

**Community Carrot Ltd, Annual General Meeting**  
**Meeting Report 2024**  
**Sunday 21st April, 3 - 4pm**  
**Dunbar Townhouse, Community Room**

**1. Welcome and introductions.**

Present: R Barnes, N Pike, J Demer, J Bell, M Wallis, F Dickson, L Punler, S Burrows, L Dickson, I Dickson, G Morgan, S Morgan, P Lucas, A Tossell, M James, H Smith, E Smith, K Triscott, A Dickerson, S Dickerson, L Hardy, J Hardy, K Brill, T Whitehouse, J Muir, D Moore, J Jenkins, D Wight, I Knox, T Greene, N Pike, J Dorin, E Wimbush, N Barnes, H Muir, J Gibson. (35 present)

Apologies: Jo Waddell, Diana Greene, Pamela Denholm & Michael Denholm; Ute Penny; Vana Kristi; Jane Ó Dochartaig; Ken Hare; Alastair Stobart; Paul Fineron & Beng Cheah; Philip Revell and Liz McLean; Ola Wojkiewicz.

Approve previous minutes - nominated by Jacquie Bell, seconded by Alison Tossell

Point of Order raised by Gareth Morgan - Article 4.1 in the constitution states that the AGM should be held within 6 months of the end of the financial year. This meeting is 7 months late. The next AGM should be in September 2024.

**2. Managers' Update – Jo Gibson and Helen Muir**

Jo: Firstly, the managers extended thanks to shareholders and shoppers for coming out to the AGM and for continued support. 2023 - 2024 has been a really good year for the shop. The Post Covid world has been tricky with the instability in the economy, tighter budgets for households and constant price increases. While we have to pass on price increases to the customers, we also look to reduce prices if wholesale costs go down. Preserving our ethos while remaining competitive is a challenge. We are discontinuing products that are now appearing on supermarket shelves because they undercut us. We are always prioritising small suppliers with unique products to sell who can't get into the supermarket.

What has made the real difference to us is the loyalty of returning shoppers, hard working shop staff, volunteers offering their time, and the board who do the last minute shifts, stock taking on a Sunday, grant fund writing: all this takes a big team, loyalty and a strong community. Staff changes in the shop now mean we have a good size team to manage the shifts. The increase in staff wages has been a big achievement and it's nice to bring in new peeps.

Helen: paying staff the Real Living Wage in March was a big moment for the shop. When I took on the manager role over 4 years ago when we became a community shop, I imagined it would be lots of fun, hard work with passionate people. Now it feels like we are achieving that, like the Old Crunchy feel. Recently, at the Dunbar Traders' Association AGM, there was a lot of chat about the High St and how we've lost a lot of shops in the last few months:

Turnbull's, Beer Zoo, etc. But other businesses report that they are doing OK, so why is this? For Crunchy, there are a few reasons: 600 shareholders, a great board, people want us to be here and support us. We get a range of shoppers who want specialist items but also people who want the personalised shopping experience. We are supporting local producers. We have got to be different from the supermarkets in order to survive, keep on adapting to keep up with new demand from new customers, with a strong ethos. We are starting a new 'specials table' to keep prices down of some items. Lastly, next year will be Crunchy's 25th birthday!

### **3. Treasurer's Report – Julia Dorin**

The accounts relate to 2022-2023. This was post pandemic, footfall was low and turnover decreased. The loss after tax was £15,000 but taking into account our assets we had a value of £51,839 at the end of the financial year. The Development Officer work was funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.

2023-2024 - the accounts are in draft form and it looks like we may have made a profit of approximately £5,000. EposNow has contributed to this, making it easier to track and change pricing, inflation is levelling off, footfall has increased. We are now paying the Real Living Wage to all staff and finally we are able to replace share money in the the cash reserves to build up the safety net that was crucial to us during Covid.

**Question: What is the strategy on mark ups?** Dried goods have a 40% margin but margins on fresh goods are more variable and it is a matter of discussion between us and our suppliers. Some sellers know what price they need to make their product viable and we are flexible to support this. Market prices can be very competitive and allows us to mark up at a higher rate.

### **4. Membership Report – Erica Wimbush**

Since 2019, we've only had 29 new shareholders. Shareholders are the strength of the Crunchy and there are thousands of new people moving into the town so there is an opportunity there to recruit new shareholders. How do we reach them? Word of mouth recommendation is very effective - please suggest buying a share in the shop.

### **5. Communications and Outreach Lead's Report – Hannah Ewan**

Hannah's new title is Community Food Outreach and Communications Lead. This better describes her role, rather than Development Officer. Hannah can now announce that the National Lottery has confirmed 2 more years of funding for the outreach food projects she runs. Recruitment to find a member of staff to take on Sunny's Kitchen will go ahead very soon, as Hannah is running more cooking skills clubs for kids. Cook Club will be financed via the Investing in Communities Fund. Hannah hopes to move into the Ridge's new kitchen in June 2024 and so have a permanent base to work from. Moving out of the Bleachingfield

became essential when they started to charge £100 per week for the hire of the space as there was no funding to cover this cost.

**Cooking Skills - 196 participants in the following clubs and events:**

- Cook Club
- KidsFoodJourney
- Apple pie day
- Cook Your Tea
- Kids' holiday cooking
- After-school clubs
- Crunchy Cook bags

**Sunny's Soups**

- A food waste group that provides free soup to local organisations.
- Around eight of us meet each week
- Distributed by Dunbar FoodShare, given to Dunbar Day Centre and The Ridge Recovery Café, used in Sunny's Kitchen.
- Since the last AGM we have used 1065 kg of surplus ingredients in Sunny Soups, representing 2,663 portions of soup

**Sunny's Kitchen**

- 20 - 30 folk come along weekly, to cook, eat or both
- 'Stop-gap' version currently running
- Free two-course meal made from mainly surplus ingredients
- This year we've rescued 430kg of surplus ingredients.

**Communications for Crunchy** - the main focus has been on food waste, plastic waste and sustainability this year on social media and on the website. Please sign up to the Crunchy's newsletter via the website.

**6. Voting in board members – Tim Greene**

7 e-votes and majority of those present at meeting in favour of re-election of Naomi Barnes

**7. Resolution for next year's accounts - Julia Dorin**

7 e-votes to approve the resolution and majority of those present at meeting in favour of passing the accounting resolution.

**8. Member consultation - Nathan Pike**

Last year, we asked you for feedback on what we do and don't do well at the Crunchy. You said:

- Pay a fair living wage

- Dark premises
- Better window displays
- More public engagement
- Raise profile

We did:

- We now pay the Real Living Wage!
- Moved furniture out of the window to create more natural light in the shop
- Updated the website with pages on volunteering & Hannah's outreach projects
- Replaced front shop sign and got new window stickers

Other comments:

- Space is tight - managers are optimising the use of space
- Produce is sometimes a bit tired - we are looking into getting another chiller
- Prices can be high - see notes on margins and variability above

This year's question:

What can we do to encourage more people to shop at the Crunchy Carrot?

## **9. Q&As – Naomi Barnes**

EL Friendly Food Network meeting on 23rd May

AOB - please sign the petition to support the proposed Community Asset Transfer of the Bank of Scotland premises or fill in the survey online to give your views.

Naomi Barnes

22/4/2024