

1. Welcome.

The Chair welcomed everyone. About 35 people attended; apologies were received from some members.

2. Minutes of 2018 AGM and matters arising.

No objections were raised.

3. Treasurer's report.

Peter Gotham, as acting Treasurer, presented the report; copies of the accounts were available for members at the meeting. Thanks were given to Andrew Entiknap ACA for examining the accounts.

The Financial year runs from 1st Jan to 31 December. Income totalling £1,286.70 came from a Council grant, membership subscriptions and donations. Expenditure totalling £1,312.06 was on mower and parts, a picnic table, insurance, hall hire and plants. We started the year with £577.65 in the bank and ended the year with £552.29.

Subscriptions

FoMC do not propose to ask the members for subscriptions this year. However, as well as hard cash which helps us with extra plants and projects and mowing costs, FoMC appreciates donations in kind like plants and refreshments for meetings. Asking for donations for identified projects was seen to be most appropriate. FoMC bank details have published and included on membership form to enable bank transfers to be readily facilitated and this has successfully been used by several members this year. During the Year between AGM's we have registered 13 new members. Down on the 25 last year which could have been due to our absence from Strawberry Fair children's area and annual Orchard picnic being washed out and cancelled. At this meeting we received membership registrations from two new members each paying £5 plus a £5 donation.

Donations

Other donations during the evening added a further £30 cash. FoMC is especially grateful to the BruNK Residents Association and the Beth Shalom Reform Community who donated £340 between them for the new picnic table in the Orchard.

4. Election of Honorary Officers.

Charles Hattersley was willing to continue as Secretary. Dick Baxter was proposed as Chair by Charles Hattersley and seconded by Ray Gay. Peter Gotham was proposed as Treasurer by Susan Stobbs and seconded by Jo Hesslewood. There being no other candidates, all three were elected. Dick Baxter expressed thanks to the retiring Chair Susan Stobbs on the

excellent service she had provided over the last few years and attendees added their support with applause.

5. Election of Committee.

In addition to the Honorary Officers, the following were proposed as Committee members by Dick Baxter and Charles Hattersley and seconded by Susan Stobbs: Nick Levine, Sue Woodsford, Sue Gordon-Roe, Rosica Bates and Josephine Hesselwood. There being no other candidates, they were duly elected. The Committee may decide to co-opt other members when they meet. In particular Kate Hurst could represent the interests of people living in boats along the River Cam - as a Camboaters member who lives on the river she could provide useful interaction and comment.

6. Chair's Report.

The Chair presented her Report.

7. Open Forum.

Steve Cheek asked if there were any know restrictions applying to electric cycles compared to pedal cycles. Anthony French the City Council officer responsible for Open Spaces responded saying that there were some paths managed by City and some by County which was a little confusing, however he confirmed there was no differentiation until a certain horsepower was reached.

He then took a few minutes to address the meeting on matters since last year. Good work has been carried out after all the events and is considered as being very effective in maintaining the structure of the Common. This was helped by the weather at time of events being clement. The City Council are in the process of buying a 'Verti Drainer' machine which aerates the soil and is very beneficial to the soil. Having their own machine will enable them to be very much more reactive after events as they will not be reliant on sub contractors schedules for hiring in such.

The Fort St George public house new management team has been very cooperative with regard to not parking on the Common, the landlady and the Greene King area manageress are both making a positive impact on the pub and it's environment. The council will now be pushing for such improvements with other local businesses.

Midsummer Fair is under new management after the demise of Cambridge Live and is currently being managed by The East of England Showman's Guild; FoMC has received an email from a Jane Brown, the Secretary of the Guild, to meet. The council are engaged with this via Jane Wilson and Alastair Wilson (line manager of Anthony). A Safety Advisory Group of Open spaces team, Ambulance-Fire-Police and Licensing are meeting soon in April to ensure that critical safety and public order provisions are in place. The lawlessness experienced last year on the Common and in neighbouring streets and businesses was unacceptable.

Strawberry Fair was not considered an issue as it is very well managed, albeit there is a new chair this year. Other events will be much as before and are as follows: Half Marathon March 3, Circus Wonderland April 17, Strawberry Fair June 1, Midsummer Fair June 19, Memory Walk October 6, Circus Vegas October 9, Town and Gown Race October 20 and Bonfire Night November 5.

Water Fountains and taps were being developed across the city with first being opened soon on Parker's Piece, FoMC have asked for one in the Orchard area. Cows should be reappearing on common soon.

In response to a question from Val Cornish Anthony French commented that moorings along Riverside are temporarily moved as pontoons are being provided. He commented that the recent study of the 100+ events that take place across the city each year was very informative and that they very much value the input of the various Friends groups in the city. He advised that The Tree of Heaven near Parsonage Street is in a dangerous state and would be felled in near future. They would appreciate suggestions about an appropriate replacement.

Sally Butterfield posed a question regarding the level of Signing being getting too cluttered and not necessarily removed once they were history. This was acknowledged as being an issue that the Council were addressing.

Jeremy Francis commented on whether there was any policy with regard to separating cyclists and pedestrians. A 3 metre pathway is required to provide segregated lanes and the council, Clare Rankin, is addressing this issue. However there were comments that this could result in increased cycle speeds. With children and dogs and tourists being 'cycle unaware' this could make matters worse. The general opinion was that cyclists must be more empathetic when using shared spaces, time is not of the essence when using such paths. Oscar Gillespie, Market Ward councillor, was concerned about such separated lanes. Means of slowing down high speed cyclists were voiced and included rumble strips to help encourage them to share the space with empathy. This is being addressed by the Council. A resident (who failed to state name) commented that the absence of cycle permission to use Christ's Pieces as a route was inappropriate as the alternative routes were dangerous with buses and taxis being in high volumes. It was noted that many cyclists use the paths with little or no issues. Anthony French advised that Christ's Pieces have been awarded a Green Space award. Cllr Gawthorpe was reported in the press as saying that "The Green Flag Award is a prestigious international benchmark of quality for a park or green space – the equivalent of the Blue Flag for beaches. I am delighted that Christ's Pieces is a 2018 award winner and the first Green Flag park in Cambridge".

Roger Chatterton asked whether the Midsummer Fair parking revenue was going to be retained by the council under the new stewardship of Showman's Guild. It was suggested that the past arrangements will be continued. Wendy Andrews asked about Strawberry Fair. This will be under the same management as last year but with a new chair but it is expected that the high standards and orderly conduct will continue. Jenny Horton commented that nettles and thistles are 'doing' very well and what was the Council strategy to ensure they were controlled within reason. It was suggested that Guy Belcher, the Council biodiversity manager, could comment on this matter if asked.

There was no other business so the meeting was closed.

Charles Hattersley (secretary)
28 March 2019