

Ipswich Hindu Samaj

**Minutes of the General Meeting
held on Wednesday
21 March 2007 at Suffolk College, Ipswich**



Present: Sushil Soni, Hamlesh Soni, Shakti Khosla, Subhash Patel, Harshad Patel, Lila Patel, Ila Patel, C Patel, Peter Haystead (Suffolk Constabulary), M Mistry, B J Patel, V B Patel, Renu Mandal, Amar Mandal, Anil Patel, Manda Patel, Umesh Patel, Pushpa Patel,

Apologies: Anil Khosla, Debajit Naha, Mina Ashok Kumar, Gautam Banerjee, Devender Khurana, Ujjal Singh, Cynthia Capey, David Capey

1. Welcome by the Chairman

The Chairman, Sushil Soni welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced those members of the Executive Committee who were present. He conveyed the apologies from Anil Khosla, the Secretary, who had to go to Holland from work. Anil's wife Shakti Khosla had brought all the paperwork the Secretary had prepared for the meeting. Shakti also agreed to take the notes of the meeting.

Sushil Soni explained that the meeting had been specifically called to approve the changes in the Constitution, as suggested by the Charity Commission, to enable the Ipswich Hindu Samaj to apply for Charity status. The Charity Commission had pointed out that the objectives, as set out in the Constitution, were a mixture of powers and charitable objectives and their recommendation is that these should be separated.

2. Minutes of the 26th July 2006 - Inauguration meeting.

2.1 Approval of minutes

The Chairman went through the minutes on a point by point basis. All questions and points raised at the meeting had been addressed and the suggestions incorporated into the Constitution.

All present agreed that the minutes be approved and duly signed by the Chairman. Renu Mandal proposed the motion to accept and approve the minutes. This was seconded by Ila Patel.

2.2 Matters arising

None but a correction was made to the minutes to add Sushil Soni's name to the list of attendees present on 26 July 06.

3. Motion by the Chairman: To formally adopt the Amended Constitution.

Dr Soni explained that the Charities Commission had recommended an Object to be inserted into the Constitution to enable the IHS to be registered as a Charitable Organisation. He then read out the words as suggested by the Charity Commission for paragraph 2 i.e. 'Object' of the Constitution. The subsequent paragraph numbering has been changed to realign with the new numbering scheme.

Once the changes to the Constitution have been approved by the members, a certified copy of the Constitution is required to be submitted to the Charities Commission so that registration for Charitable status can go ahead.

The changes were approved by all present and a copy of the Constitution was signed by them. In addition, written votes in favor of the changes had been received from Anil Khosla, Gautam Banerjee and Mina Ashok Kumar. Their names & signatures will be added to new Constitution.

4. Secretary's Report

A newsletter dated 20th February 2007 had already been sent by the Secretary, Anil Khosla, to members. In Anil's absence, Dr Soni gave the secretary's report, elaborating and updating on the points covered in the newsletter.

Sushil said that since the formation of the IHS in July 2006, numerous meetings had been held with Suffolk County Council (SCC) and Ipswich Borough Council (IBC), particularly in regard to funding and also finding a suitable site for a Mandir. However, neither had met with much success.

In one of the meetings it was suggested that the Ravenswood Community Centre building which is complete now but not yet operative, could be used by the IHS for its activities. However, the IHS would be **one** of the users & not the **sole** user. IHS could use it exclusively on Sundays and two evenings during the weekdays. There was a possibility that the IHS may have to pay some fees for the use of the Centre. The discussions with the SCC and IBC are continuing.

Since July 2006, IHS had held celebrations at the Unitarian Meeting House in Ipswich and more are in planning stages. Sushil expressed gratitude on behalf of the IHS for the use of the Unitarian Meeting House for our functions. Anil Khosla had included the days and dates of Hindu festivals for 2007 in the newsletter.

Building of a new Temple was discussed. Sushil stated that the building of new temple will cost in the region £300K to £500 and may take several years. He said that the objective was to find a suitable premise with easy access by A12 and A14.

There were a number of questions from the floor with regard to the sole use of the Ravenswood Community Centre, the booking of the hall, availability of the hall for private or other functions during weekdays day time, capacity of the Hall, number of people covered by Insurance . These were satisfactorily answered by the EC Members and the Trustees of IHS.

5. Treasurer's Report

5.1 Financial Statement.: The Treasurer, Chandu Patel, presented the accounts as at 15th March, 2007.

5.2. Membership Status: The membership as at 15th March, 2007 is as follows:

Full Family Membership (35), Single Membership (3), Associate Membership (3) & Life Membership (2)

5.3. Donations/Fund Raising Status: Of the total of £2458.16 raised, £930.00 is from fund raising and the rest is from donations.

5.4. Life Members: Suffolk New College is the first Organisation to have taken out a Life Membership of the Samaj.

A lively discussion then took place on topics such as Membership Status, Accounting period, when AGM will be held. The normal yearly accounting period & membership period is from 1st January to 31st December. However, as the IHS was formed in July 2006 and did not have many activities or members at the start, the period was extended up to 31st December 2007.

Mahesh Mistry proposed to accept the Accounts and Renu Mandal seconded the motion.

6. A.O.B.

6.1 AGM - The Chairman informed the AGM be held in 2008

6.2 Hate Crime and Safer Neighbourhoods

Peter Haystead, of Suffolk Constabulary had set up a display board and handed out leaflets to raise awareness regarding Hate Crime and Safe Neighborhoods. Peter stressed the importance of reporting all incidents of hate crime so that preventative action could be taken & these incidents could be reported either directly to Police or through IHS. He also stated that that information and display boards would also be available at the ISIA Mela in July and a Police officer from the Asian Community would be there.

6.3 Fund-raising

Discussions then centered on fund raising activity. The Trustees and EC Members will discuss this at one of its meetings. The aim will be to maximize fund raising by holding events that require minimum costs upfront.

Several suggestions were made by members on fund raising activities ranging from approaching rich Asian business people to seeking lottery funding. Making 'reporting of hate crimes' as a possible project could attract lottery funding.

The EC should consider holding Navratri Celebrations in Ipswich for next year. The meeting closed at 9.05 p.m.

Shakti Khosla
on behalf of the Secretary, Anil Khosla