

DEVIZES CONSTITUENCY CONSERVATIVE ASSOCIATION

Minutes of Kennet Valley Branch Annual General Meeting

Held on Saturday, 21st August 2021, 12 noon, at Breach House, Lockeridge, SN8 4EG

Present: Anthony Elkington, Susanne Stedman, Jane Davies, Mary Spender (Chairman), Phyllida Joel, Graham Kitchen, Michael Daley, Hugh Badman, Louise Elkington, Anthony Spender, Ken Carter.

1. Apologies for absence: Rupert Stephenson (DCCA), Martin Parsons (DCCA), Cllr Caroline Thomas, Gordon Pepper, Gillian Pepper, Trish Smith, Anstice Baring.

The opportunity was taken to share our memories of Mike Smith and Gillian Watson (see Chairman's Report).

2. Minutes of 2020 AGM: accepted as a true record. Proposed Anthony Elkington, seconded Graham Kitchen. Carried.

3. Matters Arising: due to Covid, no discussion or reorganisation of local Branches took place, and our fundraising supper party in May was cancelled.

4. Chairman's Report: attached.

5. Treasurer's Report: no financial activity took place during the year.

6. Election of Officers and Executive Council Branch Members:

Chairman – Mary Spender. Proposed Anthony Elkington, seconded Susanne Stedman. Carried.

Deputy Chairman - Anthony Elkington. Proposed Jane Davies, seconded Graham Kitchen. Carried.

Treasurer – (no nominations, post vacant)

Secretary – (no nominations, post vacant)

Remainder of the committee agreed to continue to serve. Proposed Michael Daley, seconded Louise Elkington. Carried.

Executive Council Branch representatives: Mary Spender (reserve, Anthony Elkington). Proposed Jane Davies, seconded Susanne Stedman. Due to a change in the rules, Jane Davies now attends ex officio.

7. Future of the Branch:

Given our lack of committee members, various options open to us were fully discussed. After Rupert Stephenson's support plan had been explained - increased inter Branch liaison and more DCCA admin help – plus his ideas for a big push for more members in the 30-50 age range, it was agreed that we should carry on for another year as we are. We are proud of our Branch contributions in the

past – financial, canvassing and recruitment - and would like to retain our independence as a rural Branch if possible.

8.Any other business: Graham Kitchen noted that there was an ancient 2016 AGM Tweet notice that came up when Kennet Valley Branch was googled. Action: Mary Spender to contact DCCA admin.

The formal meeting then closed at 12.45pm.

Address by Cllr Jane Davies:

Jane is the Wiltshire Council Cabinet member for Adult Social Care.

She represents the West of Marlborough electoral Division (which now includes most of our Branch area); she is Chairman of the Marlborough Area Board, and on the Town Council.

She explained that it had been agreed that canvassing and contact with the electorate should continue between local elections, and that she would be carrying this out.

She gave several positive examples of Wiltshire Council actions: - the setting up of Stone Circle to help increase the purchase and development of Council housing; the Council had recently been voted “Greenest Local Authority”; £40m was to be spent on a new special school at Rowde, for 400 children.

She is always ready to help and support us.

Message from Rupert Stephenson, DCCA chairman:

1. There would be a September Management Meeting which would result in an agreed and budgeted Strategy paper/Mission Statement: it was planned to use our resources better with enhanced Branch liaison, to fund a push for more members, especially in the 30-50 age group, and to give more support to our Councillors. The Management Team would then be held accountable to this.
2. A committee comprising representatives from all Branches would be set up to coordinate a programme of future events, and share resources in organising them.
3. Rupert has already strongly objected to Central Office about the proposed Boundary changes, and DCCA will be working on a better plan.

Members present discussed these points fully, and also at the drinks party afterwards we talked about the benefits of joining the Patrons Club and about the aims of the new Devizes Constituency Community Fund (administered by the excellent Wiltshire Community Foundation) – more information can be found on the recently much improved DCCA website www.devizesconservatives.com

MFS/AGM.21