Goole Civic Society Annual General Meeting, April 29th 2020

` `

**Chair’s Report**

Goole Civic Society has completed its landmark first year as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), which has allowed us to trade and raise funds. We have done this successfully with our calendars and DVDs and, as the Treasurer reports, we have a healthy balance in the bank account and will remain sustainable despite the Coronavirus impact.

Our efforts in working for the local community were recognised with an invitation to join the Goole Town Deal Board, where we sit alongside our MP Andrew Percy and senior figures from the local authority, our two Local Enterprise Partnerships, Goole Town Council and major businesses in the area. The aim is to negotiate a Town Deal with the Government, attracting funding of up to £25m plus other funding from the private sector and other pots.

Highlights of the last year are:

**Calendar competition**

The calendar competition and launch was a major focus for the year. We sold out our first print run of 200 calendars and had a further 75 printed, making a profit of just over £500.

It was also a success in terms of publicity, both through the Goole Times and social media.

We had excellent collaboration from Goole Library and Goole Museum. The library sold calendars and DVDs and displayed a selection of pictures by calendar winners and runners-up for three months, supporting the sales campaign. The library is keen to market any other merchandise we can produce.

The museum hosted a very successful launch day, attended by the entrants and families as well as local dignitaries. It featured a display of winning entries and provided refreshments for the launch. We are very grateful to librarian Hayley Nicholson and museum curator Debbie Hardy for all their help.

**Goole in Bloom**

Goole Civic Society joined 26 other organisations in putting together Goole in Bloom’s entry in the Yorkshire in Bloom awards 2019, which resulted in Goole receiving a Gold award.

Our contribution, along with the Goole WW1 Research Group, was a sign board and garden outside Goole Station. We also donated picture boards we had of old Goole street scenes for display on the Hull-bound platform and display stands for our books in the station ticket office. These have proved very popular.

I was invited to accompany the judges on their tour of the town and also attended the Yorkshire in Bloom awards ceremony at York Racecourse.

Following on from this, the Civic Society joined Goole in Bloom, the Lions and others to establish a constituted Friends of Goole Station group with £500 of seed-funding from Northern Rail. I am currently chair of this group.

**Goole Town Deal Board**

The nomination of Goole as one of 101 towns invited to negotiate a Town Deal, with up to £25m of Government funding, was a major boost for the town. A Town Deal Board has been established to define a vision and strategy for Goole and produce a Town Investment Plan and Town Deal proposal.

The Civic Society was invited to join the board to provide input on the built heritage aspects, which is an indication of our profile in the town. Others on the board include senior figures from the local authority, our two Local Enterprise Partnerships, Goole Town Council, Hull and Humber Chamber of Commerce and major businesses including Siemens, ABP, Croda, the Kerfoot Group and Jos Richardson and Son. The chair is Joseph Richardson and deputy Phil Jones, president of Hull and Humber Chamber of Commerce.

The first two meetings (one face-to-face and one virtual) have been very positive, with lots of enthusiasm, engagement and ideas, particularly from the big business figures. The Civic Society is acting as host for the virtual meetings using Microsoft Teams, which will continue throughout the Covid 19 emergency. We have been assured that Town Deal funding will still be available, indeed an important part of rebuilding after the pandemic. Our deadline for submission looks likely to be deferred until October.

**Planning**

The Goole Conservation Area Management and Maintenance Plan, to which the Civic Society contributed, was finally approved by East Riding councillors in February 2020. We look forward to seeing its contents put into action and the Conservation Area’s at-risk status removed.

Prior to that, in December 2019, we made an official complaint to East Riding Council about lack of protection and enhancement of the Conservation Area and requested that officers come to Goole to meet us and walk around the Conservation Area. We had a date in the diary but this has had to be postponed because of the Coronavirus lockdown.

We have objected to ABP’s plans to demolish the old Goole Shipyard buildings, although the demolition would come under permitted development. We applied to Historic England to have the buildings listed and requested that East Riding Council issue a notice to prevent demolition until this was considered. The Conservation Officer, Steve Devey, also determined that prior approval of the Council is required, as information was lacking in how protected species would be dealt with.

Unfortunately Historic England has turned down our listing application, although any further movement has been prevented by Coronavirus measures. We have made our point very clearly known to East Riding and ABP and are hoping that the plans may be reconsidered.

One brighter note is that work on reinstating the roofline on Chesham House in Hook Road was well under way when we went into lockdown in mid-March after a long campaign by the Civic Society.

We continue to lobby for the protection and enhancement of Aire Street.

**Market Hall**

Development of the Market Hall is likely to feature as part of the Town Deal proposal and the Town Council and all our East Riding Councillors are supportive.

We have backed two initiatives by the Town Council – one to re-establish a market and event space in the Market Hall and the other to establish a twice-weekly open market in the precinct. Both have stalled due to the Coronavirus emergency.

Following a unanimous vote of Civic Society members at the February 2020 meeting, we are pursuing our application to have the Market Hall designated as an Asset of Community Value.

**Blue Plaque**

The Civic Society has begun preparations for a Blue Plaque to Anne Greaves, a pioneering female quarry owner. It will be erected on the Royal Hotel in Aire Street later in the year.

**YHACS**

The Yorkshire and Humber Association of Civic Societies celebrated its 20th anniversary in November 2019 with a lunch in York, which I attended. I also attended a quarterly meeting in Pontefract and the YHACS agm in Harrogate in January 2020. YHACS supported Market Weighton Civic Society in erecting a blue plaque to a leading woman aeronautical engineer, Hilda Lyon, and I produced an information pamphlet and attended the unveiling.

**Together for Goole**

Together for Goole, a group bringing together local charities, facilitated by HEY Smile Foundation had a slow start. However, it has come into its own during the Coronavirus emergency, with aid funnelled through the Moorlands, which has ramped up meal deliveries and recruited volunteers for shopping and prescription collections.

**Focus for 2020-21**

* Goole Town Deal
* Conservation Area
* Market Hall
* Fund-raising to support our projects