhile cause in the sum of £4,175 presented in June 2013. The bike was present in the meeting room. On each side are inscriptions recognising the Masonic donation, and this donation has attracted Press publicity.

Bro Scott Miller explained that the team of volunteers recently established provide an out of working hours service every day of the year to transport blood (and more recently drugs, body organs and premature baby milk) to trauma situations throughout Lancashire, Liverpool and Manchester. Since early 2012 this local team has expanded from four members with one bike to currently 173 bikers and 8 bikes. Previously taxis were used at great expense and slower response for these emergency needs. Blood Bikes has been a National scheme since 1970 supported by the National Lottery. The bikers are all police trained in blue light travel to enable a speedy response. A short video displayed scheme.

The President thanked Bro Scott Miller for his presentation and the valuable voluntary work provided by the Bikers. He then handed over to the **Chairman, WBro Paul M Rose**, to undertake the formal business.

Agenda

1. To receive apologies

The notice convening the meeting, which had been distributed to all members in advance, together with a copy of the Annual Report and Financial Statements, were taken as read.

Apologies for absence were reported by the Hon Secretary on behalf of WBro D Biggs, RSC Mitchell, and from 17 members.

2. To approve the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 19 September 2012

The Chairman drew attention to the circulated Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting and enquired whether they were an accurate record of what took place on that occasion.

It was proposed by **WBro Mark Davis** and seconded by **WBro Brian Carter** that the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Monday 19th September 2012, which had been distributed in advance, be agreed as a true and correct record. This proposition was approved unanimously. There were no matters arising.

3. To receive the 2012 Annual Report and Statement of Financial Activities

The Honorary Treasurer, WBro Jonathan Brownson, referred the meeting to the Annual Report detailing the annual accounts, and the notes and comments on those accounts. He explained that the Charity Accounts and those of the Hall Company, it's wholly owned subsidiary, had been consolidated, and provided an explanation of the headline figures. During his presentation the Hon Treasurer explained that the unrestricted income had increased in value during the year largely due to the income received through generous legacies from departed Brethren. However the Hall Company income decreased in difficult trading conditions and exceptional costs incurred related to the impending disposal of the property, but in the current year – 2013, losses will be significantly reduced. There has been a continuing reduction in donations from the Craft and Royal Arch, and investment income also reduced. However an operating loss at Hewlett Court was much reduced in 2012. Refurbishments and improvements have been undertaken to ensure that the Home is modernised and fully compliant with health and safety legislation.

There were no questions from the floor on the Financial Statements. The Chairman thanked the Hon Treasurer for his presentation.

4. To receive the Auditor's Report

The Chairman welcomed **Mr Tim Elston, the Senior Statutory Auditor** at Percy Westhead and Co, to the meeting and invited him to make his Report. Mr Elston indicated that he did not intend to go through the whole accounts but would be happy to answer questions. He then read out the Audit opinion contained within the Annual Report and Financial Statements. There were no questions from the floor. The Chairman thanked Mr Elston and his colleagues for their attention as Auditors of our accounts.

5. Resolution to adopt the Annual Report and Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 December 2012.

The Chairman explained that the Annual Reports, as contained in the printed booklet, previously distributed and available in hard copy this evening had been considered in detail and approved by the ELMC Board at a meeting that had taken place on Wednesday 31th July 2013; he proposed that they be formally adopted. The President seconded the proposal and Members present voted unanimously in favour of the proposition. The Accounts were adopted.

6. To elect nine Directors.

The Board structure comprises between 12 and 15 Trustees, up to 11 of who are elected at each Annual General Meeting.

The four ex officio Directors are the Provincial Grand Master, as President, the Deputy Provincial Grand Master, as Deputy President, the Provincial Grand Almoner and the Provincial Grand Charity Steward.

The Chairman thanked WBro Roger Flitcroft for his work as ELMC Honorary Secretary over a period of two years. He announced that WBro Mark Davis is to be proposed as the succeeding Hon.Sec. and thanked him for his acceptance and his work as Chairman of the Benevolent Committee. The Chairman then introduced WBro Steven Barton who will be proposed as Chairman of the Benevolent Committee.

The nominations for the nine elected directors are;

Paul M A Rose	Chairman of the Board
Mark W Davis	Honorary Secretary
Jonathan S Brownson	Honorary Treasurer
Steven Barton	Chairman - Committee of Benevolence
Alan D P Smith	Chairman - Hewlett Court Management Committee
Edwin Cheadle	Chairman - Community Fund Committee
Philip J Price	Non-executive director
William R Waite	Non-executive director
Robert S C Mitchell	Non- executive director (Museum Committee)

The President, RWBro Sir David Trippier proposed that the nine nominated Brethren be elected to the Board of the East Lancashire Masonic Charity for the ensuing year. The **Deputy President VWBro Derek N Thornhill**, seconded the proposition. All present voted in favour. The Chairman, **WBro Paul Rose** thanked the Brethren, welcoming Steven Barton, and Mark Davis in his new role, and all nominated for agreeing to serve the Charity as Directors.

7. To appoint the Auditors for the ensuing year.

The current Auditors, Percy Westhead & Co have signified their willingness to continue in office for a further year if elected. The Chairman gave his thanks for the work they had undertaken on behalf of the Charity and the service they had provided. He invited a proposition that they be re-elected for the ensuing year. This was duly made by **WBro William R Waite**, seconded by **WBro Brian F Sigsworth**, and carried by the members.

The Chairman confirmed the reappointment of **Percy Westhead & Co** as auditors of the East Lancashire Masonic Charity for the 2013 financial year.

8. To appoint Members of the Committee of Benevolence

The Chairman introduced the next agenda item; to appoint the Members of the Committee of Benevolence. He asked the Secretary to read the names of the Brethren to be appointed as members of the Committee for the forthcoming year:-

Steven Barton	Chairman
Charles B Ward	Deputy Chairman
Peter Whitnall	Bury
Alan Potts	Salford
Brian W Powell	Ashton and Mossley
Brian Harrison	Bolton
David J Halford	Oldham
Paul Thornton	Burnley and Pendle
Paul Waring	Audenshaw
James T Gartside	Rochdale
Paul O'Carroll	Manchester City Sykes
Frank Salt	East Ribble
Paul O'Carroll	Manchester City Derby
Dennis Heskett	
Julie Ward	ELMC Director of Operations also attends.

In addition it was reported that the Provincial Grand Almoner, the Provincial Grand Charity Steward and the Hon Secretary are "ex- officio" members of the Committee.

9. To Appoint Members of the Community Fund Committee.

The Chairman asked the Secretary to read the names of the Brethren appointed as Members of this Committee for the forthcoming year, those being:-

Edwin Cheadle	Chairman
Chad Northcott	Deputy Chairman
Sir David Trippier	
Derek N Thornhill	
Brian J Carter	
Brian F Sigsworth	
Mark W Davis	
Karen Hall	Secretary

The Director of the Communications is also invited to attend.

10. To note the appointment of members to the following committees’.

I will now ask the Secretary to read the names of those Brethren who have been appointed to serve on the other ELMC Committees for the forthcoming year:-

Hewlett Court Management Committee

Alan D P Smith	Chairman
Dr Michael Boden	Deputy Chairman
Michael Williams	Secretary
Peter Jones	
Anthony Smith	
Harry Rogers	
Derek Worthington	
Julie Ward	ELMC Director of Operations

Comforts Fund sub-Committee

Charles B Ward	Chairman
Steven Barton	Vice Chairman
Brian Harrison	
Brian Robinson	
David Williamson	
Julie Ward	ELMC Director of Operations

Chairman of the Committee of Benevolence, Provincial Grand Almoner and the Provincial Grand Charity Steward are “ex-officio” members of this Committee.

Young Peoples Sub-Committee

Roger Tinker	Chairman
Peter Cole	
Denis Heskett	
Nigel Pickering	
Edward Smethurst	
Paul T Doran	
Ken G Hampson	
Julie Ward	ELMC Director of Operations

Investment Committee

Brian W Taylor	Chairman
Derek Calrow	
David Rothburn	
David H Seal	
Mark Davis	Hon Secretary
Jonathan S Brownson	Hon Treasurer

John Scott of WH Ireland Ltd attends to offer advice on investments.

Chairman, Paul Rose – My very grateful thank you to all those who have agreed to serve on the committees for the coming year.

May I also take this opportunity to offer a special thanks to Alan Smith in his task in caring for our elderly people at Hewlett Court. A lot of work and improvements have taken place which are not always appreciated. I must also thank Julie and Karen for their continued work for the Charity.

11. Any Other Business

The Chairman invited items from the floor under Any Other Business. No matters were raised. He then gave an overview of the negotiations regarding **development of Freemasons Hall, Manchester:-**

ELMC Board and Development Committee have been involved for almost 10 years in discussions and meetings with a number of solutions being put forward. In the period 2006/7 ten potential developers put forward various ideas such as: hotel, residential accommodation, offices, licensee, 25 story tower in place of car park, extension above the building. However these proposals did not proceed or were considered unsuitable. During 2011/12 a strong proposal had been discussed at length including negotiations with the Planning Authority etc. This offer was eventually withdrawn just before commencement of the AGM in 2012.

A new strong proposal acceptable to the Board is now progressing well with the Developer and Planning Authority. Masonic accommodation for Lodges, Chapters etc will be provided on the third floor, and access to the Derby suite will be maintained. The development will most likely include restaurant and office/conference facilities within the first and second floors, and potential development above the building. Work is now likely to commence in the near future in the areas to the right hand side of the building, and cleansing of the outer faces. Development over the open car park is still under negotiation with the planners and English Heritage.

Our aims are to provide a sustainable area for Masonic involvement in Manchester, and for preservation of this iconic building. Many other iconic buildings are no longer present in the City. Such preservation would involve considerable expenditure which could not easily be sustained by Freemasonry.

Questions were invited:

1. Are there any other alternatives or fall back provisions?
Plan B could be to further reduce staff costs to help viability, but this could not be a long term financial solution.
2. What is the English Heritage issue?
There are windows facing the car park that would be affected by any building.
Bridge Street is in a Conservation Area – an empty plot is not an option.

The President in his closing remarks particularly thanked the Development Committee including Paul Rose, Derek Thornhill, and Martin Caller for their enormous involvement over a long period of time. A required deposit has been paid by the developer and we now await confirmation from the planners. He thanked the retiring Hon Sec for his work and liaison, and others too numerous to mention by name.

Brethren, that concludes the formal business of this Annual General Meeting. Wine, soft drinks and canapés are available with our compliments.
