

Framlingham Business Association

AGM: Wednesday 20th September 2023 – Draft Minutes

Present (at Framlingham Technology Centre):

Lily Benbow (FBA Chair) – Noble Prawn Ltd

Lisa Hamon (Treasurer) – LA Global Management

Jenny Labbett (FBA Management Committee) – Renaissance Training; Jenny Labbett Computer Services

Ruth Leigh (Speaker and FBA Member) – Ruth Leigh Writes

Allan Williams (FBA Member) – AW Artworks

Becki Garrod (FBA Member) – Suffolk Sense; Rebecca's Reflexology and Wellness

Claire Rowell (FBA Member) – Claire Rowell Financial Planning; Councillor, Framlingham Town Council

Jenny Stockman (Guest) - Seckford Education Trust

Steve McDowell (Guest) – Councillor, Framlingham Town Council

Vivia Bamford – Framlingham Library

Dawn Jeakings (Guest) – Framlingham Retail and Business Event Co-ordinator

Jacqueline – FBA Secretary and Association Co-ordinator

Apologies:

Danny B (FBA Vice Chair) - TSG

Keith Snowdon (FBA Management Committee) – Keith Snowdon Web Design Ltd

Steve Calver (FBA Management Committee) – SR Epic Sound and Lighting

Rebecca Winn (FBA Member) – Winthinking People Development

Meeting Chaired by Lily Benbow, FBA Chair. Meeting Commenced at 5.40pm

Attendees were noted and apologies given and accepted.

Attendees were all invited to introduce themselves.

1. Review of the Year



Annual Report 2022/2023

Current committee

Lily Benbow	Chair and committee member, Chair appointment June 2023
Danny Bannister	Vice Chair and committee member, Vice Chair appointment June 2023
Lisa Hamon	Treasurer
Jenny Labbett	Committee member
Keith Snowdon	Committee member
Kelvin Gibbs	Committee member, Resigned January 2023
Jacqueline Ward	Secretary

Annual Report

FBA Chair Lily Benbow (LB) said it had been an interesting year for FBA. LB had joined the committee after the previous AGM when things had been quieter due to covid. FBA had been running for a while without a full time Chair, the role had been shared by the committee but needed the focus and direction of a Chair and Vice Chair in post. Meetings were productive and enthusiastic, but the practicalities had been more difficult. LB has learned about what and how things have been done in the past and looked at what FBA needs to do to move forward positively from that base.

Late Spring had seen LB elected Chair and Danny Bannister Vice Chair, they have met to discuss their vision and had shared their ideas with the rest of the committee. There has been a lot of energy around this, and LB thanked those who have shown energy in the past too. DB was unavoidably away on business for the AGM but is very keen to engage and work with the businesses in the town and wider area. FBA will work to attract new committee members to further increase new ideas and energy.

FBA supported a Window competition for Galafest and is happy to do more of this. FBA are keen to strengthen their link with Framlingham Town Council and were involved in the paper sift for their new Framlingham Retail and Business Event Co-ordinator. LB and DB will meet again soon with Dawn Jeakings, the successful candidate who has wide experience and expertise, to move forward with ideas while also working on FBA priorities. LB asked that if FTC need FBA support to just ask. There will be open dialogue and mutual support, not everything will work or be possible, but communication is important as Dawn looks at what is needed and shares information.

It has been agreed that meetings will be cut back to bi-monthly meetings for committee to free time to focus on plans, this may change as things move forward.

One key area will be more engaged social media for FBA and its members. FBA have been more active on social media in the last year, with stats showing significant increase in reach. The FBA admin is retiring and the funding for FBA social media is limited so FBA have decided to create a new streamlined role that will cover both administration and social media, the recruitment process has begun.

The appointment of a new administrator will see the social media role increase, although meanwhile social media would be a little quieter. LB asked that people share and comments on FBA social media. Members will be invited to spotlight their business. FBA are keen to share the breadth of expertise, experience, and the connections that we all have.

ACTION: Members present agreed to send in their information for the spotlight.

FBA had 48 members during the 2022 – 2023 membership year. Currently 20 members have renewed or joined, the renewal process continues. FBA continue to work on increasing engagement

and membership. LB and DB have plans to meet businesses in person, including at networking, and to encourage membership which would also increase income and allow FBA to do more.

FBA continued to produce a regular emailed newsletter for members, this posts member and local news, and signposts information from other organisations including for events, training, and grants.

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ACTION: Members present agreed to send in their information for the spotlight.

LB had received support for her business form government funded MENTA who are happy to support a relevant FBA event in Framlingham, likely to be in Spring 2024. LB recommended businesses look at the MENTA website and networking, FBA also signpost to how it benefits the business community both new and existing. Discussion about old links with Suffolk Chamber of Commerce and Suffolk Coast Business followed and two names given as potential contacts.

ACTION: LB to consider contact with Suffolk Chamber.

2.Consideration of FBA Accounts and current balances

BALANCE SHEET 1st September 2022 to 31st August 2023

INCOME

TOTAL FOR YEAR	£3640.01
INTEREST ON SAVINGS	£24.00

TOTAL INCOME	<u>£3664.01</u>
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EXPENDITURE

TOTAL FOR YEAR	£-4839.98
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TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>£-4839.98</u>
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PROFIT/LOSS	£1175.97
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Bank Account Movement

1st SEPTEMBER 2022

COMMUNITY ACCOUNT	£ 1354.13
SAVINGS ACCOUNT	£ 6626.88

TOTAL	<u>£7981.01</u>
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31st AUGUST 2023

COMMUNITY ACCOUNT	£159.16
SAVINGS ACCOUNT	£6140.88
TOTAL	<u>£6300.04</u>

Submitted by Lisa Hamon, Treasurer
September 2023

NB Ring fenced amounts are held within the FBA accounts.

LH gave an overview of the balance sheet, highlighting the loss over the year and that FBA income comes mostly from its members, membership growth is therefore critical to FBA. During the year a previously agreed (pre-Covid) £1K sponsorship of The Great Framlingham Sausage Festival had been made and FBA social media had been a further expense. Networking had been revived and continued monthly, thanks to £500 sponsorship from FBA Members Fairweather Law.

FBA has two bank accounts, a Current Account and a Saver Account which is now attracting a higher interest rate applied quarterly rather than bi-annually as in the past. FBA has ring fenced amounts, some remaining from grants, money remaining for networking, and a small amount left for a Heritage Open Day event.

A spreadsheet highlighting monthly income and expenditure item breakdown was available at the meeting in the AGM pack and available on request by members.

LH highlighted the benefit of networking going 'on the road' to go to the businesses who can't always come to us, with a very successful event held in August at Suffolk Sense in Wickham Market. It is hoped to continue with this, LH commenting that if anyone knows of suitable venues that won't eat into FBA funds the committee would be interested to hear about it.

LH asked if there were any questions.

3.Retirement and Election of Management Committee

The Management Committee stood down.

Kelvin Gibbs had retired from FBA early 2023 due to retirement. He had been sent a card and small gift in thanks; he has contacted FBA to give his thanks.

Lisa Hamon has already expressed interest in going back on the Management Committee, and to remaining FBA Treasurer.

Keith Snowdon has expressed his willingness to remain on the FBA Committee in advance of the AGM.

Jenny Labbett expressed willingness to remain on the FBA Committee.

Steve Calver was unable to attend the AGM and will be contacted to confirm he wishes to be on the FBA Committee.

Lily Benbow expressed willingness to remain as FBA Chair.

Danny Bannister unable to attend but had expressed willingness to remain as FBA Vice Chair in advance of the AGM.

Jacqueline Ward resigned from the FBA Secretary role.

There had been no other applications of nominations from FBA members.

A vote by those present and eligible to vote took place for each person willing to be on the Committee or in a specific role. All candidates were successful.

The FBA Management Committee for the 2023-24 membership year are Lily Benbow, Danny Bannister, Jenny Labbett, Keith Snowdon, and Lisa Hamon, with Steve Calver to be confirmed.

The committee expressed their pleasure on remaining on the FBA. There are opportunities for any FBA members to join the FBA committee during the current membership year.

ACTION: JW to contact SC about him staying on the FBA committee.

NB – SC officially confirmed by email on 12th October he wishes to still be on the FBA Committee for the 2023-2024 membership year.

ACTION: JW to agenda the vacant Secretary position.

4.Subscriptions

To formally confirm the management committee had discussed the annual £60 FBA membership fee and agreed it at the July Meeting, the renewal process now in progress.

ACTION: JW to send out reminders as appropriate.

5. FBA Events

FBA ran a Best Dressed Window competition for Framlingham GalaFest, sponsored and decorated a tree at the FOSM Christmas Tree Festival, encouraged the small Christmas trees display around town, and was one of the sponsors of the 2022 Great Framlingham Sausage Festival.

FBA Networking is held at a central location and is sponsored by members Fairweather Law. It has attracted energy and has been growing with good connections and contacts made by attendees. One event had successfully been held on-the-road in Wickham Market. An A board has been purchased to make finding the event venues easier.

It has been agreed that there needs to be stronger communication about the networking to highlight those benefits for attendees. The networking is open to both members and non-members, it has been hoped that attendees will see the value and join FBA - this has already happened in number of cases. LB would encourage people to pop in, even for just a few minutes.

6. Any Other Business

LH highlighted 'Pawsitivity', a fundraiser for Suffolk Libraries. FBA Member Allan Williams had designed one of the dog statues on display in a Suffolk Library, VB highlighting they had hosted one of the dogs at Framlingham Library. On October 12th FBA member Clarke and Simpson would be holding a fundraising auction of the artwork

ACTION: JW to highlight in the FBA newsletter.

JW is retiring from the admin role and committee, she was thanked by the FBA Chair and Management Committee and was presented with a card, gift and flowers. JW thanked everyone.

7. Speaker – Ruth Leigh of Ruth Leigh Writes

Ruth Leigh gave a very entertaining, funny, and thought-provoking talk, including what we thought our individual superpower was. Ruth explained what had led to her writing career many years after telling people that she was going to be a writer when she was a child.

Her career has included working on content and blogs for the charity sector and for small Suffolk businesses, she offers commercial writing, a critiquing service and public speaking. You can find out more on her website at - <https://www.ruthleighwrites.co.uk/about-ruth-leigh>

Ruth worked hard over 15 years to build up her freelancing work but when Covid hit much of her work dried up. However, the time allowed her to write something light-hearted on a national blog that ultimately, with publisher encouragement, led to a book called "The Diary of Isabella M Smugge". This has been followed by 2 more books in the series and a forth due to be published, she has also written a book exploring some of Jane Austen's very minor characters in Pride and Prejudice.

Ruth concluded her talk after time given for questions from the audience.

FBA Chair Lily Benbow thanked Ruth for her excellent talk.

Ruth's books were on display and proved a good draw.

8. Close

The AGM closed at 7pm, Chair Lily Benbow thanked everyone for attending.