

**SHEFFIELD CREDIT UNION LIMITED
INCORPORATING LASER CREDIT UNION
MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Tuesday 25th March at 6pm

The Circle, 33 Rockingham Lane, Sheffield S1 4FW and online

Present in person

Chris Kearton (Vice Chair), Peter Armstrong (Treasurer), Paul Thomas (Director), Richard Edwards (Director), Robert Savage (Director), Katrina Cleary, Jenny Wright, Colin Harvard, Steven Jacques, Divya Shankar, Paul Hancock (CEO), Sharon Oates, Emma Carpenter, Amanda Walker, 5 other members.

Present online

Patrick Knox, Paul Lundy, Geoffrey Mills, John Selby, Jonathan Collins, Emma Coldham, David Evans, Patience Ifaluyi, Sarah Fletcher, Ralph Morton.

Observers: Ade Kosoko (Tiaa)

1. Welcome

Chris Kearton introduced the meeting and explained that, as Maxine was not able to attend, he would chair the meeting.

2. Apologies

Received from Maxine Stavrianakos (Chair), Christine Ursell (Director), Jonathan Cook, Jane Woodford, Michael Bracey, Jackie Hallewell

3. Minutes of AGM held on 5th of March 2024

Accepted as a true record. No matters arising.

4. Annual reports

4.1 Chair's report

- Chris Kearton presented the Annual Report and spoke to his section of it, describing a challenging but productive year.
- Some staff changes, following a long period of very stable staffing, but still with a team with a wide range of skills and experience, committed to the values of the Credit Union.
- The merger with LASER CU in Rotherham had been legally completed, but the operational integration was being taken at a considered pace in order to limit disruption for members and staff.

4.1 CEO's report

- Paul Hancock, CEO, began by remembering our dear colleague Sarah Horsfield, who died in January after 15 years service. She died after a short and sudden illness and is a big loss.
- Paul outlined a year of growth, welcoming 2000 new members with Laser, lending up by 15%, building strong partnerships (including Rotherham MBC and Sheffield CC).
- He then mentioned key changes in the pipeline, including regulatory approval to change our name to Sheffield Community Bank, a new website, a new App and new branding and improved digital services.

4.3 Treasurer's report

- Peter Armstrong, our Treasurer, summarised the accounts, which had been approved by our auditors (Jacksons). The full accounts are available to members on request.
- Losses to bad debt remain low at 3.2% of total loan book – indicating we are responsible lenders and that we are fortunate to have loyal members who understand we are in effect lending money to each other.
- Income increased, but so did our costs – thus the surplus reduced from £62k last year to -£28k this year (this includes payment of previous year's dividend).
- We still have significant reserves, which are very important in giving us resilience.
- We have begun to use some reserves to increase our marketing and our operating systems and Peter explained how this is shown in the accounts.
- At the end of 2024, Laser's final accounts show £940k in savings, £600k outstanding loans, £160k reserves and a surplus for the year of £58k.
- In 2024, SCU lent over £1m, processed transactions totalling £6m.

5. Discussion

Members were invited to raise any questions or discussion items.

Background to the Laser merger – why has it happened?

Chris reported that the Laser Board approached SCU – the increasing regulatory demands are challenging for smaller credit unions. Laser had lost Board members who were hard to replace and the Board wanted to make sure Laser didn't get into difficulty.

Are SCU looking at small business loans to develop small businesses?

Chris mentioned a partnership with a small social purpose lender called Purple Shoots, which provides loans up to £5k – we will monitor this pilot before deciding if this is an area SCU should develop.

Of the 3000 applications for a loan, how many did we turn down?

Paul reported that roughly 50% are declined for reasons of affordability or other risks.

Should we be concerned about turning down 50%?

Paul reported that due to cost of living pressures, many credit ratings are getting worse, making affordability difficult to prove. We feel we are too dependant on lending to our existing members and we need to reach new members for effectively.

Robert Savage emphasised that many of the loans we approve would not be offered by mainstream lenders, but this is partly due to them being less than £500. We are an ethical lender, i.e. we won't lend if the member is likely to struggle to keep up payments.

The Annual Report mentions changes to fees – what is the reasoning behind removing joiner fees?

The Board feel membership fees are a barrier to bringing in new members.

VOTING ITEMS

6. Adoption of Financial Accounts to 30/09/24

Adopted. 22 in favour, 6 abstained.

7. Election of Directors

Elections were carried out by secret ballot.

Katrina Cleary, Colin Harvard and Jenny Wright were elected as directors for a 3 year term.

Robert Savage, Maxine Stavrianakos and Christine Ursell were re-elected for a further 3 year term.

8. Motion to pay a dividend to adult members of 1.5% of their shares (savings) balance held with Sheffield Credit Union during the year 2023-2024

These payments will cost approximately £65,000.

Approved. 24 in favour, 4 abstained.

9. Motion to pay 1.5% interest on junior savings held with Sheffield Credit Union during the year 2023-2024

This will cost approximately £1,200.

Approved. 24 in favour, 4 abstained.

10. Motion to make a payment to adult members of 1.5% of their shares (savings) balance held with LASER Credit Union during the year 2023-2024

These payments will cost approximately £11,000. This payment is not linked to LASER's financial performance during the year, but is intended to place former LASER members on an equal footing with existing SCU members; and will be applied to both dividend- and interest-bearing products.

Approved. 23 in favour, 5 abstained.

11. Motion to re-engage Jacksons accountants of Hull as external financial auditor for the current year

Approved. 22 in favour, 6 abstained.

12. Motion to re-engage TIAA as internal financial auditor for the current year

Approved. 23 in favour, 5 abstained.

13. Any other business

No other business. Chris closed the meeting.

As a director at the meeting, I confirm that these minutes are a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Date: 19/02/26

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Kearton', written over a light grey rectangular background.

Chris Kearton

Chair