

Minutes of the Foredown Tower Astronomers Committee

Meeting held on the 25th October 2017 at Foredown Tower

In attendance: John Davies – Chairman (JD), Peter Fishenden – Treasurer (PF), David Inman (DI) – SAGAS Representative, Mike Feist (MAF) – Committee Member

Apologies received from: Ann Moore – Secretary, John Skelton – Committee Member

Meeting opened at 10:50am.

The minutes from the previous meeting were read and items from those minutes along with issues raised by DI & MAF in a document circulated on the 14th October formed the agenda for the meeting.

These formed four basic points:

- Concerns over altering the number of meetings per year
- Concerns over proposals to change the membership fees
- Presentation of the above points to the membership
- Concerns over the quality of the society's record keeping

Because MAF was not present at the previous meeting JD explained his concerns regarding the group's finances in the longer term. Assuming fees and member numbers remained the same and average speaker costs were £30 it was shown that over the year the society would have to dip into its reserves to remain viable. The reserves would quickly be depleted should there be any other calls on the reserves (such as an increase in the fee for the room, increased insurance fees or a problem with the projector).

JD explained that some groups did not hold meetings in the summer due to the light nights and how this would reduce speaker fees. JD said he felt the long term viability of the society revolved around member numbers and membership fees.

MAF & DI commented that they felt reducing the number of meetings would cause a drop off in membership. JD commented that having presentations / demonstrations from members for the July / Aug meetings would be helpful as booking speakers could sometimes be tricky during the summer months. The committee agreed to try to encourage some of the more experienced members to make short 10-15 minute presentations.

After discussion it was decided to keep to number of meetings to 12.

Discussions were had over raising membership and visitor fees and whether the membership fees would be collected as a one off payment with differing views amongst the committee. Following various representations it was decided that membership fees would rise to £20 / half year paid in January and July and visitor fees will rise to £5 per meeting.

The above changes are to be presented to the membership at the December meeting.

There were concerns raised as to whether the society's minutes were comprehensive enough and visible to the membership. It was decided to endeavour to increase the level of detail in the minutes and, once approved by the committee, make them available in the Archive section of the website.

AOB

The committee discussed an email received from JS explaining that his other projects would not give him time to remain a committee member. It was decided to canvass for more committee members at the December meeting ready for the January AGM.

DI raised concerns regarding access to the society's PLI documentation stored within the SAGAS website. With a SAGAS meeting being held on the 28th October DI & JD commented that they would try to talk to the responsible person and update the society as to their progress.

JD explained some of the other avenues he was exploring to advertise the events through online social media and sites such as Friday Ad. It was decided to continue these efforts as they were zero cost to the society.

Meeting closed at 12:15pm. Next meeting date TBA.