

**AGM Minutes**  
**Tuesday 5th February 2019 - 17.30 to 18.30**  
**Chartham Park Golf & Country Club**

Present: Lee Farren CEO  
Kate Bennett, Business Manager  
Samantha West, Marketing Administrator  
Margaret de Jong, Pertinax  
Roger Martell  
Margaret Martell  
Norman Webster, Councillor  
Rex Whittaker, Mayor  
Stuart Scholes  
Philip de Jong  
John Belsey, GolfGuard  
Martin Robinson, Blackland Farm  
Tim Thompson, Imberhorne School  
Nikki Burch, Imberhorne School  
Robert Bliss, The Tasting Rooms  
Jonathan Woodhead, Jon Woodhead & Associates  
Jon Cornell, Metro Bank  
Lucinda Howard, Arthur Hayes Opticians  
Sharon Callery, Buss Murton Law  
Dick Rowberry, EG & District Assoc. For Mental Health  
Fiona Humphreys, Hindleap  
Francoise Inman, East Grinstead Museum  
John Bardsley, Intermedia  
Peter Robinson, Robinson Elliott Surveyors  
Carol Everest, Everest Events

Apologies: Fiona Bowers  
Nick Blythe  
Charmaine Hallmark  
Barney Durrant,  
Judy Theobald  
Bob Russell  
Julia Beckett  
Jonathan Ash-Edwards  
Christina Bassett  
Elaine McGloin

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**CEO's Address**

Lee thanked everyone for taking the time to come and join us for this evening. Sir Nicholas Soames send his best wishes, but unfortunately cannot make this evening as he normally does, due to something important going on in Government???

Lee also thanked Chartham Park for offering their wonderful facilities for this evening and being a very active member. During the evening, to save a mouthful, he will refer to the Association as EGBA. Remember #EGBA. Not to be confused with the European Gaming and Betting Association.

As an Association we are a small team that work out of my office 2 to 3 days a week. Unlike other Associations, we have a postal address, phone number and happy staff to answer this.

Lee would like to thank his team, thank you Kate our Business Manager, for her support and hard work. Walking and talking to businesses in town, keeping members happy and recruiting new members.

Thank you to Fiona, for all her hard work last year as Marketing Administrator. Happy to say that she has now joined us on the Executive Committee and is member with Hindleap. We have a new marketing administrator, Sam, who sends out our Newsletters, chases for invoices and various other activities.

These guys keep Lee in check in the office and are the real nuts and bolts behind EGBA, and we do have a laugh along the way, whilst he works!!

### **Treasurer's Report**

Lee thanked Judy who has been our Treasurer for over a year. Sadly, work commitments has meant that she has had to stand down from the role. We are lucky enough now to welcome Margaret de Jong as our new Treasurer.

Margaret explained that she had just taken over last week and did not have much to say. She would be following the structure that Roger Martell had set up as it worked very well. She said she was there to support and if required, improve.

Stuart Scholes asked if there was anything from the accounts that strikes as disturbing? Margaret answered no not that she could see and that the 2019 Budget needed to be discussed a little more and there may be some improvements in the year, but she would look at that as she went along. At the moment the reserves were around £19k.

Tim Thompson asked as we were part of Gatwick Diamond, could we grab more money?

Lee Farren explained that we had looked at this, but we were a non-profit organisation. We had looked at the grants and received what we were due. Kate Bennett said that there were specific projects for the grants. John Belsey asked what were the ideal reserves? Lee said that we had discussed this in the Executive Committee Meetings and we will discuss some more and decide what this should be. We have sponsored the Young Enterprise Scheme at

Imberhorne. We will look at utilising some of the funds to give back to the Town. Lee thanked Margaret.

## **CEO Report**

Lee Farren said that East Grinstead is a thriving town, a wide variety of businesses in size and what they do. Wide range of types of businesses large employers like the Caravan & Motorhome Club, High Street retail, venues, charities and everything in between. We are a similar size to Haywards Heath, but we have more tourism. At the present moment we have 127 members. We have had 22 new members join last year and lost around 20 members. The most common reason for dropping out is that they haven't attended any of the meetings. The EGBA have embraced the digital age. We are working on blogging events and promoting on social media FB and Twitter. We have 163 followers on FB and 770 on Twitter. It is just a problem with time, of keeping it all updated. Always looking for contributors to both.

We have had around 15,000 hits on our website. We also run Visit EG along with the Tourist Office and backed by the Council. As a member you have a raised listing and it is authoritative. Visit EG has had over 100,000 hits. We work hard at having good ties with both Mid-Sussex Council and West Sussex Council.

We are lucky enough to have the support of Norman Webster as our Mid-Sussex representative. Norman also writes Norman's Notes every month which are published on our website, which are always good to read. Norman is very supportive of our organisation.

## **Re-election of Committee Members**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Seconded</b>
Fiona Humphreys	Stuart Scholes	Tim Thompson
Fiona Bewers	Lee Farren	Stuart Scholes
Nick Blythe	Kate Bennett	Lee Farren
Charmaine Hallmark	Margaret de Jong	Lee Farren
Elaine McGloin	Lee Farren	Philip de Jong
Stuart Scholes	Lee Farren	Kate Bennett
Rex Whittaker	Lee Farren	Philip de Jong

## **Election of New Committee Members**

Lee thanked Barney Durrant and Bob Russell for all their hard work and said that they had now decided to stand down.

<b>New Members</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Seconded</b>
Tim Thompson	Lee Farren	Stuart Scholes
Philip de Jong	Stuart Scholes	Kate Bennett

## Re-appoint Officers

Officers	Proposed	Seconded
Lee Farren, CEO	Stuart Scholes	Philip de Jong
Kate Bennett, Business Manager	Tim Thompson	Lee Farren
Samantha West, Marketing Admin	Lee Farren	Kate Bennett
Margaret de Jong, Treasurer	Lee Farren	Tim Thompson

## Review 2018

Lee said that it has been a very busy year with two networking events a month. These events were very informal, no hard sell, they brought everyone together. The Drink and Meet at La Farola was always popular. Thank you to La Farola for hosting and for the lovely food they put on. We started the year with a great Buzz Meeting at Imberhorne School and the Young Enterprise Scheme. We would like to thank Waitrose for providing the refreshments. Waitrose are also members. We then had Buzz Meetings hosted by Paella Fella, April. May it was Cook, June the Tennis Club. Thank you to Sir Nicholas Soames for arranging the visit to the Houses of Parliament in July. We were lucky enough to have tickets for the Public Gallery. Kate said that she had asked that we could do this again this year. Lee said then followed the Bluebell Railway in August, Crown Plaza September and a great Buzz at DevAssist in November.

Lee said that as part of being the Town Promotions Committee they had worked on the Big Reveal, which was getting bigger every year. The Christmas Fayre, working closely with Margaret and Roger Martell.

Lee said that himself and Kate had met with Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath Business Associations and were forging closer links with them. In April Kate judged at the Young Enterprise, which we sponsor. Network Rail contacted us regarding rail disruptions. It didn't affect us in East Grinstead, so he put them in touch with Haywards Heath.

In July, we joined up with Haywards Heath Business Association for a Pimms Evening. In September, we had a stand at the Mid-Sussex Business Expo at Ardingly. Lee was asked with Rex to open the new Travelodge. In November Elaine laid a wreath on Remembrance Day.

Lee said that Stuart and Nick had been having meeting with West Sussex with regards to parking issues within the town. We supported the Mayor with his Sports and Music Quizzes, though we didn't do very well in either. Our Christmas Bash raffle raised nearly £300 for our charity Age UK.

## Year Ahead

Lee said that we will continue with the Meet and Greet at La Farola. That we wanted to grow this and members are welcome to come along for an informal chat and to bring their colleagues and friends with businesses within the area.

We have some Buzz Meetings already lined up. In February we have the Football Club and then later in the year, Hindleap, Centre for Sight and the Rugby Club. We will also be looking at another visit to the Houses of Parliament. Kate said that this had to be booked six months in advance.

Lee said we have agreed to increase the sponsorship to the Young Enterprise Scheme, Imberhorne. Tim Thompson said that it was being judged on 20th March and would know how Imberhorne had done then.

Lee said that we were looking at working more closely with Sackville. We would like them to become more involved. So important working with our schools as these were our next generation of employees or employers. We shall also look at working with the local primary schools, which there are 10 of.

Lee announced that we are looking forward to supporting our new charity, East Grinstead & District Association of Mental Health (EGDAMH). We have Dick Rowberry here, Dick would you like to say a few words?

Dick said that the Charity was founded in 1952. Mental Health had not been recognised as a big issue until recently. We offer as a small charity, art, sports and conservation. We hand out small grants, help with taxis to and from our events. 1 in 4 of us will be at risk of mental health. We try to develop relationships at our coffee mornings. We find it very therapeutic for a cup of tea and a chat. Any money you raise will be put towards the following:-

1. Starting a coffee club, having chats. A lot of those who are on meds find it difficult to get out.
2. Young Minds initiative, we want to help in schools with mental health.
3. A Music Group, which is good for mental health.

Tim Thompson suggested that the Coffee Morning be called the Cake Club as everyone loves cake and these are the most successful coffee mornings within parishes. Dick said that cake and cookies would be offered.

It will be held at Chequer's Mead Community Centre as this is easily accessible for most people.

Lee said that we had kindly been given a grant by the Town Council to further develop VEG. It needed a total refurbishment. We wanted to encourage businesses to utilise our websites for themselves. We had started the first phase by sending out a link whereby you can post any events or member to member offers. VEG has lots of hits. Stuart asked how many? Lee said that he would look at the demographics and let Stuart know. We would like to stay busy, please come to our events and encourage others.

### **Any Other Business**

Kate Bennett said talking about engaging schools, Sackville are having an event on 7th March 4.30 to 7pm. They need businesses to talk to pupils and explain how they got into what they do, what qualifications they need to get. From personal experience Kate said she knew what a difference it has made going to Imberhorne School and getting involved.

Stuart thanked Lee for all his hard work and his continuing support as CEO of EGBA.

Lee said thank you and the meeting closed at 7pm.