



**Chelmsford District Scout Council**  
**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting**  
**Held on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022**  
**At Writtle Scout HQ,**

**Present** – Roger Cole (in the chair), Leanne Oscroft and Suzanne Ball (Co-District Commissioners), Richard Oscroft MBE, (District President), Councillor John Galley (Mayor of the City of Chelmsford), Jan Dear (Deputy County Commissioner) plus some 30 members and friends of the District Scout Council representing the following Groups/Units – 1<sup>st</sup> Chelmsford, 2<sup>nd</sup> Chelmsford, 11<sup>th</sup> Chelmsford, 15<sup>th</sup> Chelmsford, 17<sup>th</sup> Chelmsford, 1<sup>st</sup> Broomfield, 1<sup>st</sup> Danbury, 1<sup>st</sup> Writtle, Network, ASU, Evolve ESU and members of the District team, plus 3 Leaders and 4 participants going to the 2023 Jamboree in South Korea

**Welcome** – Roger welcomed everybody including our guests Councillor John Galley (Mayor of the City of Chelmsford) and Mrs Galley, Jan Dear (Deputy County Commissioner) and said it's great to be able to meet face to face at last in 2022. As most are aware, the AGM report must follow a fairly strict format, especially for the reporting of the accounts. This is somewhat dictated by the Charity Commission's reporting requirements, so it means that it's sometimes difficult to get into the meat of things when reading what is in essence a very important, though nevertheless quite a boring report. So during tonight's presentation we are going to try and tease out a few of the highlights.

**Apologies for Absence** – 12 members of the District sent their apologies

**Minutes of Annual General Meeting – held on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021 (via Zoom)**

Last year's AGM minutes which had been issued to all members of the District were **approved**

**Annual Report and Accounts**

It's been a difficult year in many ways, and it follows three particularly difficult years and especially the two years of COVID with no income from the shop, no income from Gang Show a very much reduced income from the Riffhams campsite and of course all other expenses didn't stop in fact some of them increased. These deficit figures have been hovering around about the £10,000 a year mark now for four years and that is not sustainable. But we have started to turn the corner, Riffhams income is starting to get back

to what it was before, likewise Scout Shop sales have started to pick-up. Nevertheless, the stark fact is that income level has dropped £40,000 over the past 4 years, such that our available cash is now fast approaching the figure that we have set as our strategic reserve (£66,000). And although the accounts say we have cash funds of £94,000 strictly speaking £17,000 of those belong to Explorer Units. We have set in-train an action plan looking at all of these things and asking if there more income generation possibilities that we would explore. But this must be without impacting too severely on the prime role of the Executive to protect the District's assets whilst at the same time offering a vibrant programme to our young people. One of the immediate actions that we regrettably feel that we must take is the introduction of a small District levy of £3.00 a year per young person. We hope this is going to be a temporary arrangement whilst we take action to re-balance the District finances.

The Annual Report and Accounts were **approved**

### **DCs Annual Review for the year 2021/2022.**

**Leanne** – The dreaded Covid word – still impacted on our Scouting experience unfortunately – however Chelmsford once again successfully rose to the challenge. We continued to embrace virtual scouting (virtual St George's Day) before being able to move to the Out of Scouting.

We hope you're proud of your achievements – both through your work with our adults and our Young People.

During this period, We put the Out in Scouting both when we had no choice and when we did.

From Squirrels to Network we offered and took part in activities ranging from abseiling to zorbing with sports days, hikes, colour runs, outdoor crafts, handicraft competitions, camping challenges, family activity afternoons, High Street Flash Mob with Cub Scouts with about 100 cubs who came out and danced in uniform and in front of the public, and much much more in between.

It was amazing to see the nights away numbers, unsurprisingly you really did embrace the out in scouting as soon as the green light was given - camps were underway. Offering 340 nights away in total across the district.

Throughout the year we have had the jubilee challenge running and the badge is now being produced for those that have taken part from the winning design.

Riffhams opened their working party to the Explorer section – who learnt and used new practical skills.

Our first Squirrel Drey opened at 8th Chelmsford – a massive challenge and well supported

Network relaunched - they have helped at a handful of events within the district and are taking part in various activities when meeting weekly. Please do remember to ask them for help when planning events. Promote this section within your Groups. We are hoping that as this section grows in both numbers and confidence, they will be the future leaders of our District.

Whilst there weren't many opportunities for our ASU to support the District in this period, they did offer their services when asked to assist at section events etc and held a couple of social BBQs. They are keen to support as and when possible. Please ask.

There were a handful of District events held for the adults, ranging from afternoon tea at Riffhams to the Ball at Chelmsford Cathedral.

Gang show returned, when we held our audition day in October with weekly rehearsals commencing directly afterwards. Whilst our numbers didn't grow, the confidence of our cast and crew did; the expression of interest in our next show has been very positive.

World Jamboree - A successful international selection day was held at Riffhams, and we now have Scouts and Explorers and Leaders going on the 3 international trips to Korean, USA and Jersey.

All groups are now up and running, but not every group is currently able to run at full capacity. We do know that we have groups who still need Leaders, and we are hoping that the new volunteer journey will make volunteering more appealing. More details of this will follow as soon as HQ make this available.

With recruitment in mind, we attended fresher's fayre at Writtle University, had a stall in the town centre to promote Chelmsford Scouts and run 2 media campaigns. Resulting in a small number of volunteers being put in contact with Groups.

We want to thank each and every one of you for once again giving the time, commitment, and hard work for the benefit of our Young People and your fellow Adult volunteers. You truly are amazing.

Leanne then presented a couple of awards. To Chris Dear – 25 years certificate and Stuart Collett – GSL Wood Badge. Lastly, the loss this year of two stalwart District Scouters was acknowledged – Bill Hamblin (former Deputy DC) and Sidney (Nobby) Bass (former ADC Venture Scouts).

### **To Receive the District Commissioner's nomination for District Chairman**

Roger Cole was nominated by the DC's and was **re-appointed**.

### **Result of Election of District Officers: -**

#### **District Secretary – Rick Balding**

(No other nominations received) **Duly elected.**

#### **District Treasurer – David Clarke**

(No other nominations received) **Duly elected.**

Thanks were expressed to Sandy Wilson for all the support he had given in helping manage our District finances during the past year.

### **To Note the results of Election of 3 members to the District Executive Committee**

The following nominations had been received:

Malcolm Taylor (Chair 1<sup>st</sup> Broomfield)  
Andrew Missen (15<sup>th</sup> Chelmsford Scouts)  
Chris Harpley (Riffhams campsite Manager)

No other nominations received and thus these 3 were **duly elected**.

Roger commented that the Exec were keen for a younger member (18-25 years) to join them and asked members to enquire in their respective Groups if anyone might be interested. He also suggested that the Riffhams Campsite Manager should be a co-opted post in the future given that Riffhams was a major income generator for the District.

### **To note the District Commissioner's Nomination to the District Executive Committee**

Nicola Hills (Danbury Cubs)  
Danyel Horner (Deputy District Commissioner Youth programme)  
Stephanie Bendall (Monster ESU)

Thanks were expressed to Sandy Wilson and Peter Wilkes who had both stood down from the Executive Committee.

### **Election of Group Scouters to represent the District on the County Scout Council**

Kris Reynolds agreed to continue with this role.

### **To note the Appointment of the District President**

Richard Oscroft was **reappointed** as District President.

### **Appointment of an Independent Examiner for 2022/2023**

Community 360 have been our Independent Examiners for the past 7 years and have proved to be very professional. Proposed by Chris Dear and seconded by Richard Oscroft that they continue as our Independent Examiners. **Accepted**

### **Amendment to CDSC Constitution**

To add the following wording to the Constitution to allow for Zoom meetings and electronic voting: *"The District Executive Committee can meet by video conference as well as face to face to discharge their responsibilities. Electronic voting (such as via email) is allowed for decision making when deemed appropriate by the Chair. In such instances at least 75% of the Executive must approve the decision"* **Approved**.

### **Jan Dear (Deputy County Commissioner for Training and Development)**

Jan commented that it's good to see that the membership is increasing once again after Covid and understands the problem we have in retaining our adults. She pointed out about

the transformation of Scouting coming next year and this has been brought around by talking to people who have left the organisation in the last two years and asking why they left and what could we do to make it better. One comment that came out from a parent was .....” if you asked me to be a Leader my answer will be No, but if you asked me to run a craft evening, to cook at a camp, to wrap up that some presents, to cut out some stuff for a craft evening, then I'll probably say Yes. This is one of the reasons why we need to think about volunteering differently and isn't it better to have your 24 parents each doing one thing rather than trying to rely on one adult to be at every meeting. She urged people to go onto the testing hub and put your opinions about the various changes because without your feedback they're not going get this right for all our volunteers. On behalf of all the young people from Chelmsford and all the members of the Essex County Scout Council she thanked the District for the contribution to making wonderful experiences for our young people.

### **Councillor John Galley (Mayor of the City of Chelmsford)**

Councillor Galley (a former Cub and Scout in South Woodford) thanked us for the invitation and said how honoured he was to attend our AGM. One thing that struck him when he walked in was how excited everybody seems at being together again. He spoke to the youngsters that are going to South Korea next summer and they seem all geared up for it already and have been doing lots of things in advance. He had expected a degree of apprehension amongst Leaders having gone through covid and lock downs with everybody thinking “where do we go from here”? But it's not evident this evening that we are already planning ahead. He noted that everything in Chelmsford Scouting was in good shape and that our ambition is phenomenal. He really felt that our enthusiasm is what keeps us going, plus our teamwork, and finished by acknowledging we had lost money during Covid. But he added “whilst I'm not a betting man, I'm sure you'll get your finances back in shape and make an even bigger contribution to your assets in a couple of years” He concluded with his congratulations to everybody, “well done and keep looking forward and upward, and you will continue to be successful. Thank you everybody for what you do for our young people in Chelmsford”.

### **Closing Remarks**

Roger finished the meeting with a quote from our Founder “the only way to do great work is to love what you do”. He thanked our guests and all members of the Scout Council for their attendance, plus the Executive Committee for their hard work this year. We've got much work ahead of us and we will be tackling that but with the continued support of all of you who love this great game of Scouting. He thanked the WSJ South Korea 2023 team who had provided the evening's refreshments

Signed :- \_\_\_\_\_

Date :- \_\_\_\_\_