MAYFIELD COMMUNITY BENEFIT SOCIETY LIMITED

Unapproved Minutes

Annual Members Meeting 25 November 2025
held at Colkins Mill Church, Station Road, Mayfield at 7pm

Chair: Andrew Ratcliffe

Present: 26 members in person and 13 by proxy, 8 supporters in attendance

Introduction

1. Andrew Ratcliffe, the Chair observed that a quorum of members was present and opened the meeting.

Operations report

2. Jo Eates, Postmaster reported on the Society's operations and plans for current year and following year.

3. Jo reported on the early recruitment of additional staff after the reopening in November 2024 which enabled the extension of opening hours to 9am until 5.30pm on weekdays and 9am to 3pm on Saturdays. Unfortunately there had been turnover of staff, for personal reasons, and two new members of the team were now in training. Jo explained the complexity of the Post Office and courier systems which meant this was an extended process.

4. Jo reported that the Society has not been successful in becoming an EVRI branch, due to EVRI's wish to limit the number of outlets, but that she continues to press the Society's case.

5. Jo commented on the expanded rage of non-post office goods now stocked: a good range of cards (including the Mayfieldian Christmas cards) Goodlookers reading glasses and Cosy Soft throws. Services include: photocopying, printing and laminating, and a collection point for old printer ink cartridges for MAYFACS. The photo booth installed during the year is used regularly for passport and driving licence photos. New services are being added:

- The post office will become a drop off point for Mobile Galaxy, a phone shop in Heathfield. Mobile phones and tablets that need repair can be left at the post office and collected when the work has been done, saving a journey. Some of Mobile Galaxy's range of chargers and other accessories may be stocked in future.
- Conversations are in train with Timpson's with a view to installing one of their key cutting machines in the New Year.

6. Jo concluded by inviting thoughts and ideas for other goods or services that it would be useful for the post office to offer. A member asked if it would be possible to drop off shoes to be repaired by Timpson's and it was agreed that this would be investigated

Finance report

7. Andrew presented the Annual Report and the Financial Statements for the period to 30 June 2025, which had been sent to members on 2 October, and reported on the Society's financial plans for current year and following year.

8. Andrew noted that the financial statements include some items which will not recur: £23,560 of single donations as part of the initial fundraising and £12,827 of costs to establish the Society and the new premises. Making allowance for these items changes the surplus of £4,752 in the income statement to a deficit of £5,981.

9. Andrew explained that this effective deficit was mainly due to lower commissions because of the time to recover to previous levels of use of the post office. This had now been achieved. There were also additional staff costs as new members of the team were trained. However, the successful offer for shares and invitation for donations meant that the Society still finished the year in a strong financial position with cash of over £37,000, so its ability to keep going was not in doubt.

10. In answer to a member's question, Andrew confirmed that, subject to the matters above, the Society's business model was as expected at the time of the Fundraising Document. Another member asked how long the lease of the post office's premises was. Andrew replied that it is five years and recorded the Society's thanks to Ted Handley, its landlord.

11. Andrew expressed the Society's gratitude to all those who subscribed for shares, who had made donations or who continue to make donations. He recalled that the Fundraising Document said that subscribers for shares or donors of £1,000 or more would be acknowledged in the post office as Founders, unless they wanted to stay anonymous. The Founders Board, which will be displayed in the post office, was revealed.

12. Andrew said that commissions from Post Office Limited were expected to grow to around £25,000 in the current year and other sales to grow to around £17,000 but noted that, as explained by Jo, the turnover of staff had meant additional training costs. It was expected that there would be a small deficit for the year as a whole, but one that was within the Society's financial resources.

13. Beyond next year, Andrew reported on the strategic plan of Post Office Limited, which is supported by a Government Green paper, to increase commissions by 60% by 2030. If this is implemented and evenly distributed, it will increase the Society's commissions to around £40,000 per year which would turn its deficits into surpluses.

Membership report

14. Andrew reported on the state of the membership and membership strategy.

15. Andrew noted that, in the Fundraising Document, the Society had stated its intention to apply for the Share Offer to be eligible under the Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme. This application has now been made the outcome is awaited.

16. Andrew reported that there had been one death among the membership and paid tribute to Tim Cornish as an early supporter of the Society. Under the Rules of the Society, shares become repayable on the death of a member; but the beneficiaries of Tim Cornish's will have agreed to donate the proceeds of that withdrawal to the Society and Andrew expressed his gratitude to them.

17. There are no current plans for a further share offer.

Formal Business

18. Andrew proposed the following resolutions:

- to receive the Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Society for the period to 30 June 2025; this was carried unanimously.
- to apply the exemption from the requirement for audit to the Society for the year ending 30 June 2026 in accordance with Section 84 of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014; this was carried with no votes against and one abstention.
- to reappoint the Honorary Independent Examiner, Gill Marenghi, for the year ending 30 June 2026; a member asked what work the Examiner did and how this compared to a full audit; Andrew replied that the Examiner had had full access to all the Society's accounting records, supporting vouchers and bank statements but had not, to his knowledge, carried out any independent validation work; the resolution was carried unanimously.

19. Andrew expressed the Society's thanks to Gill Marenghi for agreeing to carry out the examination on an honorary basis.

Conclusion

20. The meeting was closed at 7.30pm.

Minutes approved

Chair……………………………………………………………

Date……………………………………………………………