

**Community Carrot Ltd**  
**Annual General Meeting Report 2023**  
**April 30th 3-4pm**  
**Community Room, Dunbar Town House**

**Present:** The meeting was attended by 27 shareholders plus 1 non-shareholder.

**Apologies:** Nathan Pike; Andy Sim; Sheila Sim; Eddie & Lynne Clutton; Ben Dorin; Colin Barnes; Ola Wojkiewicz; Mark Letza; Mairi Ferris; Elizabeth Wilson; John Jenkins; Ken Hare; Gareth Morgan; Rod Widdowson; Patrick McComb; Daniel Wight; Dave Williamson; Diana Greene; Mark Garner

**Email votes in from those listed above,** except Andy Sim; Dave Williamson; Diana Greene & Mark Garner

**1. Welcome and Introductions - Tim Greene**

2022 meeting report was proposed by JBell and seconded by David Mumford.  
Approved.

**2. Resolutions from last year's meeting - updates.**

- a. Staff Representation on the Board. A whole staff/ board meeting was convened at the end of August 2022 where the shop's systems and governance were discussed. A second whole staff/ board meeting was held last week to continue board/staff contact, raise any ongoing issues and gather ideas for going forward directly from staff. While this isn't staff representation on the board, it is improved staff-board communications. The board secretary now also sends out an update each month after each board meeting which highlights issues that concern staff. This always includes the date of the next meeting and an invitation to attend if there are matters they wish to address.
- b. Staff pay. In August 2022 staff pay increased to £10 p/hr (when the Real Living Wage - RLW - was £9.90). In April 2023, the minimum wage was raised nationally to £10.42, which we now pay staff. Our ongoing commitment is to pay staff the RLW.

**3. News from the shop managers - Helen Muir and Jo Gibson**

**Jo:** Staff appreciate having access to the board and the pay rise. After the rollercoaster of Covid, the shop feels like it's settling down again now although price rises, economic challenges and slightly different demand from customers present different issues.

**Deliveries:** we had a system review and made the difficult decision to only take veg box orders from vulnerable or sick people (and these people need to decide themselves to ask for this service). Running a delivery service and a high street shop are two different business models and we couldn't do both successfully. The costs of personalised veg boxes and deliveries wasn't covering itself and this was detracting from the quality shop customer experience. Now, in-shop we have plans for more changes. The screen is now down and there is a major stock review ahead of us.

**Digital shop system:** we made the transfer from Shopify to EposNow to manage stock. It was a good decision to change and we employed Jade to manage this transition, which was invaluable.

**Staff Changes:** Gordon Jenkinson has retired, Jade Muir stepped up as Assistant Manager in May 2022 and is now stepping up again to Acting Manager for the next few months while Jo

works one day less to look after her partner. Tiffany, Danielle and Jenny are new staff in the shop and we have 2 volunteers as well, Karell and Diana.

**Manager focus:** we have been evaluating what stock is good for the shop and what is affordable. There is now more time for customers, and we want to improve our profile and raise awareness of our key messages.

**Helen:** a big thank you to the staff for keeping the shop going for the last 3 years. Stopping the box scheme was a difficult decision but it is lovely to welcome people back into the shop. We've managed to halve the wage bill and have more time to give customers. It feels like there's an influx of new customers who want different products and we want to be different from the supermarkets.

At the recent DTA meeting organised by Jo Waddell, it was inspiring to see so many traders from the High Street and it's great to see the High Street looking so vibrant.

#### **4. Treasurer's update - Julia Dorin**

Our monthly accounting is completed by our bookkeeper Paula Gibson. The annual accounts are prepared by Haines and Watts, who have not raised their price this year. As they did our accounts last year, they anticipate that it will take them approximately 6 weeks to complete this year.

**The 2021-2022 accounts** cover the time when Covid restrictions were still in place, footfall was still low and we were running the box scheme. There was reduced government support for small businesses. Turnover increased but so did the cost of sales. There was an annual (£2484) loss after tax in this period but the Adapt and Thrive grant was spent (on digitising our stock system) and the Development Officer's work continued via grant funding.

**The 2022-2023 accounts** are in preparation, again with Haines and Watts. The EposNow system is working well and giving us better management information, footfall and turnover have increased, community support is still strong, and we still have a safety net of cash reserves. However, external factors are a challenge: inflation and a changing market. The national minimum wage has increased and we are no longer paying the Real Living Wage, which is still our main goal. The managers also have not had a pay rise since 2019, and this is the next issue to address.

#### **5. Membership update - Erica Wimbush**

Most of our shareholders bought shares at the outset in 2019. There has only been an increase in 17 members since that time but we could raise money for a specific project by asking for more input from shareholders in the future. It's still possible to buy shares on the website, or by requesting a form from the shop.

#### **6. Development Officer's update - Hannah Ewan**

Hannah is fully funded, mainly by the National Lottery, DELAP and other sources. She does a variety of outreach cooking and foodEd classes, processes food waste and runs a community kitchen feeding 30 people a week. For the Crunchy Carrot, Hannah is our communication officer. She does our facebook and instagram posts, sends out a monthly newsletter, and follows up a lot of ideas from the sales and marketing group.

**Cooking skills:** 391 children and adults have participated in Hannah's cooking skills classes this year.

**Sunny Soups:** 703kg of surplus produce has been made into soups for the Day Centre, Foodshare and the Ridge this year.

**Sunny's Kitchen:** 30 people eat each week, some are regular volunteers in the kitchen, rescuing 524kg of surplus ingredients.

### **7. New board members and elections - Naomi Barnes**

Tim Greene was re-elected onto the board.

Nathan Pike was elected onto the board.

Erica Wimbush, Julia Dorin and Naomi Barnes are continuing on the board.

Jennifer Allan stepped down in January 2023.

### **8. Accounting Resolution - Naomi Barnes**

Members unanimously supported the accounting resolution:

The members hereby resolve to disapply the audit requirement for the year ending 31 March 2023, but the accounts must still have ***an Audit Exemption Report by a registered auditor*** as required by the section 85(2) of the Co-operatives and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014

### **9. Sales and Marketing update - Naomi Barnes**

In January 2023, Nathan set up a sales and marketing subgroup to revisit our aims and objectives, review who our target audience is and how we reach them, with the aim to increase footfall and sales. The group has initiated a variety of actions, e.g. a plastic comparison, a new design and paintwork for the front shop, new labelling, more focussed social media product posts, recipes, shop cleaning, shop layout and ways to get our key messages across about buying local, supporting local growers and people who make local products. A big thanks to Karell, who does a lot of in shop volunteering. Also, big thanks to Jade who initiated, researched and implemented the EposNow system.

### **10. Consultation**

Members completed a short questionnaire to give their views on the shop's strengths, weaknesses, and any changes they wish to see.

### **11. Q&As**

A query was raised about transferring shares into another person's name by Graham Jackson.

Naomi Barnes  
2nd May 2023