**Present:**

Brian Barrett (BB) Vice Chair Jean Eldridge (JE) Treasurer Rob Lovesey (RL) Secretary

Malcolm Spinks (MS) Pete Eldridge (PE) BCO & PAO Derek Bradshaw (DB)

Mike Chamberlain (MC) (On-Line) Derek Bradshaw (DB) Sue Fowler (SF) Yona Barrett (YB) Max Heron (MH)

**Guests:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Serial** | **Discussion/Decision** | **Action** |
|  | 1. **Meeting Opened**

The Chair opened the meeting at 2026hrs in the Mill Stream Centre Benson. The Exhortation was spoken by the Vice Chair. |  |
|  | **Apologies*** 1. Lynda Atkins
	2. Fiona Lovesey
	3. Dave Cooper
	4. Andy Helliwell
	5. Rob “Wozza” Warren
 |  |
|  | **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 10 Jul 24 were reviewed by members of the committee; passed as a true copy and signed by the Chair and Secretary.Proposed: Brian BarrettSeconded: Malcolm SpinksThe vote was carried unanimously  |  |
|  | **Outstanding Actions from Previous Minutes**There were no outstanding actions. |  |
|  | **Communication*** Remembrance Special Circular 2024 – distributed via email.
* RBL Central News dated Aug 24 – distributed via email.
* RBL Central News dated Sep 24 – distributed via email.
* RBL Central News dated Oct 24 – distributed via email.
* RBL Oxfordshire County Newsletter Special Edition Part 1
* RBL Oxfordshire County Newsletter Special Edition Part 2
* RBL Oxfordshire County Conference “Calling Notice” 29 Sep 24.
 |  |
|  | **Treasurers Report**The Treasurer presented the current balances of Branch accounts as at 09 Oct 24:* 1. Branch Account £1498.03
	2. Petty Cash £17.60
	3. Total Assets as at 09 Oct 24: **£1515.63**
	4. Benson & District BFI £2126.45

**Total Funds in Account** **£3642.08**See the AGM Minutes for the Treasurers Report.**Proposed:** Malcolm Spinks**Seconded:** Jean ElderidgeThe vote was carried unanimously. |   |
| 7. | **Chair’s Report**See the AGM Minutes for the Treasurers Report |  |
|  8. | **Branch Plan**The Secretary announced that the Branch Plan will be updated following the release of the County Plan after the County Conference on 01 Feb 25. |  |
|  9. | **Branch Community Co-Ordinator (BCC)** The BCC Representative stated that there was nothing of note to report other than the name change from the Branch Community Support to Branch Community Co-ordinator. |  |
| 10. | **Office 365 Report**There is a need to progress with the County MEO to attain Branch email addresses for the following posts:* Branch Chair
* Branch Treasurer

The Secretary is to make the request to the County MEO. | Secretary |
| 11. | **County Chair Report**Pete Eldridge in his role as County Chair stated that it has been the busiest year he had experienced in the role; he went on to explain that he was aware too that it has been equally busy for other County Officers particularly, the County Vice Chair and Secretary (both members of the Benson Branch). He attended 2 Chairmans Seminars and attended National Conference with Jean Eldridge (Jean was the Benson Branch Nominated Delegate). Much of his time of late has been visiting County Branches and working with them since 30 Jun 24 in achieving the submission of Branch Accounts to increase compliance for Oxfordshire. Early indications that through this hard work they have achieved 80% plus. Attention has turned to the second part of Branch Compliance in the submission of the MS1 and MS1B, which Benson will be fully compliant following this meeting. Finally, he confirmed that due to the unexpected nomination of a candidate for the post of Oxfordshire County Chair he would be standing down from the role. He went on to thank the Branch for all the support during his period as Oxfordshire County Chair. |  |
|  12. | **Poppy Appeal Organisers Report**Pete Eldridge in his role as PAO stated all actions are well in hand. He confirmed that he has received the new Poppy Appeal stock and has a contactless machine for the transactions. The Poppy Appeal Stall for Branch will be at Bob’s Corner on 26 Oct 24 between 0800-1200hrs. |  |
|  13. | **Remembrance Parade**The process of organisation was well in hand with most of the administration handed over to the Benson Parish Council. The Branch will retain the organisation of the pre-Remembrance Parade gathering at the Mill Stream Day Centre and Pete Eldridge confirmed that the Deputy Lieutenant of Oxfordshire will once again be attending the Parade. |  |
|  14. | **Entertainment and Events*** **Events for 2024**:
	+ **Oxfordshire County Poppy Appeal Launch 2024 –** the Secretary announced that due to time constraints this year’s Poppy Appeal Launch has been cancelled.
	+ **RAF Benson Families Day 15 Aug 24 –** Branch members, Fiona Lovesey, Pete and Jean Eldridge, Malcolm Spinks and his wife Carol attended the Families Day at RAF Benson. The event was a huge success with 96 plus a cheque for 2 wreaths making a total of £136.
	+ **St Helen’s Church Christmas Tree Festival 2024 –** the Branch has once again been invited to take part in the annual St Helen’s Church Christmas Tree Festival. The Secretary announced that a new set of silhouettes have been crafted to augment those already available. Pete Elderidge presented the Branch with an application form for the event. He mentioned that there is a fee to participate of £10. It was agreed that the Branch would enter the festival and that the fee would be met by Branch funds.

**Proposed:** Rob Lovesey**Seconded:** Yona BarrettThe vote was carried unanimously* + **Benson Christmas Fair –** the Vice Chair announced to the meeting that the Branch has been approached to hold a stall at the scheduled Benson Christmas Fair in the Parish Hall. It was agreed that this would be an excellent opportunity to raise much needed funds for the Branch.
	+ **Wantage Silver Band Christmas Raffle – t**he concert by the Wantage Silver Band which included a Christmas Raffle in aid of the Poppy Appeal achieved £97.
 | Treasurer |
|  15. | **Any Other Business*** + **Memorial Service to WWII Sterling Bomber Crew 24 Aug 24 Botley Cemetery –** the Chair approved the Standard Bearer to attend the mention ceremony at Botley Cemetery on the 24 Aug 24.

**Proposed**: Fiona Lovesey**Seconded**: Max HeronThe vote was carried unanimously.* + **Announcement by the Parish Council –** the October Issue of the Benson Bulletin has made a clear statement as part of a request for volunteers to come forward to assist with the Remembrance Parade as Parade Safety Officer, Supervising the Community PA system and Traffic Marshalling. The problem comes by the statement that “if the roles cannot be filled, then sadly this year’s parade will be the last”. As this is beyond the gift of the Branch and the organisation and management falls to the Parish Council, this presents a clear issue for the Branch.
	+ **Transfer of PA System to Benson Parish Council –** Pete Eldridge proposed that transfer of the PA System from the auspices of the Branch to the Parish Council. This would support Parish Council events and the Remembrance Parade.

**Proposed**: Jean Eldridge**Seconded**: Derek BradshawThe vote was carried unanimously.**Note:** Following the vote Pete Eldridge will ensure the transfer to the Parish Council. The Secretary will adjust the Asset Register. | Pete EldridgeSecretary |
|  16. | **Date of Next Meeting**The next meeting will be held at 2000hrs on Wednesday 08 Jan 25 the Benson Millstream Day Centre.  |  |
|  17. | **Meeting Closed**The meeting closed at 2110hrs. |  |
| 18. | **Kohima Epitaph** |  |

F LOVESEY R LOVESEY

Chairman Secretary

Date Date

**The Benson and District Royal British Legion Committee Regularly Meets on the Second Wednesday of January, April, July and October at 2000hrs. The AGM is held on the Second Wednesday of October unless the dates do not allow sufficient time for the Remembrance Day Parade preparations. All meetings are scheduled to be held in the Benson Millstream Day Centre unless otherwise notified.**

**Upcoming meetings are:**

**Committee Meeting – Wednesday 08 January 2025 – Millstream Day Centre**

**Committee Meeting – Wednesday 09 April 2025 – Millstream Day Centre**

**Committee Meeting – Wednesday 09 July 2025 – Millstream Day Centre**

**Committee Meeting – Wednesday 08 October 2025 – Millstream Day Centre**

**AGM Meeting – Wednesday 08 October 2025 – Millstream Day Centre**