

The Friends of Briantspuddle Post Office and Shop Association Ltd

Notes of Committee meeting held on 3 March 2025 at Cruck Cottage

Present: Peter Head (Chair), Richard Killer, Peter Martin (Treasurer), Chris Miller, Jo Neudegg, Cindy Read and Lesley Wilcox (Secretary).

1. **Apologies for absence:** none required.
2. **Notes of last meeting on 20.1.25:** approved.
3. **Election of Officers**

The following appointments were confirmed;

Chair – Peter Head, Vice Chair – Richard Killer, Treasurer – Peter Martin, Secretary – Lesley Wilcox

There was likely to be a big problem in filling the post of Treasurer as Peter M was planning to move from the village during the year. Various ideas were discussed; the first step was to publicise this in the community to see if someone else would volunteer. The cost of a professional bookkeeper or accountant undertaking the work was likely to be in the region of £1,000. Against a background of a profit last year of £700 this would be a significant overhead. It was hoped that Peter would be able to continue to the end of the financial year.

Lesley also confirmed that she intended to step down from the Committee at the next AGM.

4. Treasurer's Report

Profit had decreased every month in the current FY with February showing a loss. However, this was the usual annual pattern and it was expected that sales would pick up approaching Easter when the holiday season brought an increasing number of visitors to the area. Margins were holding up and overheads remained flat. Re margin by category for the biggest items – newspapers were a little lower but this could be due to the timing of payments, Sainsburys and F&V remained good. Most categories were 10-15%. Re cashflow, there was nearly £1,000 more in the bank than at the end of the last FY.

VAT is chargeable once turnover reaches £90k. As the shop's turnover for 2024/5 was £70k this is not an immediate problem.

5. AGM follow-up

There was less feedback than last year, all positive. However, it was agreed that it would be useful to have had more discussion in the hope of gaining more useful information from the floor. Next year's AGM would be more widely publicised in the hope of increasing the number of attendees.

There were some ideas for calendar themes. A decision was necessary by the end of April so would be made at the next meeting.

6. Replacement for Postmistress

Eve, Richard and Lesley had met with the PO Area Manager, Giles Hewson on 30.1.25. Whilst he had been very informative and open about the situation, he had confirmed that the PO would not help in finding a replacement for Eve. If a suitable replacement could not be found the PO might provide an Outreach service for a few hours a week. Otherwise, our PO would be closed. A leaflet had been delivered to each household in the Parish (except Waddock Cross) explaining the position and asking for any volunteers to come forward. One person had done so and, as a first step, will discuss the duties with Eve.

7. Volunteers and operations

Nothing to report other than one person had volunteered to help with the F&V collection on Wednesday.

8. Step into shop

It was hoped that the work would be undertaken within the next couple of months once the weather improved.

9. Working group with other parish organisations

The first meeting had explored potential projects. Leonora Sheppard represented the shop and PO.

10. Steve Smith's retirement

The collection for a retirement present was going well. It was planned to hold a small presentation on a Saturday morning to coincide with the Coffee Shop. Lesley will contact Steve's family to make arrangements.

11. Security

Possible responses to any incident in the shop were discussed. To be discussed again at the next meeting.

12 Any Other Business

- i. It was agreed to purchase a new stand for the shop to hold the F&V currently in boxes on the floor.
- ii. The idea of holding a raffle to boost shop funds had been discussed at a previous meeting. However, it had been agreed not to go ahead. The idea was discussed again and it was agreed that, subject to confirmation re the cost of the licence, we would do this but with the profits going to a charity.
- iii. Consider holding a 'thank you' event for all volunteers. To be discussed at the next meeting.

13. Dates of next meeting

Mondays – 14 April, 7 July and 8 September 2025.

Lesley Wilcox

Secretary