

**5<sup>th</sup> Dunstable (Methodist) Scout Group**  
**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting**  
**5<sup>th</sup> July, 2023 at Milton Bryan**

**1. Introduction and welcome**

The Chair welcomed everyone, and thanked them for attending the meeting. He then introduced himself (Nick Porter) as Chair, Helen Charters as Treasurer, Jenny Ryder-O'Regan as Group Scout Leader, and Sue Gibson (*in absentia*) as Secretary.

The Chair also explained the revised terminology introduced by The Scout Association, as follows:

The **Group Scout Council** consists (broadly) of every adult associated with the group. This includes leaders and their helpers, parents or guardians of Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts, and the Patrol Leaders of the Scout Troop. That's pretty well everyone in this room.

The **Group Trustee Board** consists of a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and the Group Scout Leader, together with the Section Leaders, and 'lay' members elected by you, the Group Scout Council. The GTB is responsible for ensuring that the Scout Group is properly managed and adheres to all regulations.

**2. Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Roger Pepworth, Mary Wilson, and Sue Gibson

In attendance: Nick Porter, Jenny Ryder-O'Regan, Helen Charters, Brian Calvert, David Betterton, Jeanette Betterton, Jonathan Charters, Jean Basham, D Mackintosh, J Veyres, C Veyres, S Hastings, N Slack, V Ashby, K Birchall, S Davey, R Sage, K Pritchard, S Porter, S Ronda-Garciga

**3. To approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 6 July 2022**

The Chair explained that the minutes of the previous AGM had been examined by the Group Executive, and proposed that they are accepted as a true record. Seconded by David Betterton, and approved by a show of hands.

**4. Governance topics**

The Chair explained that the following are part of the standard AGM format recommended by The Scout Organisation to ensure good practice is followed.

**a. Adopt the model constitution from Policy, Organisation and Rules**

The Scout Association has provided a standard form of Constitution, as part of its "Policy Organisation and Rules" document, and the Group Trustee Board proposes that this is adopted as the constitution of the 5<sup>th</sup> Dunstable (Methodist) Scout Group. Seconded by Brian Calvert and approved by a show of hands. In response to a question from the floor, it was clarified that this model constitution can be found on the main Scouts website, and there is a link to it from this AGM event on our own website.

**b. Note the Group's financial year**

The Group's financial year runs from 1 January to 31 December

**c. Agree the number of members that may be elected to the Trustee Board**

The Chair proposed that up to six Group Trustee Board members may be elected by the Group Scout Council. This was seconded by Jeanette Betterton, and approved by a show of hands.

**d. Agree the quorum for each of the Group Scout Council (including this AGM), meetings of the Group Trustee Board, meetings of any sub-committees**

The Chair proposed that the quorum for meetings of the Group Scout Council should be set at 15 members. Seconded by Russell Sage, and approved by show of hands.

The Chair proposed that the quorum for meetings of the Group Trustee Board should be set at one third of the GTB membership, plus one, in line with Charity Commission good practice, and that the quorum for any sub-committees (of which we currently have none) should be set at one third of the relevant sub-committee membership, plus one. Seconded by Jana Veyres and approved by show of hands.

**5. Review of the previous year**

**a. The Group Scout Leader's review of Scouting in 5<sup>th</sup> Dunstable Scout Group**

The group continues to run successfully. For those unfamiliar with a Scout group, we provide scouting opportunities for young people aged 4 – 14, that is Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts – at which point Dunstable district run Explorers and Network for 14 – 25-year-olds.

Our numbers are looking good but we do expect to have to turn away people on the waiting list for Beavers and Cubs as we need to make sure we have the space in the following section. We will continue to work with other groups in Dunstable to try and ensure everyone gets a space somewhere.

Since the last AGM we have continued to have 'firsts' since COVID.

Firstly, Scout camp last July – which we are ramping up to again now – this was also our first without Brian and Ian (though Ian still made regular appearances to repair things).

Then our family camp – we squeezed one into last September – we have seen numbers dwindle over the past few years and so we would welcome any feedback you have on what would interest you in a family camp so please talk to any of the leaders or drop me an email.

And our jumble sale. Those of you who have been involved know that this is a huge undertaking, consuming many volunteer hours. Its success means that we have been able to keep subs low, despite increasing costs, keep a well-maintained store of equipment and heavily subsidise camps and events such as the Beavers trip to the snowdome earlier this year.

In April we had St George's Day parade with the rest of Dunstable Scouts – a bit different this year with campfire songs and a much more informal feel which was well received – even if it did demonstrate that we had very little memory for campfire songs.

Later this year the Scouts will start competing for the District scout competition again with the Hat Challenge, an annual outdoor event that sees them taking on many different challenges and competing against other groups in Dunstable.

As many of you will know we have also had a first this year with the opening of our Squirrels section. Squirrels are young people aged 4 – 6 and tonight is only their 4th ever meeting. We have started with a small group of 8 while all the leaders got to grips with the new age group and plan to increase this in September. We have 3 entirely new volunteers join us for the section and thank you to Paulette who had put so much work into making this happen.

None of the above would be possible without our volunteers. Every adult you come across in Scouting is a volunteer who fits Scouting around work, family and various other commitments. Those of you with young people in Cubs and Scouts will also know that it is largely the same team, of Hannah, Harry and Poppy, who run both of those sections – no small feat after a full day at work.

To keep this group running we need volunteers to come forward, whether that is for one-off events like the jumble sale, or a more regular commitment. We understand that a weekly commitment or being surrounded by 36 children isn't for everyone but there are 1000s of things that happen behind the scenes which need doing – the Beavers making the father's day gifts, updating badge records, delivering jumble sale leaflets. Whatever capacity you can help in please do volunteer – the more people we have the easier it is for everyone. And what's more volunteering is proven to be good for you and make you happier.

Finally, some thank yous. We must thank the The Square Methodist Church where we meet for their continued support – they have asked me to mention that they will be having a special service on Dunstable Downs at 11 am on Sunday which will include various activities such as shelter building for young people – if you are interested there is more information on their website.

Then thank you to all of our volunteers. The Trustee Board. The adults and young leaders who run the sections and also all of those people who support throughout the year to make sure things happen.

**b. To receive and consider the Annual Report of the Group Trustee Board including the annual Statement of the Accounts**

The Treasurer presented a summary of the accounts, in particular explaining that the deficit in 2022, as in the previous two years, has been largely due to Covid, where we chose to use some of our reserves to offer subs holidays, and where we have been unable to run our Jumble Sale, which is a major source of funds. We remain in a healthy financial state, and we were able to run a Jumble Sale in 2023, so next year's accounts are expected to be better balanced.

**6. Making appointments**

**a. To approve the Group Scout Leader's nomination of the Group Chair**

The Group Scout Leader nominated Nick Porter to remain as Chair, and this was approved by a show of hands.

**b. Election of the Group Secretary**

Sue Gibson has been proposed and seconded as Secretary. With no other nominations, this was approved by a show of hands.

**c. Election of the Group Treasurer**

Helen Charters has been proposed and seconded as Treasurer. With no other nominations, this was approved by a show of hands.

**d. Elections of members to the Group Trustee Board**

The following have been proposed and seconded to serve as members of the Group Trustee Board:

Ian Ellis  
Russell Sage  
Dave Gibson  
Steve Clarke  
Jean Basham

These were approved by a show of hands

**e. To approve the Group Scout Leader's nominations to the Group Trustee Board**

No additional members were nominated

The Chair thanked all members of the Group Trustee Board for their service over the last year, and for their continuing service into the next year.

**7. To appoint the Scrutineer**

Rachel Martin has been proposed and seconded, and as treasurer for another Scout Group, is qualified for the role. This was approved by a show of hands.

**8. Close**

With thanks to all in attendance, the Chair declared the meeting closed.