



York Minster District  
Annual General Meeting Minutes  
12<sup>th</sup> September 2023, 7.30pm  
at Snowball Plantation



## 1. Welcome & Introduction

York Minster District Chair, Tony Hale, welcomed all attendees to tonight's AGM. Tony introduced his fellow Trustees sitting next to him – David McDowell, District Lead Volunteer (District Commissioner) and Deborah Watson, District Treasurer.

## 2. Apologies for absence

Apologies have been received from the following: Peter Ingham, Paul Mills, Peter Swann, Emma Footer, Simon Mills, David Ingledew, Trevor King and Mike Richmond.

## 3. Approve the minutes of the previous AGM

The previous AGM was held on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2022. The attendees present all agreed that the minutes produced were a true record of the meeting.

Proposed – David Hatliff

Seconded – Matthew Larkin

## 4. Governance topics

### a. Adopting the model constitution from POR

Tony stated that the outgoing District Executive Committee has recommended that York Minster District adopts the constitution as stated in POR 5.4. The alternative would be to create our own version, which would need to be drafted, as it does not exist at this time.

**Decision: Those present agreed to adopt the constitution as stated in POR**

### b. Note the District's financial year

The outgoing District Executive Committee has recommended that the District adopts a financial year period of 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March. Attendees present agreed.

### c. Note the change from Executive Committee to Trustee Board

Noted.

### d. Agree the number of members that may be elected to the Trustee Board

The outgoing District Executive Committee has recommended that a maximum of 5 members be elected to its Trustee Board. Attendees present agreed.

### e. Agree the quorum for each of the District Scout Council (including this AGM) and meetings of the District Trustee Board

The outgoing District Executive has recommended the quorum for the District Scout Council is to be 15. Tony notes that there are more than 15 people present here this evening. Attendees present agreed.

The outgoing District Executive has recommended that the quorum for meetings of the District Trustee Board is 4 members, comprising a minimum of 2 Ex-Officio officer holders,

and 2 Elected members. Tony said their aim was to ensure an even balance of opinion. Attendees present agreed.

A question was asked regarding why Network was included in the Ex-Officio list for the District, as the questioner believed this was a County responsibility. Max Butler, County Lead Volunteer (County Commissioner), stated that this role is listed as an Ex-Officio member in the Constitution on POR, and that the District manages its own Network unit, not the County.

## **5. Review of the previous year**

### **a. District Commissioner's review of Scouting within the District**

David McDowell spoke about the previous year's challenges, including the numbers of volunteers on the District Leadership Team. There are further changes coming via the Scouts' transformation project, and we also have our own local challenges to contend with. Matthew Larkin is now stepping down from his role as Deputy District Commissioner; Nathan has taken a break and is considering his future role(s). Katie has stepped down as District Secretary and Tony would like to step down as District Chair.

York Minster District has had a small but important increase in adult volunteers in the last year, and also an increase in the numbers of young people too. David celebrated that some groups are doing really well, and there is a great selection of District Events now happening, especially for Beavers and Cubs; it is the District Team's ambition to have more events catering for Scouts too. David is keen for any volunteers to help be a part of a District Events Team, to keep up this momentum.

The District's three Explorer Scout Units are all doing well. Simon Errington has now stepped down, so Gary Gelissen has taken over at Apollo (Clifton). The District team have been reviewing the Explorer Scout provision and running some joint activities.

We know some groups have capacity, and others have long waiting lists, so another ambition of the District team is to try and have some conversations about how we can ensure those young people waiting for a group can get to take part in Scouting.

We had also reinvigorated our GSL forum, which had proven successful but multiple conflicting priorities have meant there hasn't been one recently. David is keen to get this going again, as it's an important mechanism to help establish connections between groups and to allow sharing of information and ideas.

We have lost some great leaders in York Minster this year, and we are doing what we can to support those groups that have lost key members of their teams. In particular, David mentioned Kevin Winship at Osbaldwick and Christine Dick from York Garrison. David encouraged everyone to get in touch with him if anything is needed.

### **b. Receive and consider the statement of accounts for York Minster District and the York Scout Joint Trust (YSJT) for the year ended 31 March 2023**

A copy of these accounts was provided for those present.

A question was asked from those present regarding Gift Aid, as the statement of accounts for the District notes no Gift Aid has been claimed, and the YJST accounts notes only 64 pence has been claimed. Deborah Watson (Treasurer) explained that no gift aid forms have been received from the District Explorer Scout units. Tony Hale (Chair) said he will ask YJST for more information about their Gift Aid figure.

Another question was asked regarding the YSJT report, and asked why no report has been presented from the Snowball team? Tony responded that this has been omitted by accident.

Another question was asked regarding the YJST reserves policy. At last year's AGM, Max Butler had encouraged the Trust and the District to be considering reducing its reserves, in line with advice from the Charities Commission. The YSJT figures shows it made a £10,000 loss last year, so can this be explained by an increased spend of the reserves? Tony explained that Snowball has made a conscious decision to lower its charges, to keep it within an affordable band. The consequence of this is that it has reduced Snowball's income, and also the booking numbers have reduced too, so there has been a double impact. The team are currently working on a project to encourage more use of Snowball. They also have money in their reserves which has been earmarked for specific projects, and the team are currently working to move this funding into the correct account for use. Snowball has also bought more equipment this year.

## 6. Making Appointments

Max Butler explained that the Trustee Board is made up different groups: the Ex-Officio members, who are those volunteers with certain roles which, as stated in POR, also requires them to be on the Trustee Board; the Elected Members, the members nominated by the District Commissioner, and Co-opted members, who are those who can be asked to join the board due to their particular skills or experience. The AGM will ask those in the Scout Council to choose the elected members for the Board, and the Secretary and Treasurer, and to approve the District Lead Volunteer's nominations for Chair and nominated members.

A question was asked whether the Scout Council can elect a role to the board, not a person. Deborah explained only named persons can be Trustees, and they must be listed as such on the Charities Commission record.

### a. Note any supporters admitted to the membership of the District Scout Council

As noted above, through adoption of the POR model constitution, the membership of the District Scout Council can be found in POR at 5.2.4.5.

Max Butler explained that all those with a Compass role are members of Scouting, except those with Occasional Helper roles. However, the District Scout Council is comprised of a smaller group of volunteers. Being in the Scout Council just enables those volunteers to vote at the AGM.

**b. Approve the District Commissioner's nomination for District Chairman.**

Tony Hale has now stood down as District Chairman. No volunteer has put themselves forward to take on the Chair role so there is no nomination at this time. Tony will remain as Chair until the Trustee details are updated and he is removed; then in the absence of a replacement, David will cover as Chair.

**c. Elect District Secretary**

Katie Gilpin has stepped down as Secretary, and no other volunteer has put themselves forward to take on the Secretary role at this time.

**d. Elect District Treasurer**

Deborah Watson has agreed to continue in this role and the Scout Council duly elected Deborah to the Board again.

**e. Elect members to the District Trustee Board**

Adrian Pomfret, Cleo Duke and Gerald Snowden were all elected by the Scout Council to the Trustee Board.

**f. Approve the District Commissioner's nominations to the District Trustee Board**

David McDowell nominates David Ingledew to the Board. The Scout Council approved this nomination.

**g. Appoint an Independent Examiner**

Claire Hutchinson was appointed to continue in this role.

The Trustee Board for the next term therefore comprises:

**Ex-Officio Members**

David McDowell

*Vacant*

*Vacant*

Deborah Watson

Stefan Palmer

Gary Gelissen

Harry Pomfret

District Lead Volunteer (District Commissioner)

District Chair

District Secretary

District Treasurer

District Youth Commissioner

District Explorer Scout Commissioner

District Scout Network Commissioner

**Nominated Members**

David Ingledew

**Elected Members**

Cleo Duke

Adrian Pomfret

Gerald Snowden

## 7. Nomination of a person to represent York Minster District at North Yorkshire County Scout Council

Adrian Pomfret was nominated to undertake this role.

## 8. Presentation of Awards

David introduced the awards presentation and said we want to 'publicly' recognise our members and the amazing commitment they have put in. David presented awards including Wood Badges, 5-year, 10-year, 15-year, 20-year, 30-year and 40-year awards, many of whom were present at tonight's AGM to collect their award.

## 9. County Lead Volunteer's Closing Remarks

Max began by presenting David McDowell with his 5-year award. Max remarked that this is a very well-attended AGM which shows what great level of support there is for Scouting in York Minster District.

The Scouts' Transformation project is now ongoing, and it will help separate out the operational tasks from the governance tasks. The District Trustee Board's focus will now be on aspects such as ensuring the District has enough funds, that there are appropriate policies and procedures in place, and that Scouting is happening safely.

The County Team is hands-on now in York Minster District, helping to support the District Team. We know that York Minster and York Ebor Districts both cover roughly 50% of the population in York as a whole, yet York Minster District has fewer Scouting members than Ebor. No blame or criticism is attached to this, but it shows that growth is possible! And whilst there have been discussions in the recent past about merging York Minster and York Ebor Districts, this is not something that the County is going to be pursuing. The County is here to help ensure both Districts are able to run successfully, independently. Of course, there are lots of collaboration opportunities with Ebor, and David and the County Team are building a strategy with Nigel White, York Ebor's District Commissioner.

Max celebrated that all those present at this AGM and other volunteers supporting York Minster District are doing a great job and our young people are having a great time! We know that they are out and about, getting great experiences and learning skills for life – and this is, after all, why we all volunteer our time to Scouting!

## 10. Meeting Close

Tony Hale concluded the AGM and remarked that the Trustee Board has space for new faces and new perspectives. If anyone wants to consider joining the team, then do get in touch with David McDowell. Tony also thanked all those who have ended their roles on the Trustee Board this evening for the hard work they have put in, during their tenure.