

ROTARY CLUB OF ROMSEY TEST

COUNCIL AND CLUB MEETING - 7.30 WEDNESDAY 2 DECEMBER 2020

ATTENDEES

30 in total, including the following for Council:

Bryan Rickett - President	Steve George
Nick Bellamy	Graham Hollier
Nigel Budd	Gren Lamb-Hughes
Keith Cameron	Jon Livingstone - Secretary
Clive Collier	Stewart Mitchell
Brian Davies	Shaun O'Brien
Bill Gidley	Roger Shepherd

Apologies: Sandy Dunn, Nikki Jones

1. INTRODUCTION AND DISTRICT AWARD

Bryan welcomed all Members to the meeting and guest 'Tris' Tristram, Immediate Past District Governor, Member of Alton Rotary.

Tris presented the Club with a Countdown to History Award on behalf of District, for the Club's efforts in the last Rotary year towards eradication of Polio. RCORT is one of 15 Clubs in District of 76, to receive this award. Tris explained that the framework for Polio vaccination had been used for Ebola and would also be used for Covid in developing countries. The fight for Polio eradication continues.

Stewart responded on behalf of Foundation and Members, thanking Tris for the welcome recognition.

Jon shared present Club numbers with Tris; 57 Members and 2 Honorary.

2. COUNCIL REPORTS

Club Treasurer

At the end of November the Club had **£9,100** in its bank account. The account additionally held a positive balance of **£5,200** on members dinner accounts. Most of the £5,200 will be returned to Members by Nick shortly.

Nick also expressed pleasure that the monies that Members have donated to Romsey Food Bank, in lieu of meals, now amounted to c.£8,500/ and £10,600 with Gift Aid.

Donations in lieu of Christmas Cards this year are for 29 Charities and an excellent total of £1,600.

Nick advised in view of the low level of spending by the Club (only c.£300 year to date on top of District and National) there would be a holiday on Club subs until further notice; though n.b. Standing Orders continue unchanged during this period.

Trust Fund Treasurer

Graham had sent the Financial Management Report up to 24th November summary of the Trust Fund financial position, to all Members in advance of the meeting. This included options for consideration by Members of how total available funds (including allocated budgets in the present year currently unspent //

uncommitted funds in the present year // plus £16,200 reserved for 2021/2022 year) might be allocated over the next thirty months - to ensure funds are available for Club activities going forward.

Bryan advised that he, Graham and the incoming Presidents, Roger and Nigel had agreed to make a decision on this once the mid-term review of budgets was completed in January. As such there was no need for the Club to make an immediate decision but the views of the club were a valuable input to these discussions. The following is a flavour of the useful discussion:

: Neil - agreed we should ring-fence money for the forthcoming years, supporting Graham

: Gren - advisable to defer the decision, rather than decide at this meeting

: Graham - can discuss how much of existing year budgets can be released, with Committee Chairs and advise in January

: Tony Trowsdale - be prepared to raise money for issues as required - no need to hold onto large sums

: Colin - these are unprecedented times. Support Graham who has a good handle on the financial position

: Stuart - noted we often find it difficult to spend all of budgets each year

: Jon - expect to make financial commitments later within this 2 December meeting, so position will be clearer next month

: Shaun - be positive. In our gift to raise more money as and when required

: Nick - supportive of Graham's approach. Can adjust/ flex in a month or so

: Clive - as for Nick. No need to stop spending. Excellent Treasurer and can adjust budgets in future if required

: Roger - Graham has very good understanding of the financial position and best to be cautious at present.

Bryan having confirmed that a decision was not required at this meeting, suggested Committee Chairs confirm budget requirements for the remainder of the present Rotary year with Graham over the next month. The Club will then have a clearer view for the following years, when we know how much of the present year budgets will be used. Bryan also advised that the incoming Presidents for the next two years, Roger and Nigel will liaise with Graham in the meantime; and Members to review again in next year. Bryan thanked Graham for his work on this budget planning, keeping the club financially sound.

Club Service

Roger verbally shared his Council Report looking into Club Strategy to address ageing and ensure the Club is attractive for new members. This is attached at the end of these minutes.

Tris, mentioned that District average age is 78; six years older than RCORT. District have a £20k Marketing and Communications budget and keen to help. Another Club has a 90 day plan, aiming to attract 11 new members in this time! Other Clubs seeking to set up new dynamic younger aged Clubs.

John Gould suggested invite views of people in Romsey about (joining) Rotary. Could be done on Facebook; Roger will consider.

Communications

Keith updated on the excellent progress of communicating the image of Rotary in Romsey. This covers three Clubs; RCORT, Romsey Rotary and Inner Wheel.

Keith was enthusiastic referring to the previous Club Strategy discussion and positive if a new younger fourth Club was to be established. This would be a great opportunity, to build on the excellent reputation of Rotary in Romsey.

Keith requested Committee Chairs, who have not already done so, to provide updates to website pages.

Membership & Recruitment

Shaun advised not much to report till Roger's Group output is known.

Fundraising

Brian advised Walk the Test Another Way, raised just over £26k for charities - a splendid result; plus £679 registrations. Funds for charities have been distributed.

Brian also reported £85 just in from the 2017 Walk! The cheque has gone out of date during lockdown, so unable to apply just yet.

Stewart has had a letter of thanks for the over £1,000 he raised - with tram - for Youth In Romsey. Brian confirmed many other such letters have been received.

Community Service

On Nikki's behalf, Bryan shared Community Service proposal for £500 donation towards Young Carers Christmas Box appeal. The charity is well known to the Club. Bryan proposed and Mike Thorne seconded. This was carried.

John Jones advised he had sought Council approval through Bryan for the Club to repeat last year's £300 donation to Ataxia UK through The Big Give. John is himself adding £200. With the Club donation, the £500 is doubled by Big Give (effectively making a donation of £1,000). Given the urgent deadline (1st December), this funding had been approved ex-committee by unanimous vote in favour, of Council. Graham advised the cheque has already been sent.

Bryan advised that efforts to make a similar donation for Jane Scarth House, had not proved possible for the present year, based on the way in which The Big Give works.

Foundation

Stewart and Keith have been liaising with Hilliers in connection with plans for Purple for Polio in February and March. Options how best to maximise this have been considered. This has been overtaken by events as Hilliers have just advised there will be no third-party events until after Easter. Stewart and Keith will revise plans for lighting Romsey Abbey, newspaper coverage, Hilliers' and RCORT website and other Virtual possibilities. There may also be potential to link with the Hilliers' venue later in the year.

International

Gren on behalf of the International Committee, proposed the Club should donate the cost of one box (£590) to Shelterbox from currently uncommitted funds, based on the proposal he had sent earlier.

After initial consideration, this was voted on. Proposed by Gren, strongly seconded by Frank and Shaun, 'no reason to delay and let's get on with it'. Carried, with no votes against.

Frank shared that at his previous Rotary Club, they had overnighted in the town in a Shelterbox tent and had received good support and donations. Frank was keen to do this in Romsey post-Covid. The silence was

deafening when Frank enquired for people to join him. As an ex-Scout I'm happy to be included. Other volunteers please contact Frank direct.

Youth

Dictionaries for Life: Steve outlined the plan to extend from nine to twelve schools and budget increase from £1,300 to £1,540, within available Youth funds. General support for this excellent project.

Steve thanked Stuart and Tony for their support and enthusiasm for Dictionaries for Life.

Stuart will assess the logistic/ delivery demands in the coming year. Steve will liaise with the Lunchtime Club if help required.

Sports & Social

Nothing to report.

3. PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Bryan thanked members for contributing to, what had proved to be a busy meeting covering some complex issues.

4. ALMONER

Prior to the meeting Ian had provided an email report. During the meeting he advised that Mrs Jane Dunning (for new members, if you are unaware of ex member James Dunning, please ask &/or Google - 1st hit is great) wished to be remembered to us all and had sent her good wishes to the club.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

None

6. NEXT MEETING

Next meeting is a Speaker Meeting with Mark Edgerley, talking about his time as Town Hall Manager and Romsey; taking place by ZOOM on 16 December.

APPROVAL OF TRUST FUND EXPENDITURE

The Trustees approved the following items of expenditure:

Young Carers £500

Ataxia UK £300

Shelterbox £590

Club Service

There has been another Zoom meeting of the group considering the future of the Club after the end of the current Covid 19 restrictions. This was attended by Bryan Rickett, Nigel Budd, Jon Livingstone, Bill Gidley, Shaun O'Brien, Stuart Wineberg and myself (Roger).

Firstly, some background information relating to the current state of the club was considered and this was:

1. We currently have 57 members of the Club (excluding honorary members). In comparison with many other Clubs this is very good.
2. We currently have 2 members of the Club who are women. In comparison with many other Clubs this is very low.
3. At the end of this calendar year the average age of members will be 72.14 years
4. The current members joined Rotary (some initially a different Club) in the following periods;
 - i. 1990 - 13 members (founding year)
 - ii. 1991 - 2000 - 19 members
 - iii. 2001 - 2010 - 9 members
 - iv. 2011 - 2020 - 16 members
5. The average ages of current members when they joined Rotary was;
 - i. 1990 - 42.85 years
 - ii. 1991 - 2000 50.95 years
 - iii. 2001 - 2010 57.67 years
 - iv. 2011 - 2020 61.38 years
6. Items 3,4 and 5 above indicate that the Club has an issue with an ageing membership.

The meeting considered some ideas for the future of the Club. It was felt that it would be likely to be difficult to have meetings which would be attractive to both prospective younger members and older existing members. A suggestion was considered to have a wider range of meetings aimed to be attractive to different groups of members. Another suggestion was that the Club should become more project based.

Shaun O'Brien agreed to contact both other younger members of the Club and women members to try to identify what they felt would increase the Club's attractiveness to potential new members.

Bryan Rickett and I subsequently attended another Zoom meeting with Geoff Rhodes and Richard Pratt of the Rotary Club of Romsey. This was very constructive. While they do not have so many members, they have similar ageing issues to our Club. It was agreed that the Clubs should aim to work more closely together. As a step towards this it was agreed to share our respective events calendars. It was agreed that reports would be sent back to our respective clubs with a view to a further meeting early in the new year.

Roger Shepherd