

Minutes of the Friends of Culcheth Library AGM

29th September 2018

Present: Jacqui Johnson, Gill Mortimer, Andrew Mortimer, Jim Billington, Eion MacDonald, Dianna Grylls, Matt Smith, Chris Smith, Keith Bland, Adrian Poynton, Cindy Kelly, Kath Wright, Ben Alldred, Laura Thomason, Joan Grime, Dianne Clarke, Trudy MacDonald, Lesley Cragg

Apologies: Anne Sharpe, Elaine Durrington, Peter and Gill Coon, Dorothy Cook, Janet Simms

This is the first AGM so there were no previous minutes.

Chairs Review: (Ben Alldred)

This is the year when the Friends of Culcheth Library came into existence with its mission to support the Library Service in delivering a wide range of library-related activities and to offer practical support to promote the role of the Library as a community resource in Culcheth.

As a brand new friends group we have achieved the following things this year:-

- * Developed and realised a constituted group with a committee including a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and many other members.
- * Developed a Mission Statement and Code of Conduct.
- * Created a partnership with LiveWire in order to facilitate the development of a Library that will be sustainable and meets the needs of Culcheth residents into the future.
- * Opened a bank account through our Treasurer.
- * Consulted with Culcheth residents at several meetings in the Library with the aim to create a group of volunteers who are willing to support the work of the Library Service.
- * Fundraised within the community to support the work of FoCL.
- * Consulted with Livewire about the remodelling of the Library building in Culcheth to meet the needs of the community.
- * Through Lottery funding set up and equipped a wellbeing hub in the Library.
- * Through Lottery funding provided Mindfulness training to approximately 20 volunteers who will take this into the community through a mindfulness group meeting regularly in the library building.
- * Engaged with Warrington Voluntary Action to provide Safeguarding training to many of the volunteers in the mindfulness group.
- * Created policies for Safeguarding Adults & Young People and for the new data protection regulations.
- * The committee thoroughly reviewed the spending of the Lottery Grant for the Well being Hub.
- * Supported a Crafting Group that meets regularly in the Library.
- * Supported a Reading Group that meets regularly in the Library.

* Financially supported a Poetry event organised by LiveWire that was attended by many School children from Culcheth.

* Created and developed plans for future events and groups that will in the near future come to fruition.

The fact that so much has happened in the past 12 months is down to the hard work and commitment of the many people involved in this project, thank you.

The main purpose of the Library in Culcheth is to lend books, audio books, and videos to residents. If this does not happen then we jeopardise the existence of this community educational facility. FoCL encourages you to do just this, lend a book read it, read to your children, your partner, your parents, your pet, your neighbour then return the book to the library and repeat.

Secretary's report (Joan Grime)

There was a livewire consultation in 2016 about the future of our Libraries in Warrington, triggered by cuts in Livewire Funding from the Council, which itself has suffered massive losses in funding by Central Government. I have gone back to this because these cuts are still there, and still have to be dealt with. We have achieved a lot, but we can't afford to sit back and assume the problems have disappeared.

A working group was formed in Culcheth, as in other areas, to fight for our Libraries. We had some very well attended meetings last spring here in the Library that produced many very good ideas of things we could do. Some groups have started and are running very well, others have half-started and faltered, but overall we have found the key question for is – who is going to run it. People have put a lot of work into trying to organise things, but in the end you might have dozens of great ideas but the same few people can't run them all! Anyone who is keen to get a group going and happy to lead it, stay at the end!

Through the efforts of some of the working group we won an Awards for All Lottery Grant to set up a Well-being Hub. The aim is to support the Community and increase and widen use of the Library. We also set up Friends of Culcheth Library. The working group continues working with FoCL but with a different focus. (Any questions on working group or Well-being hub individually at the end.)

The officers of the first committee were formed from the working group, and other officers were co-opted from members who said they were interested. I emailed them all and exactly the right number turned up at the meeting. The committee has met once or twice a month to deal with setting up the group, all minuted and available for inspection. However my aim is that all these will be kept in a file in the Library.

In 2017 Warrington BC formed its own Working Party headed by the Chief Executive Steve Broomhead in response to the uproar about closing Libraries. This group reported to the executive of the Council at the end of the year with the recommendation that no Libraries should be closed and the stock should be upgraded. The exec accepted the report with the addition of "subject to a robust business case" for each Library. Steve Broomhead is now leading a national body, and Warrington is again leading the way on Libraries.

Our business case is that the Parish Council will rent office and community space in the Library. The working space behind the main Library will need to be partitioned. This offer has been on the table for months. The Library Partnership Board and the representatives of the various Friends groups are divided. The basic problem is there is £1m available for repairs and upgrades and it is not enough. The people who are not ready with ideas are afraid all the money will be gone by the time they are.

The lottery grant gave us a year (till end November) to set up with a group of trained people to tackle problems such as stress and anxiety in the community. We are 'ready to roll' and we will have two open meetings in November. We have also made contact with the Medical Centre and got a very positive response. If anyone is interested and would like further information we would be delighted to hear from you.

Treasurer's report (Cindy Kelly)

The Balance Sheet for the financial year up to April 2018 was distributed.

The treasurer has written to the Inland Revenue to verify that we do not pay tax.

Insurance – we need to insure property, employer's liability (including for volunteers), public liability.

We need to establish an understanding of who can authorise what.

Constitution

The constitution had been distributed with suggested amendments and clarifications from Warrington Voluntary Action. We will ask Bryan Dargie what 'external verification' involves (instead of professional auditing). We will ask the Clerk to the PC about whether the FoCL property should be on the PC asset list. What happens to it in the case of dissolution tbc.

The amended constitution was passed. Thanks were made to Ben Alldred for his work on it.

Election of Officers

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| Chair | Ben Alldred |
| Vice chair | Keith Bland |
| Secretary | Joan Grime + assistance |
| Treasurer | Cindy Kelly |
| Membership Secretary | Matt Smith |
| Youth | Lesley Cragg |
| Laura Thomason | |
| Chris Smith | |

Jacqui Johnson

Jim Billington

Andrew Mortimer

Janet Evans

Observers as needed

Minutes will be sent to Livewire, who will attend the AGM.

Plans

TBC. In general we need to continue to have open meetings. A website was discussed and potential problems explained. Alternatively we can use the facebook group. We need a publicity officer. Flier with what we do. Record of our events – a history of FoCL.

Next meeting 27th October.

Next AGM, last Saturday in September, 28th September 2019

Community Day Presence

We will have a stall on Community Day (May Day 2019) to publicise FoCL, receive donations, book sale.

AOB

The closing date for the Skipton Bid is 10th October. Andrew Mortimer will send a link to vote. The winners will be announced on 5th November.

We will investigate if the Borough will allow us to proceed with the stud wall to divide the work space into offices. Meeting with Livewire about the Library structure 11th October. We can also be in the Library on Xmas markets day (24th November).