

ALRESFORD & ITCHEN VALLEY LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

Annual General Meeting 2019

Held at 8 The Mulberries, Alresford

On 24th November 2019

Present: David Chidgey (President) Margot Power (in the Chair) Russell Gordon-Smith Yvette Riley John Frampton Jacquie Frampton Jackie Porter Peter Pooley Janet Pooley Cathy Booth Sarah McHardy Jim Thompson Sue Greenway Miranda Pinch Paul Greisen Paul Curtis-Heywood Paul Greenwood Stuart McCullouch Simon Cook Tracy Spring Jeanette Pratt Steve Pratt

1 Apologies: Fiona Southwick April Chidgey Irene Hudman Kevin Head Dorothy Hamilton Kevin Ratcliffe Jo Gilbertson Glenn Gilbertson Annette Rizzo Clare Pinniger

2 Minutes: The minutes of the 2018 AGM were approved

3 Report of the Chairman: Margot Power said a successful year began in May, with Russell Gordon-Smith being elected to Winchester Council and the Party taking control. We contributed to the election of three LibDem Members of the European Parliament. We have an excellent prospective MP in Paula Ferguson, who has the prospect of winning an astonishing victory in the General Election. Our membership in the Branch has doubled over the year and stands at 88. A new Membership Secretary was now urgently needed. She said she was making a special effort to meet all the new members.

For the future, we have the opportunity in May 2020 to elect a new City Councillor, making a total of three from our town and valley. We have reached this level as a result of many years of hard work, showing that our people can deliver on our promises and get things done – with the result we can gain votes at the local level even from those who oppose our policies at the national level.

Margot thanked the members of the Committee for their assiduous advice and their support to our Councillors. She expected the next year there will be an enlarged and yet more energetic Committee including new members. She mentioned with particular appreciation the recent work of Stuart McCullouch, Sam Dalling and Cathy Booth.

4 Report from the Treasurer Fiona Southwick, absent because of unavoidable family commitments, had asked the Chairman to present her report. The accounts, which the Meeting

approved, showed for the year to date an income of £1125 and expenditure of £270. This fall in expenditure was the result of a change in the way our literature is produced, leaving the vast majority of costs being incurred centrally, with the help of a contribution from us. Branch funds in future would be used for purely local events.

5 Reports from Councillors: Jackie Porter mentioned that each County Councillor represented 15,000 people. She commented on the frustrations of working on a LibDem agenda in a Council composed of two-thirds Conservatives. These members loyally supported their Tory MP who voted for Government cuts which were borne by libraries and children's services. Russell Gordon-Smith said that the City Council was greatly more formal and more political than the Town Council (of which he remained a member) and therefore slower-moving. The LibDem administration, new to power, faced three or more years of hard going to implement their new policies related to climate change as well as taking over the troubled dossier on inner-city regeneration.

6 2020 District election: The Chairman reported that no candidate had yet been found to stand for the vacant seat in May. The present Councillors were ready to talk to prospective candidates about the work involved, which is interesting, rewarding, and remunerated.

7 Election of Branch Officers: The Chairman read out the list of those members who had been duly proposed and seconded (as shown in the agenda, with the addition of Cathy Booth as Membership Officer). There being no other nominations, it was agreed on the Chairman's proposal that the elections could be taken *en bloc*. She recalled that Councillors became Committee Members *ex officio* during their term of office. Those elected *nem con were*:

Chairman Margot Power

Vice Chairman Russell Gordon-Smith

Secretary Peter Pooley

Treasurer Fiona Southwick

Membership Officer Cathy Booth

Ordinary Members John Frampton Yvette Riley Annette Rizzo

8 Other business: Yvette Riley gave an account of the progress of the General Election campaign. The constituency was one of the most active in the country with regard to canvassing (200 canvassers), literature distribution (155,000 items), posters, telephone banks and software

use. Hustings had gone well for our candidate. Altogether the campaign team was impressively strong in numbers, expertise, work-rate and enthusiasm.

David Chidgey emphasised the importance attached to gaining this seat, one of 18 designated as vital to ensure a powerful presence in the new Parliament. There was much to do, aside from arriving at a satisfactory end to the Brexit saga, including putting the NHS back in order and sorting out relations with Ireland

The Chairman, concluding the proceedings, thanked the hosts and cake-makers, her Committee for their support, and the new and the established members present for their attendance and encouragement. This enlarged and highly-motivated team could make the coming year even more successful than the last.