

# MINUTES

## Shop directors' meeting

07/01/2025 4.30 pm | In the chair Lyn Foley

---

### In Attendance

---

Catherine Fraser, Sue Wright, Alan Brimecombe, Lyn Foley

---

### Approval of Minutes

---

No previous minutes were referred to

---

### Board

---

Since the previous meeting both Sue Menzies and Katherine Rake have stood down from the board and grateful thanks were extended to them both for their service since the inception of the Community Shop. Without both their hard work and perseverance we would have no shop. Gary Findley (co-opted onto board July 24) also stepped down, with effect from 28 November 2024.

There now being only 4 directors available it was decided that Lyn Foley would take on the role of treasurer with responsibility for setting an annual budget, liaising with the book-keeper and with responsibility for filing the shop accounts with the FCA. Catherine Fraser is not sure she can perform both roles but in the absence of other options is prepared to act as chair and secretary with a view to getting more directors onto the board as soon as possible.

CF will take over the role of second signatory to the bank account to act when LF or Trudi Cronin is away

There was discussion as to whether we could cope as a board of 4 with CF of the opinion that we needed to get the managers to take on more responsibility so that the board did less. LF and SM were unsure if this could be achieved. CF thought that a way to achieve that was to make more money such that more employed staff could be taken on.

---

### Volunteers

---

Helen Townson has expressed interest in taking on the volunteers' liaison role and LF will speak to her about this. 2 new prospective volunteers have filled in forms which LF will chase up. CF expressed the opinion that the volunteers form was a bit intimidating and will look at re-writing it to be a bit less prescriptive

---

### Window vinyl display

---

Alan Brimecombe has quotes from 4 companies to do a vinyl display for the window. He recommends approaching John Burton Signs for artwork and a firm quote. This will be presented for approval at the next directors' meeting. The committee are in agreement subject to approval of the mock up and also reassurance as to the durability of this form of product

---

### Health and Safety

---

There was an accident at the shop where Deanna Legg fell over a box on the floor in the store room and fractured her knee cap. The directors were not informed of this by the staff on duty in the shop at the time. Need to put in place more formal health and safety decision tree to include informing directors immediately and to remind managers of their responsibility in this area

Possibility that Alan Edwards may be willing to take on a health and safety role in the future.

---

## Opening Hours

---

LF expressed discontent that Gary Findlay had manned the shop alone on Sunday without calling for back up. It is difficult to get volunteers for a Sunday shift (although this shift has not been put on the volunteers' request list by Ann as it has previously been covered by Gary, Lyn and Katherine in rotation.) CF and KR had done a visit to 3 other local community shops who all provided papers on Sunday just for pre-ordered papers which were left outside for collection without apparent problems. However that would still result in somebody needing to come in. Around £300 was the average Sunday income. It was suggested that reduced Sunday hours may increase the likelihood of attracting volunteer cover or possibly advertising for a youngster to do a 3 hour shift as a paid position.

Still to be decided.

Possibility of opening ½ hour later to make it a more attractive position for volunteers. This would save 2.5 hours over the week from Ann and Claire's salaries and that time could be re-deployed elsewhere.

Still to be decided.

---

## Trading Standards

---

LF has filled in an on-line questionnaire for the Food Standards Agency to see if we need to be inspected. This was as a response to a letter from the FSA. See below re calibration of scales in the shop which will need to be done before any further inspection.

---

## Employed staff

---

Both Ann and Claire have over 40 hours of holiday unused meaning that we have virtually no paid cover for February. This was a problem last year and has not been resolved. We may need to re-draft the contracts before March to address this issue. They should be self-managing but this is not working. We also need to look at the implications from the recent budget on pay levels and National Insurance. LF suggested that Claire should now be paid the same as Ann and not view her as a line manager, line manager will have to come from the board

Still to be decided.

---

## Computing

---

Dataweigh have sent in an invoice for overseeing E Pos for which we have not received value for money. CF will organise a training session for directors and Gary to address this. Also Dataweigh do calibration of scales which needs to be re-done this year. CF to do.

---

## Next Meeting

---

04/02/2025 4:45 pm 30 Castle Street provisional

TO DO LIST:

LF Speak to Helen Townson

LF Find and chase up 2 new volunteer forms

CF Re-do volunteers form

CF Dataweigh computer training session and scales calibration

AB Get mock up and firm quote for window vinyl display

ALL Think about and come up with proposals for Opening times, Start time and Sunday opening

ALL Think about and come up with proposals for Ann and Clare's responsibilities

## Stoke Community Shop Minutes 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025

### 1) Present

Gary Findlay, Alan Brimecombe, Catherine Fraser, Helen Townson, Trudy Cronin, Sue Wright, Ann Bartlett.

### 2) Apologies

Katherine Rake, Lyn Foley, Claire Bidwell

### 3) Matters Arising

- a) We have tried the ice cream freezer in a new position but it was not liked by the volunteers and has been replaced behind the door.
- b) Social event at the All Saints' Hall was much enjoyed by everyone thanks to Sue Menzies for organising.

### 4) Volunteers

- a) Helen Townson has volunteered to take over the role of volunteer rep. Thanks to her and also to Linda who she is replacing. It was decided that to comply with GDPR she should send email messages to Ann at the shop who would distribute to the volunteers list from the shop. Similarly she would send any replies from the shop email to Helen
- b) Deanne Legg one of the volunteers tripped over a box in the store room and fractured her patella. The directors (LF and CF) have visited her twice at home to send flowers and express condolences. It was reiterated that directors should be informed of any accidents immediately so that the accident book can be filled in and any claim under our insurance can be expedited.
- c) As a result of the above please can managers make sure that all items in the shop and store room are kept up off the floor as much as possible. We now have the new shelving that Tony Menzies so kindly made for us which can be used.
- d) The directors plan to institute a discount scheme for volunteers giving them 10% discount on grocery purchases. There will be a qualifying period of 3 months volunteering to qualify for the discount. We will institute this on a trial basis and review after 6 months. Hopefully start in the new financial year. The hope is that this will reward current volunteers and encourage new ones.
- e) Sue Menzies has volunteered to do our now traditional anniversary tombola thank you very much.
- f) Start to think about a summer social event possibly boules or a quiz night.
- g) George has got back in contact and may be happy to cover Facebook for us. Need to contact him ?LF

## 5) Budget and Finance

- a) The bank balance is £37,696.91, Savings £13,754.21
- b) As we all know Barclaycard finally blocked our payment terminal and it was unblocked 10 days later. Still not clear why. After the first day customers did adapt to cash payments although turnover was down nearly £1300 over that week. CF instituted a complaint with Barclaycard and we have been reimbursed £150. In the interim LF purchased a Zettle machine as an alternative way to accept card payments so we now have a back up system.
- c) Trudy Cronin had been concerned that there was an increase in stock purchasing of more than £700 in November. However this has resulted in an increase in turnover and resulting improvement in the bank balance.
- d) Trudy Cronin was unhappy that we were providing change to the charity shop on request as this gives her difficulties making up the floats and makes trips to Montacute post office more frequent. It was decided we would approach the charity shop directors to request this does not happen.
- e) TC would like to see a minimum spend to receive cashback, this will increase to £2 minimum if cashback requested and the limit to be set at £30 cashback. There will be no minimum spend for outright purchases.
- f) We need to have a look at the cost of Payzone and to do this we need to separate out the sales figure for Payzone from the cost of rental and admin. Then decide if need to look at another system eg Paypoint or upgrade our Payzone machine

## 6) Shop Management, Stock and Equipment

- a) Catherine Fraser has ordered greetings cards from 2 new suppliers which will arrive next week. Companies are Art-Eco and Rosie made a thing. Decided that we would put coloured dots on cards to indicate the prices. Need to get peelable dots CF to sort.
- b) Gillian from original poster company failed to change the card selection saying this would be done with the new franchisee, CF was disappointed that had not yet happened and may change supplier if better cards not forthcoming.
- c) Cleaning rotas have now been finalised and will be set up this coming week to document cleaning of items in the shop for expected visit of environmental health.
- d) Need to set up date checking schedules for stock produce GF and CF to complete
- e) Need to find a place for the accident book so it is easily accessible.
- f) Need to check mark ups on Bakery Roy-Al products GF to check invoices
- g) Discussion about home deliveries. Should we institute only 3 days a week? Decided that happy to continue with 5 days. ?Minimum number of items? Try and encourage individual customers to order more things less often? Decided to leave it at present.
- h) Put more prices on shelf edges for items so less price gun needed Alan B to sort

- i) There is a legal requirement not to offer eggs for sale with less than 7 days shelf life. Need to check dates on delivery. Ann B and CB
- j) Need to arrange stock take hopefully for 2<sup>nd</sup> March, speak to LF
- k) Alan B has requested artwork for the window signage which should come next week
- l) CF has bought an external noticeboard to take the more permanent notices so they can be moved from inside the shop

## **7) Marketing, Communications and Shop Events**

- a) Newsletter entry was sent in by Catherine Fraser
- b) Very important that all communications regarding the shop are positive whoever we are speaking to as rumours still circulating in the village as to the shop's viability.
- c) Katherine Rake continues to submit the quarter page adverts to Hambook, which we get for free. She is also sending these adverts to Anne and Claire for upload to Facebook, and will do posters for other events such as Red Nose Day, for display in the shop and online.
- d) Katherine Rake continues to update the website and our Google business page
- e) Sue Menzies has volunteered to do our now traditional anniversary tombola

### **Any other business**

- a) There has been the old problem of the pothole immediately opposite the entrance door. Catherine has reported this to Somerset council to see if it can be filled in.

**Date of next meeting 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025 in the Fleur de Lis at 5pm**

# MINUTES

## Shop directors' meeting

25/02/2025 5.00pm In the chair Catherine Fraser

---

### In Attendance

---

Catherine Fraser, Sue Wright, Alan Brimecombe, Lyn Foley

---

### Approval of Minutes

---

All the actionable items from the last minutes were gone through

LF has spoken with Helen Townson and she is happy with her new role as volunteer rep and has already sent out a newsletter to volunteers

LF has chased up 3 new volunteer forms. 2 have had their induction and have started shifts, the third has been unwell but will contact us again when health allows.

CF has redone the volunteers' application form but as the Sunday shifts have changed they will need doing again

CF, AB and GF have had a training session with Dataweigh on the EPOS system which has been helpful and threw up a couple of security changes that were needed on the system. Dataweigh also advised that our weigh scales do not need annual calibration and all we need do was check weigh with a bag of sugar periodically.

AB has had the quote on the window vinyl, £275 +VAT and the order has been placed. Fitting requires dry weather above 8° followed by 4 weeks without window cleaning. LF has spoken to the window cleaner about this but we will reinforce this with a phone call once the vinyl is applied.

We have changed the Sunday opening times to 9-12 without loss of income over the last 3 weeks so that has been successful. Now need to put time into deciding whether to open at 8.30 on the other days. Also whether to reduce the handover time to 15 minutes which would give us 3 hours per week to allocate to an extra shift without changing contracted hours.

Claire and Ann have been given responsibility for extra cleaning duties within the shop. The daily tasks are being completed well the longer term tasks have been started but will need a bit more input to make sure they are completed.

Minutes were approved.

---

### Board

---

Since the previous meeting Gary Findlay has resigned as a director although he may not have been included on any paperwork, CF will check with Katherine Rake. KR has agreed to continue as company secretary for the time being and CF will compile the meeting minutes as KR will not regularly attend meetings.

CF has now become second signatory to the bank account to act when LF or Trudi Cronin is away, KR will also remain as a signatory in her capacity as company secretary.

---

### Volunteers

---

Since the last meeting we have lost 1 supervisor and 1 volunteer both citing interference in their jobs from other volunteers and directors. We have gained 2 new volunteers which will help to replace their functions but there is general discontent around volunteers' assigned roles and not being left to get on with their jobs. We need to be mindful of this in the future. One particular instance is the access to the computer and it being needed for multiple functions at the same time. CF made the suggestion of a laptop with the EPOS functions on it separate from the other computer needs such as email, ordering etc. The general feeling was this should not be necessary if we use the computer better and more considerately. Laptop purchase not approved. Reiterated the need for directors to jointly approve all new endeavours and financial expenditure.

---

## Shop facilities

---

CF in the process of upgrading the Payzone terminal and linking it with the card payment terminal in a new wi-fi only unit called Payzone Plus. As the payzone account is in the name of a previous director a new account is being set up. CF's name will be on this account. We will retain the old card payment unit until we are sure that the wi-fi system is suitable for our needs. Total cost will be £8.55 +VAT per week which will save us money if it proves successful. It will also eliminate a lot of the under counter cabling that has been so troublesome and free us up to make possible counter changes in the future.

The stockroom floor has been scrubbed clean and CF is in discussion re painting the floor so it is sealed and can be washed down more easily. Requirements for paint are non-slip and quick drying so that it can be done without disrupting day-to-day activities.

In aiming to get everything up off the floor we have arranged to put in an extra high level shelf to hold business records and Tony Menzies is planning to do that with wood already owned by LF for which thanks are due.

There is an external drain in the stock room revealed by moving a ply shelf which we will reinstate so the floor can be washed down with a hose and the excess water removed.

The money scales have ceased to function from the mains but work well with the batteries, just remove a battery to turn them off then reinsert to turn on.

The pothole outside the shop is still proving to be a problem. Wessex Water are doing work in the road overnight this week CF will see if they can drop some tarmac into it when they finish their works, possibly with a sweetener to the road team, this was approved. If not then need to upload photo with measurements to Highways.

---

## Other Business

---

The annual stocktake is this week. AB has organized forms to complete and is in charge of getting a team together. Directors approved the expenditure of complementary pizza after the stocktake completed.

Stoke Club approached CF for a donation to the wake of a little boy who died last week from a brain tumour this was approved, items to a value of £50

CF to investigate Bookers delivery again to see if viable, possibly liaising with other businesses in the village?

Food waste to go out for recycling weekly please Ann and Claire are doing that thank you.

---

## Next Meeting

---

Not yet arranged, to await production of end of year financial statement

TO DO LIST:

KR Check Gary Findlay not on business paperwork as a director

CF pothole

AB Re-do volunteers form

CF Conclude Payzone Plus negotiation

CF Review Bookers delivery possibilities

ALL Think about and come up with proposals for Opening times and how to re-jig Ann and Claire's contracts if we want to make a change.

## Stoke Community Shop Minutes 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025

### 1) Present

Gary Findlay, Alan G Brimecombe, Catherine Fraser, Helen Townson, Trudy Cronin, Sue Wright, Ann Bartlett, Claire Bidwell, Katherine Rake

### 2) Approval of Jan 25<sup>th</sup> minutes

All approved

### 3) Matters Arising

- a) AGB will re-send the instructions for the waste button on the till and the cleaning sheets as several volunteers were not able to open them. Use a pdf format next time
- b) CF has not yet started on the discount scheme but will aim to achieve this by end of the month
- c) Sue Menzies has now stepped down entirely from the shop so we will need to put together a calendar of events to reflect the shop window decoration through the year, this will start with Red Nose day then Mothering Sunday then Easter. CF suggested getting some groups of children involved in the designs.
- d) The social events will be organized by Helen Townson (with help!) There will be a boules competition with French food for volunteers and a quiz night probably in the pub as a wider community event hosted by the shop. Pencilled in for June

### 4) Volunteers

- a) We have lost 2 volunteers since the last meeting but have gained 3 new volunteers, all have had their induction and 2 have started shifts. One needs to be put on the volunteer rota AB will do this.

### 5) Budget and Finance

- a) The bank balance is £37,169.63, Savings £13,776.60
- b) The 2023/2024 accounts are now complete, signed off by the accountant and ready to submit to the FCA
- c) The total profit for the year was £1606, turning round a loss of £206 from the 23/24 accounts
- d) Several administrative anomalies remain to be addressed as part of the tidying up of the accounts, however the accountants are willing to continue for a second year so systems put in place this year will simplify the accounting procedure going forward hopefully leading to reduced accountancy costs.
- e) TC reiterated that there is a minimum spend of £2 to receive cashback and the limit to be set at £30 cashback. There will be no minimum spend for outright purchases. There are still errors in the procedure for dealing with cashback at the till, HT will re-send the procedure to all volunteers.

- f) TC has managed to isolate the Payzone charges from the amounts paid out to customers which has allowed us to see the costs more clearly (around £24 per month) CF is in the process of moving the shop to Payzone Plus which will be an entirely Wi-Fi based system incorporating card transactions. Once we are happy that this works well then we will stop the current card transactions machine. This is on a 30 day rolling contract so can be stopped within 1 month without cost.

## **6) Shop Management, Stock and Equipment**

- a) LF filled in a questionnaire on line with the Food Standards Agency but no visit from environmental health has transpired. CF felt that we might ask for an inspection now that all the cleaning schedules are working well as we only scored a 4 on our last inspection. This was because of a lack of a hand-washing sink which has now been in place for many months.
- b) Tony Menzies has been asked to construct another high level shelf in the stock room in order to store the business records which are currently on the floor. Also to lift the shelf at the far end so that it is not on the floor, this will expose an exterior drain which can then be used to remove waste water when the stock room floor is washed down.
- c) The tombola has gone well however it is thought that a child was given an alcoholic prize when their parents should have been asked to come in to receive it. The hamper was won by Tim Moore, we will ask if he could possibly return the hamper itself for use again in the shop.
- d) Still need to check mark ups on Bakery Roy-Al products GF to check invoices.
- e) Ann Bartlett will need to change her surname on the alcohol licence to reflect her recent marriage. LF will explore this.
- f) The stock take was completed in house and all went smoothly and quickly. Thanks are due to AGB for organizing and to the volunteers who gave up their evening to complete it. As a result we have saved £180 over the commercial firm who completed it last year.
- g) SW has requested some digital thermometers for the chillers/freezers as some are very difficult to read. CF also requested a probe thermometer to double check between frozen food items. SW will research.
- h) AGB has ordered the window artwork. Application is imminent but relies on dry weather above 8°

## **7) Marketing, Communications and Shop Events**

- a) We will be doing a cake sale for red nose day. KR will source some posters for the window and we will advertise on Facebook
- b) See above re boules competition and quiz night.

## **8) SSHCSL Members and governance**

- a) KR asks that we place the indemnity insurance and the ICO information in the shop as well as the 23/24 profit and loss accounts in the shop for volunteers to see, LF will do this.

- b) In order to complete the AGM in a timely manner it needs to be set up quite soon. Last year was May so attempt to get it back to April this year and then back to January in 2026. TC booked the memorial hall for Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> April during the meeting for 6pm. KR will liaise with CF so all governance issues are addressed prior to the meeting.

## **9) Any other business**

- a) Still no resolution of the pothole outside the shop door despite multiple reportings
- b) AGB wondered if the broad band contract needed renewing the answer is no.
- c) CF has received a letter from the solicitors dealing with the estate of Sally Davey. We may well have a bequest from her will, no further information as yet.

### **Date of next meeting 10<sup>th</sup> April 2025 in the Fleur de Lis at 5pm**

#### **To do:**

AGB re-send waste and cleaning schedule to volunteers

CF get discount scheme up and running

CF organise calendar for window decoration

CF contact school re Mothers' Day window

KR organise window posters for red nose day

LF publicity for red nose day

HT Make arrangements for social events

AB Put new volunteers on email list and get them set up on regular shifts if possible

HT send out instructions re cashback protocol

CF Finalise payzone plus account

CF request environmental health visit

GF check Roy-AI invoices to see what profit margin we are making

LF/AB change name on alcohol sale licence

SW research thermometers

LF Display relevant info on stock room wall

KR/CF to set up paperwork for AGM

CF parish newsletter for April edition

## Stoke Community Shop Minutes 10<sup>th</sup> April 2025

### 1) Present

Gary Findlay, Alan G Brimecombe, Catherine Fraser, Trudy Cronin, Sue Wright, Claire Bidwell, Lyn Foley

### 2) Apologies

Katherine Rake, Ann Bartlett, Helen Townson

### 3) Approval of 6<sup>th</sup> March minutes

All approved

### 4) Matters Arising

- a) Ann's name has been changed on the alcohol sale licence and Lyn will ask her brother to re-do the lettering over the door to reflect this.
- b) CF has not yet started on the discount scheme but will aim to achieve this by end of the month
- c) The window decorations by the Castle school pupils have been well received and they are keen to be more involved , possibly at Harvest
- d) A tick sheet for the boules evening has been placed in the shop for volunteers to sign for possible dates in June or July
- e) We will send flowers and a card to Jan Daniels and Sue Menzies thanking them for their help in the shop over the 5 years since inception. This would have been done at the AGM but as that is postponed would be better to do it now.
- f) Red Nose Day raised £234.09 rounded up by the shop to £250 . A note to be put in the shop window thanking all bakers and purchasers of cake.

### 5) Volunteers

- a) As there is a chronic inability to fill weekend volunteer shifts CF will approach Jules to see if Arron may be interested in working at the weekend. It would require DBS checks for the people working with him, principally Gary, Claire and Ann. 1 3hr shift either Sat afternoon or Sun morning.

### 6) Budget and Finance

- a) The bank balance is £33,104.65, Savings £13,798.17
- b) The 2023/2024 accounts have now been submitted to the FCA
- c) VAT return for the first quarter has been completed the amount paid was £170
- d) We are up to date with NI and PAYE and employment allowance will be claimed again this year
- e) The accountant's fee for the next year will be £500 cheaper than last year in view of the streamlining of the accounts.
- f) Trudy reports that cashback is being recorded correctly in almost all cases and agrees with the POS reports. Also cash discrepancies have been much

reduced, well done to all. Keep putting the explanatory notes in the till if mistakes are made.

- g) If a gift voucher is used as payment put the whole value in the till if there is an underspend.
- h) TC has managed to isolate the Payzone charges from the amounts paid out to customers which has allowed us to see the costs more clearly (around £24 per month) The payzone machine has been upgraded and worked well for a week at which point the battery failed. The engineer did come within 24 hours and has replaced the at fault battery. It has not yet been possible to incorporate the card transactions as yet, this is ongoing.

## **7) Shop Management, Stock and Equipment**

- a) Tony Menzies has completed the extra shelving in the stock room which has allowed all items to be up off the floor. Thanks to be extended to him for the prompt completion.
- b) SW has researched the digital thermometers for the chillers/freezers and will send the screen shots to CF for decisions to be made re purchase.
- c) The window artwork was completed by John Burton Signs and all are pleased with the result thanks to Alan for organizing this.
- d) Overall sales are up 31% over this time last year thanks particularly to Ann, Claire and Gary for this. Customer numbers are still down but customer spend is increased by 7.8%
- e) Last week we recorded the best week for 2 years.
- f) It was requested that all incoming post is placed in the in tray newly constructed on the shelves in the stock room to avoid it being misplaced and not noticed.
- g) CF needs to speak to Dataweigh about how to reconcile the waste figures and shop use figures now they are on the till buttons.
- h) LF and TC are away during May so KR and CF will do the Xero and Lloyds payments
- i) Decided to open just 9-11 am on both bank holiday Mondays in May

## **8) SSHCSL Members and governance**

- a) The 2024-2025 accounts are being started by the chartered accountants on April 14<sup>th</sup> and aim to be completed by end May to allow the AGM to be scheduled for June

## **9) Any other business**

- a) SW reported that a customer thought there was a banned substance in our ice poles, rest of committee thought this unlikely but would look into it. Also SW unhappy that E numbers in children's sweets may be bad for them, general thought was that parents should be monitoring this as long as all products were legal.

- b) GF reported that MD foods being brought by Wincanton chilled were actually selling well as they were cheap. Consensus was we could order more if there was room in the chiller cabinets without crowding out other products.
- c) Some greetings cards on the rotating stand were not scanning, CF to review.

**Date of next meeting 20<sup>th</sup> May 2025 in Stoke Club committee room at 5pm**

# MINUTES

## Shop directors' meeting

29/04/2025 5.00pm In the chair Catherine Fraser

This was a short meeting requested by Lyn Foley to go through the pay award for staff for 2025 to reflect the increase in the minimum and living wage announced by the government for April 1<sup>st</sup> and also the increase in National Insurance contributions.

### In Attendance

Catherine Fraser, Sue Wright, Alan Brimecombe, Lyn Foley

### Approval of Minutes

The previous minutes were approved

### Staff wages

After discussion it was decided to increase Claire Bidwell's wages to █████ per hour a █████ increase from the current █████

Ann Bartlett's wages to increase to £████ per hour from the current █████, an increase of █████

Both to be back dated to April 1<sup>st</sup> 2025

### Holiday cover for May

LF is away for the entirety of May and Trudy Cronin for 2 weeks in May.

CF and Claire will do the cashing up during May aiming to bank cash twice weekly to avoid large amounts of cash in the safe. Money can be banked through Josh at the Post Office counter on Mondays and Thursdays. Change will be available from Montacute post office.

### Other Business

A solicitor's letter has been received from the estate of Sally Davey explaining that the shop is one of 5 beneficiaries to Sally's will and that we will be receiving a portion of the residual estate once her bungalow has been sold.

We decided not to take a table or advertising for the May Fair at Stanchester. The advert would be chargeable and the table require a considerable input during the day to man.

SW requested purchase of a more substantial stepladder with 3 steps for use in the shop.

### Next Meeting

Not yet arranged, to await production of end of year financial statement

## Stoke Community Shop Minutes 20<sup>th</sup> May 2025

### 1) Present

Gary Findlay, Alan G Brimecombe, Catherine Fraser, Trudy Cronin, Ann Bartlett, Claire Bidwell

### 2) Apologies

Katherine Rake, Sue Wright, Helen Townson, Lyn Foley

### 3) Approval of 10<sup>th</sup> April minutes

The Bank Holiday hours were incorrect, they report 9-11 am. They were meant to say 8-11 am other than that they were approved. CF to amend.

### 4) Matters Arising

- a) CF has started on the discount scheme. We need to get an RF reader attached to the computer by a USB port and a stack of programmable cards. Then it is a matter of organizing which groups of stock will be accessible for discount and programming the till to reflect this. Discount cards to be held by one person only.

### 5) Volunteers

- a) As there is a staff shortage while Ann is away, Claire has offered to do extra hours to cover the Tuesday/Wednesday and Saturday of her week off. This is extremely helpful, thank you Claire. It was discussed how to cover lunch breaks if a staff member does a full day. Both Claire and Ann were offered a lunch break but would prefer to work through with just a 10 minute break for eating lunch but no formal time off during the day.

### 6) Budget and Finance

- a) The bank balance is £35,084.20, Savings £13,807.95
- b) The 2024/2025 accounts will be ready for signing by the directors next week
- c) VAT return for the first quarter has been completed the amount paid was £147 not the £170 reported in the April minutes
- d) Employment allowance will be claimed again this year, we still have a credit of £139
- e) We have been paying incrementally for the accountants' bill at £500 per week to help with cashflow and have already paid £1500 towards this.
- f) TC suggested a high interest account be set up to take maybe £10,000 for 30-60 days which would give a bit more interest. This short term account is available through Lloyds but the money cannot be touched while it is in there. TC will look into it.

7) TC was very grateful for the financial cover while she was away.

8)

## **9) Shop Management, Stock and Equipment**

- a) The safe has been moved up off the floor to make access easier for all, and the office desk drawer repaired. This will allow easier cleaning
- b) and also appreciated moving the safe up off the floor in the office.
- c) The digital thermometers for the chillers/freezers have been installed and have highlighted significant differences from the analogue recorders. The ice cream freezer readings are particularly stark and show it is more efficient than thought.
- d) The window artwork despite numerous proof reading shows incorrect times for the post office opening. AGB will look at removing the figure 2 to turn 12 into 1 for the Thursday opening times!!
- e) Overall sales are up.Thanks particularly to Ann, Claire and Gary for this.
- f) The incoming post system is working well.
- g) Jeff Davis has been asked to plane the bottom of the shop entrance door, this has been done and is much easier to operate. Thanks to him.
- h) TC requested a better system for filing and suggested a roller door cabinet to replace the wire baskets. Discussion ensued about the difficulty of the soil pipe but it has been added to the list of jobs to do.

## **10) SSHCSL Members and governance**

- a) The AGM has been arranged for the Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> June at the memorial hall at 6pm

## **11) Any other business**

- a) It would be useful to make contact with our supplier reps to see if we can get any overall discount on products. GF and CF to investigate starting with Hunts.
- b) Wincanton chilled has now been sold and there have been some initial problems with the new owners but we will monitor and hope that things improve.
- c) Alex Brookes has requested a shop contribution to a raffle hamper for the May Fayre. £20 was authorised in products from the shop, she will select.

**Date of next meeting TBA**

# MINUTES

Shop directors' meeting

---

01/07/2025 7.00 pm In the chair Catherine Fraser

---

This was a short meeting to address the shortage of directors after the resignation of Lyn Foley and Sue Wright at the AGM

---

---

## In Attendance

---

Catherine Fraser, Alan Brimecombe, Gary Findlay

---

---

## Business

---

The constitution of the company requires the board to have a minimum of 3 directors. Catherine Fraser proposed and Alan Brimecombe seconded that Gary Findlay be co-opted onto the board to fulfil this requirement. Catherine reassured Gary that this did not disbar him from becoming an employee of the company as long as he did not receive remuneration for his role as director. GF was happy with this and agreed to his co-option. The vote was carried and GF is now a director from 1/7/25

---

---

## Next Meeting

---

Not yet arranged.

# MINUTES

## Shop directors' meeting

01/08/2025 12.00pm In the chair Catherine Fraser

---

### In Attendance

---

Catherine Fraser, Alan Brimecombe, Gary Findlay

---

### Approval of Minutes

---

The minutes of the short July meeting were gone through.

Those minutes were approved.

---

### Board

---

Since the previous meeting Gary Findlay has taken on some further responsibilities in his capacity as director and the new team of 3 are working well together.

---

### Volunteers & Staffing

---

Since the last meeting we have lost 2 more volunteers, 1 moving back to France for the summer and one to a job in the USA. We are awaiting the starting of a youngster doing Duke of Edinburgh award with a placement on a Sunday morning.

It is likely that Claire Davies will be leaving her employment at the end of September so we need to work on a replacement. We have not yet received her formal resignation but need to consider her replacement so we are not left in a difficult position.

Gary Findlay is happy to take on Claire's responsibilities as an employee so we do not need to advertise externally at this point. It is important that GF's employee contract is entirely separate to his role as director for which he will not receive remuneration.

Discussion ensued around a possible change in rotas so that we have more cover on a Monday and on a Thursday afternoon. It is likely that the increase in hours will increase the wages bill possibly by as much as £200 per week. We discussed whether a 3<sup>rd</sup> employee would be better or worse in this respect. The advantage would be an easing of sorting out holiday cover among three but the added expenses may be a problem. All three directors will try to formulate a workable roster that suits all parties.

---

### Shop facilities

---

The Payzone machine failed to function again this week and left us without facilities for 8 hours. The problem was a software fault this time which was easily fixed once we were able to get a response from technical help. This makes it less likely that we can rely on the system for general payment card transactions as 8 hours is an unacceptable time frame to resolve the complaint. The current card transaction machine is subject to the possible errors of mis-typing and GF asked if it were replaced we should use a machine that is linked directly to the till so avoiding that source of error.

This week we were the victim of a fraudulent £50 note being accepted. CF has filled in an on-line police report and we will await their response. CF will contact PG Securities to find out how to preserve the recording of the incident from our

CCTV. It has always been shop policy that we do not accept £50 notes but many volunteers are unaware of this so it needs to be included in a volunteer email.

The new waste system has still not been sorted satisfactorily with till recording being haphazard at best. AB to have further conversations with Kenny re this and set up the system in its final format.

The new fruit and veg is selling well and the parish newsletter for August carries an invitation to do veg boxes for people so the next few weeks will show if this is a service worth promoting further.

GF is keen that we join Plunkett foundation to take advantage of their new link up with Morrisons. This would provide free delivery of Morrisons entire range 7 days a week at retail prices. CF/AB to watch the promotional webinar so a view can be taken at the next meeting.

GF is keen to interrogate the EPOS system so we can see which stock lines are selling well, what profit margins we are making and possibly generate orders. He will ring Kenny for a tutorial on running reports on EPOS

---

#### Other Business

---

A £1000 donation has been received from a villager. Publicity is not wanted but a private message of thanks will be sent by CF

GF has received a request from the parish council to erect holders for Christmas trees on the fronts of the properties in the Cross area to display Christmas lights. The board approved a donation of £50 towards the cost of this subject to the approval of Pam and John Young who own the building

---

#### Next Meeting

---

A committee meeting is suggested for Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> August

## Stoke Community Shop Minutes 16<sup>th</sup> September 2025

### •Present

Gary Findlay, Alan G Brimecombe, Catherine Fraser, Trudy Cronin, Ann Bartlett, Helen Townson.

### •Apologies

Claire Bidwell

### •Approval of 20<sup>th</sup> May minutes

The Bank Holiday hours were incorrect, they report 9-11 am. They were meant to say 8-11 am other than that they were approved. CF to amend.

### •Matters Arising

- The discount scheme has been deferred as we are not making enough money to justify it.
- Gary has met with reps from Hunts and Hawkridge and has obtained a discount on various products, in particular on Trewithen milk which is cheaper and also has a higher profit margin. Hunt's deliveries are now twice weekly. Customers are appreciative of the switch to Thorner's ham which is selling well.

### •Volunteers

- CF will cover all Ann's shifts while she is on holiday next week, at the same time CB is unwell so GF will cover her shifts
- We are still short of volunteers. CF to approach Amanda Isaacs who has expressed an interest.
- Our new Sunday recruit started last week and is doing every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday. GF/CF to speak to her about appropriate hair care.

- There was a plan to do a quiz but this has been shelved as there is now a memorial hall quiz monthly as well as one in the club.
- The boules match was well received by the volunteers and will certainly be repeated next summer.
- Moira Hulett has offered to host the shop Facebook page and GF will make sure she has the passwords to begin advertising new products etc.
- Both Ann Ashley and Claire Bidwell are leaving at the end of the month. Cards and a small memento will be arranged, much appreciation to both of these long term volunteers was expressed
- GF is taking Claire's post from the 26<sup>th</sup> September. He and Ann will work on a rota between them based on 24 paid hours a week. CF to assist.

### • **Budget and Finance**

- The bank balance is £22,520.34, Savings £3,837.50, High Interest 95 day notice account recently set up has £20,000 and is accumulating interest at £1.50 per day.
- It is costing the shop £1.50 per £100 to deposit cash in the bank. The committee explored the possibility of paying our employees in cash to reduce this cost. There was no objection. TC will explore the feasibility of this with the accountant and report back.
- The costs of Smiths News deliveries is being increased. They operate a sliding scale with a standing charge of £19 per week then a percentage of the weekly sales. This percentage decreases as the sales increase. We currently sit between bands B at 7% and C at 4%. It would make sense to increase sales to always be in band C. We will promote the magazine element and stock the Guardian, the I paper and also try some children's magazines and comics. The recycling of plastic and cardboard is going well.
- August figures were improved after a slump in July.

### • **Shop Management, Stock and Equipment**

- After several problems with the alarm all now appears to be sorted although PG Securities comment that we have a very old system.
- 3 cameras on the CCTV are non-functional we need to get into settings to resolve this

- Keyholders for the alarm are now recorded as GF first, CF second and AB third.
- The digital thermometers for the chillers/freezers have been installed and have highlighted significant differences from the analogue recorders. CF will get some more and prompted the use of the probe thermometer when there are discrepancies. The stock room chiller may need replacing if it is shown not to be functioning as it should. Some returned milk that was off before its due date prompts this.
- There may be some wall mounted shelf units available from AB that could work in the shop GF will look.
- TC tells us that the cabinet from the memorial hall may well be here this week to store the financial records in the store room.

### •SSHCSL Members and governance

- Katherine Rake has informed CF that the Financial Conduct Authority now have the business address as that of the shop not of one of the directors.

### •Any other business

- The waste recording is still giving problems. Suggestions made to recording weekly to stop it building up into an unusable figure. Possibly also restricting it to management use only. Management functions possible being ascribed to named buttons on the till. GF and AGB to pursue.
- We have been given some free energy drinks to try from Youings, decided to sell them rather than a raffle in view of the age restrictions.
- Try to use the Trewithen milk for the shop as it is cheaper unled we have very short dated Bruton milk

**Date of next meeting Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> November 5pm at the Stoke Working Mens' Club**

## Stoke Community Shop Minutes 4<sup>th</sup> November 2025

### 1) Present

Gary Findlay, Alan G Brimecombe, Catherine Fraser, Trudy Cronin, Ann Bartlett, Claire Bidwell, Graham Bartlett, Katherine Rake.

### 2) Apologies

Helen Townson, Lyn Foley

### 3) Approval of 16<sup>th</sup> September minutes

The minutes of the September meeting were approved.

### 4) Matters Arising

- a) The Facebook password has still not been sent to Moira Hulett. GF and CB will get the password from Lyn Foley and aim to get this started.
- b) TC has explored getting rid of cash by paying staff wages but this has proved impossible through Xero so will be abandoned.
- c) GF looked at the shelving units but they were found to not be suitable.
- d) Simon Hester will look at the CCTV cameras to try and set up the extra screens.

### 5) Volunteers

- a) We have a new volunteer Robert Bond who is enjoying his time with us and is getting on very well in the stock room.
- b) The committee welcomed Graham Bartlett as an observer with an interest in joining the directors. He has expertise in managing logistics and also accountancy.
- c) We are losing Lynda McCulley and her regular shift on a Friday morning though she is still happy to pick up occasional shifts as she can.
- d) KR asked if we might be willing to host a Duke of Edinburgh student from Yeovil. We are happy to provide a placement.
- e) The Xmas party has been arranged at the Fleur de Lis. It will be a substantial buffet. Volunteers will be paid for, partners will pay £15 per head.

### 6) Budget and Finance

- a) The current account balance is £21,314.48, Savings £53,827.39, 95 day account £20,098.99.
- b) The 95 day account receives interest of 2.77%
- c) VAT returns for this year so far are Q1 £147.25, Q2 £488.67, Q3 £779.20.
- d) Employment allowance for small business being claimed again this year, resulting in a saving of 80% of PAYE

- e) TC in conjunction with the accountants have suggested that we move our year end to 31<sup>st</sup> March to line up with the national year end and line up with the VAT quarters. This will result in filing accounts for a 13 month period in 2026. We need to get permission from the FCA to accomplish this but the committee gave their approval. KR will complete the necessary forms.
- f) The accounts position is much improved chiefly due to the generous bequest we have received from the estate of Sally Davey who was so instrumental in setting up the shop. The whole committee gave their thanks for this. Discussion then followed about how we could fittingly use this money. Suggestions included setting up a bursary or apprenticeship, an annual award through one of the schools, plus proposals for improvements in the shop itself. Discussion will need to involve the accountants so we don't incur any tax. It will also need to involve Pam and John Young as our lease is due to expire in March 2027 before any major works in the shop are carried out.
- 7)** TC requested that volunteers be given refresher training on dealing with cashback and on refunds as mistakes are still coming through in the end of day reconciliation.

#### **8) Any other business**

- a) Xmas hours were discussed, AGB has suggested a timetable which will be placed in the parish magazine.

**Date of next meeting Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January in Stoke Working Men's Club Committee Room**

## Stoke Community shop Minutes 21<sup>st</sup> November 2024

1) **Present** ; Lyn Foley, Katherine Rake, Gary Findlay, Alan Brimecombe, Catherine Fraser, Trudy Cronin, Sue Wright, Claire Bidwell, Sue Menzies, Ann Bartlett.

2) **Apologies** None

### 3) Matters Arising

- a) The quote for the freezer door was in excess of £500. In view of the fact that it has lasted less than 2 years it was decided not to purchase a replacement at this time.
- b) The Xmas rota has been covered with both Ann and Claire and volunteers and directors all stepping up. There will be reduced hours for several of the holiday days but the shop will only be closed on Christmas day.
- c) There has been a request for work experience from Julie's son which we have been pleased to accept.
- d) Sue Menzies has volunteered to do the Christmas window display, thank you very much.
- e) Sue is also organizing the Christmas social which will now take place in All Saints' Hall as the pub is busy with Christmas functions.

### 4) Budget and Finance

- a) The bank balance is £36,655.08 Savings £13,764.08
- b) The VAT bill of over £900 has been paid.
- c) Barclaycard are still requiring verification of Directors. We have sent everything they have asked for but they are still raising new queries. Catherine Fraser has requested a confirmation of identification from an accountant which has been supplied as well as confirmation of nationality. We seem to be falling between two companies' requirements as Take Payments are requesting sight of passports but Barclaycard say that is not necessary??
- d) Trudy Cronin is particularly concerned that there was an increase in stock purchasing of more than £700 in November. Discussion followed with reassurance that this was mainly for Christmas stock and would hopefully be reflected in higher sales figures over Christmas.

### 5) Shop Management, Stock and Equipment

- a) The Thorner's pies were advertised on Facebook and showed an immediate response so we will continue to post on Facebook although only Claire is able to do this at present.
- b) Lyn Foley has purchased new telephones for the shop as the old ones were not working well.

- c) Catherine Fraser has spoken to Peter from Fairytale Cards who has changed the range of cards he is supplying, however these do not include age cards for children which has been adversely commented on by customers.
- d) She has also spoken to Gillian from original posters cards and chosen a different card range for the card spinner which should come in January. A new franchisee takes over her round next year on her retirement.
- e) Cleaning rota etc. continues to be developed.

## **6) Volunteers**

- a) Ann continues to have trouble filling some shifts so we need to think of ways to encourage new volunteers as well as rewarding those we already have Xmas was discussed

## **7) Marketing, Communications and Shop Events**

- a) Hambook advert was sent in by Katherine Rake
- b) Newsletter entry was sent in by Catherine Fraser

### **Any other business**

- a) Simon Hulber has offered to do some videoing for the shop
- b) May try to move around the ice cream fridge to free up space for the newspapers behind the door

**Date of next meeting 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025 in the Fleur de Lys at 5pm**