

# Minutes of the Blackdown District Scout Council Annual General Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2023



## 1 Attendees

Shaun Dale (Chairman)	Dawn Wilson (County Commissioner)
Shawn Rutter (incoming Chairman)	Adrian Ashford (County Chairman)
Nadia Atherton (District Commissioner)	(See attendance list at end)
David Johnson (Treasurer)	

## 2 Welcome

In the absence of the President, Charlie Back MBE, Shaun welcomed all to the AGM. “It reflects back on our financial year of 2022 as well as giving us an opportunity to look forward to 2023 and beyond. Let us just take a moment to reflect back on the past year and remember those people that made it what it was, we especially remember those that have given so much to Scouting in general and Blackdown District in particular and who are no longer with us including Peter Bourner, Rob Warburton, Chris Lee and our Patron, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. More recently we learn of the passing of Mickael O’Rourke. More details are in the Annual Report

Refreshments will be served after the formal business of the AGM is concluded, so please stay for a while and have a chat.”

## 3 Opening Thought

***Shaun’s opening theme was Diamonds and Pearls***

“Every day will either be a Diamond or a Rock – say the window sticker in Brian’s lorry. Brian is an international lorry driver for Broughton Haulage based in Melksham. Their lorries are best known for the slogans on the trailers like “Eat More Chips”. Anyway, talk to Brian and he will tell you those days that are diamonds you need to make sure they glitter for all to see and reflect all that is right in the world, but remember we don’t all have diamond days and not all your days will be diamond days. If you or someone else is having a rock of a day remember this. A rock is a giant grain of sand and an Oyster makes a pearl out of that, so how can you turn a rock of a day into a pearl, think on and to quote Caroline Flack “In a world where you can be anything, be kind” because someone near you may be having a rock of a day and may need some help in making it a pearl.”

## 4 Apologies

Charlie Back MBE, Yvonne Back, Pat Hitchcock, David Humphries, Dave Lumbard, Sarah Milsted, Kerry Newberry, Tricia Sedgbeer

## 5 Approval of minutes of AGM held 24 May 2022

Minutes of the previous Scout Council AGM had been circulated. All agreed these as a true record.

## 6 Presentation of the Annual Accounts

David reported the full SOFA accounts had been approved by the Executive on 25 April. These were in statutory form and not easily digestible. A summary was included in the Annual Report and circulated at this meeting. The income of £149,646 included a legacy of £11k. Expenditure totalled £109,601. Activity at Huish Woods had recovered and shown a surplus. However, some significant expenditure on tree maintenance and electricity supplies was envisaged for 2023. With £107,715 in the bank at 31 December the Executive’s policy

of holding one year's expenditure in reserve had been largely achieved. Shaun thanked David for all his efforts in keeping finances on track.

## **7 To receive the Annual Report**

Shaun stated the Annual Report for 2022 had already been approved by the District Executive at their April meeting. It was circulated with the May newsletter. "It, I believe, reflects a vibrant Scouting community right across the District and with the spread of Squirrels demonstrates we can offer a compelling programme for 4 year olds right through to 24 year olds. The report shows that the young people and the adults that support them have engaged in a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities, locally, nationally and internationally and it is encouraging to see so many top awards being earned in every Section. It is also worthy of note that 34 adults have completed Wood Badge Training and / or earned service awards in 2022. Long service awards issued totalled a minimum of 1315 years and special note to Geoff Pinney on his 60 years.

Looking forward the annual report also includes a little on the transformation programme being run nationally, change is a constant for any organisation to stay relevant to the community it serves, Scouting continues to evolve whilst retaining its core values. The Report is commended to the meeting with thanks to everyone for the contribution they have made and continue to make in helping shape the lives of over 1,400 Young People across the District.

I would also like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the work of the District Executive in providing the governance for the District and its assets, including Huish Woods – no mean feat, but one they have achieved effectively and with great diligence."

## **8 Amendment to Constitution**

Shaun stated that the District followed the model in POR as its constitution. A number of changes had recently been promulgated within POR, notably replacing the District Executive with a Board of Trustees. The meeting agreed to adopt these changes and confirmed the District constitution as that laid down in Section 5.4 of POR. The Executive is immediately renamed the Board of Trustees.

## **9 Nomination of District Chairman**

Nadia Atherton (DC) nominated Shawn Rutter as District Chairman. All agreed. Shaun Dale vacated the Chair in favour of Shawn Rutter.

## **10 Appointment of President and Vice Presidents**

On behalf of the Executive Committee Shawn nominated Charlie Back MBE as President and as Vice Presidents June Hick, Pat Hitchcock, Marian Scott and Doreen Warburton.

## **11 Election of District Treasurer and District Secretary**

Shawn nominated David Johnson as District Treasurer – David accepted and all agreed. No nominations for Secretary were received so this will remain vacant.

## **12 Election of members of the District Scout Council to the Board of Trustees**

Six nominations had been received for the six elected seats on the Board of Trustees. The following were therefore duly elected: Phillip Bayles, Mark Cummings, David Lumard, John Lewis, Chris Pinguenet and Marian Scott.

## **13 District Commissioner's nomination of members of the Board of Trustees**

Nadia nominated Thom Hold, Andy Milsted, Sarah Milsted and Tricia Sedgbeer.

The Board of Trustees therefore comprises the six elected and four nominated above together with the Chairman, Treasurer, District Commissioner, District Explorer Scout Commissioner, District Network Commissioner and District Youth Commissioner as ex-officio members.

## 14 Election of two Group Scouters to the County Scout Council

Shaun nominated Martin Allen (Staplegrave) and Jana Truby (Bishops Lydeard) - all agreed.

## 15 Appointment of Independent Examiner for the coming year

Nadia proposed Kevin Parsons of Cooper Associates Accountants Ltd be appointed – all agreed.

## 16 District Commissioner's Report

Nadia reported the year began in April and it was a pleasure to become a part of the Blackdown DC Team, alongside Lee Troake. "Whilst Lee has stepped back from the role due to ongoing health concerns he is still involved as a District Supporter and County Training Advisor. He still runs many things behind the scenes, is my sounding board and I couldn't do this role without him.

To start on a high: this year saw a return to District Camps across all sections, as well as a return to independent group camps. We are all thankful that normality continues to seep back to Scouting! As DC it was a pleasure to attend District Camps as well as attending group meetings, presenting awards and attending many of the District's AGMs. Where I was unable to attend, we ensured that there was always a District representative.

There is a lot to celebrate over the past year, and I summarise some of the highlights below:

- A new Network Commissioner was brought into the District Team. This section had lain dormant for many years and it has been a great pleasure to see our eldest section returning, meeting, implementing and helping out in younger sections.

- A new Youth Commissioner and YC team was added to the District Team. The new Commissioner comes from a Group outside of Taunton which is essential as we serve a diverse and large District. The Commissioner is also an active Network member. This will ensure that we continue with our 'joined up thinking' and begin to retain our youth sections as they transition to adulthood.

- The Duke of Edinburgh Award has gone from strength to strength! Building on last year's success, we have rolled the scheme out to the whole District and now have multiple Bronze and Silver groups running in 2023.

- Squirrels! As our youngest section, we now have plans for two Dreys to complement the established four we already have. Both Bishops Lydeard, Crewkerne, Central and Wilton celebrated their Drey anniversaries recently, and we look forward to ensuring the same success with the new groups!

- With previous mention to our eldest and youngest sections I am also delighted to report the opening of 3 new Explorer Groups! Anyone who has looked at our waiting lists will know this is a great opportunity to continue growing and offering amazing opportunities to as many young people as possible.

It is only left for me to thank Leaders, helpers and the behind the scenes makers. Without any of you who volunteer for us here in Blackdown, none of this would be possible to achieve."

## 17 County Commissioner's Report

Dawn thanked Shaun Dale for his chairmanship over the past few years and Nadia and Lee for their leadership. Scouting was growing everywhere, not least in Blackdown and provided adventures to many Young People. Funding was a significant issue everywhere and would continue to provide some challenging times. However, as long as Scouting remained vibrant, diverse and a happy place we would all move forward together.

## 18 Presentations and Awards

**Shaun Dale** - Nadia presented Shaun with a gift saying he had been a stalwart of scouting for many years, from County Supporter to County Commissioner. Shaun could often be found chairing the District Executive or helping set up fledging group execs. Many of you may know Shaun from his time on the Appointments Advisory Committee or in his capacity as a Nights Away Advisory. He has certainly worn many hats. He has a wealth of knowledge to share and has seen many transformations. Although we did not always agree, as District Chair Shaun's was a position to challenge and challenge, he did! I thank him for playing advocate. As

we transfer from a District Executive to a Board of Trustees we say thank you to Shaun for time served, not just in this position but also as a reflection of all previous positions, for countless hours chairing meetings, sharing minutes, assessing and advising. Blackdown is very much indebted.

**Barney Kerr** – Nadia asked Barney to step forward saying “One of my favourite parts of scouting is giving awards and it is with great pleasure that I would like to invite Barney Kerr to receive a Commissioners Commendation. Barney will be attending Project Kenya in the summer and has managed to raise the entire costs through cycling 880 miles, across three months. And it doesn't end there - Barney (so far) has raised another 3,400 that will go toward stationary, clothes, crockery and books for the classrooms and as donations to other schools covered by Project Kenya 2023. A truly wonderful example of determination and consistently exhibiting the core values of scouting.”

## 17 Any other business

None reported

## 18 Closing Remarks

Shawn thanked everyone for attending and looked forward to his first year’s involvement with Blackdown, noting that the AGM for 2024 would be held on Tuesday 21 May.

The meeting closed at 7.56pm

Signed as a true record

Date

(Chairman)

## Attendance list

Phillip Bayles – Board of Trustees	Mark Maynard – Dragon Explorers
Graham Bell – ADC Scouts	Andrew Milsted –Deputy DC
David Biss – NAA via Zoom	David Mitchell – Huish Woods ASU
Mark Cummings – ASL Hinton St George, Board of Trustees	Matt Norman –
Alan Henderson – County Transformation and Learning	Chris Pinguenet CSL Trinity, Board of Trustees
June Hick – Vice President	Marian Scott – ADC General Duties
Graham Hodge – AAC	Richard Smith – District Youth Commissioner
Jacqui Hopkins – ADC Beavers	Doreen Warburton – Vice President
John Lewis – Board of Trustees	Anwar Watson – Dragon Explorers/Wilton