

BLOC AGM Minutes

26-September-2024

Rose Hill Community Centre, Carole's Way, Oxford, OX4 4HF.
(Norman Brown Rooms 1 & 2).
1930 Start
2045 Close

Committee Members Present: Jeevan Vasagar (Chair)
Marrianne Bergeron (Communications)
James Downing (Secretary)

1. Quorum Confirmed by James Downing (Secretary)
2. 2023 AGM Minutes Confirmed and Approved as Accurate (Majority Vote)
3. Committee Annual Report:

Jeevan Vasagar presented the annual report, particularly highlighting:

- a. Finances are in good health
 - b. Investment of £10,000 to reduce fees in September
 - c. Noted that the reserve had grown, but was kept in line with the constitution guidelines of 1 month bus fees + emergency values.
 - d. Bus service has been disrupted so far this year (to be further discussed in AOB)
4. Financial Report Approved (Majority Vote)
 5. Constitution Changes

- a. Proposed Change 1

Discussion raised points:

- i. We do not want to bind the committee to have to do something that may not be possible technically or financially
- ii. In person meetings are a good way for people to meet
- iii. Online excludes some people, in person excludes some people
- iv. A parent has offered use of a Hybrid Meeting space - but this may not be a permanent long term solution

Amendment had wording adjusted to clarify it is not mandatory and attendance either online or in person qualifies for a vote (this was the original intention) as follows:

5a. The Annual General Meeting shall be held prior to the school October half-term in each school year. **Remote or hybrid attendance ought to be offered to any members who require it.**

5f. ~~Notification shall be made as to whether the meetings shall be in-person or via video conference and~~ Only members in attendance (online or in person) at the AGM shall have the ability to vote.

Proposal was passed (Majority Vote)

6. Election of Officers

The following committee members were elected by majority vote:

Marianne Bergeron - Comms
Mathilde Akar - Registrar
Claudia Spadoni - Treasurer
Bota Godwin - Secretary
Zohra Jenkinson - Chair

7. Any other Business

The following topics were discussed, and output of the discussion should be considered by the new committee for next steps.

Pricing Zones and Multi-Family Discounts

Point was raised that these are common in other school bus schemes including the CBC and OLA's buses. Parents travelling further pay less, families with multiple children get a discount.

Noted that this would be a change to the founding principles of BLOC and would need majority approval at an AGM or EGM.

BLOC was set up to be an egalitarian system with everyone paying the same. This allows sharing of financial risk between buses.

Definition of "fair" is not clear: is it fairer that those who live closer pay less subsidised by those who live further away or fairer if everyone pays the same?

BLOC pays the same for all buses (apart from Bus 4 which is more as it is a double decker). Hard to justify why and where a zone would be split.

Abingdon could be split and managed as a separate entity with its own rules if parents wanted to do this.

Is BLOC too big to manage and would splitting BLOC be better

Point was raised that running BLOC is a lot of effort with 6 buses: and different users

have different needs depending on location.

Main effort is communications and managing this across all 6 buses. Registrations and invoicing are more efficient together. Governance and AGMs would be double the work if BLOC was split.

If people remember that the committee are volunteers and not service providers, communications will be easier.

If the bus company were able to handle more direct communication and service updates this would also help.

Consensus was that we are better together, with more buying power.

Bus Service Provider

There has been significant disruption to the buses over the last few weeks. Bus 14 is currently being run by an alternative provider. Question was raised over whether we should change provider from Charlton to JD, split routes between providers or stay with Charlton.

It was noted that Charlton have been a reliable service provider for over a decade, including for the majority of last year. Issue have come as they have transitioned to new management and had to replace drivers at short notice. Charlton want to make Europa their primary client and structure the business around our needs.

Charlton are very cheap. If they only have exactly the right number of drivers. They are recruiting more drivers. They only have one double decker, which is also a risk.

Bus 14 children love Craig - he was their driver last year and is again, but working for Charlton.

Bus 14 has been less reliable in the afternoons with JD as they have other routes beforehand and often arrive at the school late.

Charlton arrives at the school on time when they run, but have had problems running all the buses while they recruit new drivers. As their primary customer, they will not have other routes that make them run late.

Bus 4 are very happy with their new driver - satisfaction is often linked to the driver.

JD have quoted £295 per bus per day to run our buses. We are paying £250 per day for single deckers and £300 per day with Charlton. This would be a big factor in any decision.

Paying different amounts for different providers raises questions about how to share the cost.

Some attendees felt we should give the new management a chance.
Some Bus 14 attendees felt that they like Craig and would like to stay with him.

Attendees suggested running a survey to get feedback on Charlton over a fixed period, collecting metrics on timeliness and cancellations and holding an EGM later in the year to make a decision.

AGM Timings and Quorum

A point was raised that the timing of the AGM and low level of attendance needed for quorum means that decisions are made at a point in the year when new users are not familiar with how the bus works and with a small representation of the full user base.

It was noted that quorum is low because it is hard to persuade more people to attend.

The AGM has to be in October as a key outcome is the review of accounts, which aligns with the academic year.

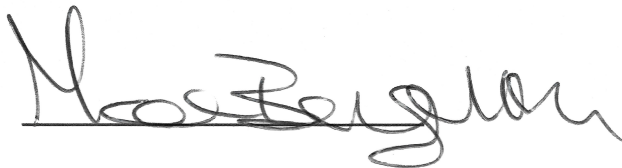
Holding extra EGMs in Spring or Summer would allow decisions to be made for the following year when people are more settled into the routine of the bus and give users more opportunities to have a say on the operation of BLOC.

SIGNED BY

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'James Downing', written over a horizontal line.

James Downing
BLOC Secretary

30-Sep-2024

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Marianne Bergeron', written over a horizontal line.

Marianne Bergeron
BLOC Communications Officer

01/10/24