

THE INLAND WATERWAYS ASSOCIATION
Island House, Moor Road, Chesham, Buckinghamshire HP5 1WA

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SEPTEMBER (AGM) 2020

Minutes of the 61st Annual General Meeting of The Inland Waterways Association (IWA), held at 11.30am on Saturday 26th September 2020 electronically via Zoom.

PRESENT

116 persons were recorded as present.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Paul Rodgers, National Chair, welcomed those present to the meeting, noting the uniqueness of this, IWA's first virtual AGM. He introduced Sarah O'Grady, IWA's interim CEO while the recruitment of a new permanent CEO was underway, also leading on a review of the organisation's governance and structure.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS GENERAL MEETING

No amendments were proposed and the minutes of the 60th Annual General Meeting held on 28th September 2019 were taken as a true record of that meeting.

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

The Chair presented some of the highlights of the year from the annual report. These included recognition of the staff continuing to work effectively through the difficult circumstances presented by the pandemic, the decisive action and good communications surrounding cancelled events, the move to online meetings and events and the creation of Zoom champions, the continued work of branch planning officers and other volunteers working in advisory roles, along with collaboration with other waterways organisations, the imminent launch of the new website and the work that had gone into the project so far, and that Covid-19 had forced lower key celebrations for the 75th and 50th anniversaries of IWA and WRG respectively. He also explained the change to this year's trustee recruitment process and expected outcomes in the next few years arising out of the four themes model.

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Ray Carter, Chair of Finance Committee and National Treasurer, introduced the Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2019. Confirming he was satisfied that these accounts reflect a true and fair picture of the financial situation of the Association, he also noted that despite receiving a high level of legacies in the year, the Association must recognise the need to increase its income streams over the coming years if it is to continue delivering high quality and successful campaigns. He thanked the finance team at Chesham for their diligence in producing the accounts under the difficult working conditions created by the pandemic.

Genevieve Wilson, Finance Manager, then gave a brief presentation about the headline figures within the year end accounts, drawing particular attention to the level of legacies and restricted funds.

There were no questions on the year end 2019 accounts.

The meeting approved a resolution to receive the Trustees' Annual Report and audited Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2020, using online and telephone poll facilities. 98% of the votes cast were for the motion and 2% were abstentions. There were no votes against.

APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

The meeting approved a resolution to reappoint Saffery Champness as auditors to the Association and to authorise trustees to determine the auditors' remuneration, noting that, in accordance with good governance practice, the Board intended to review the auditing services and undertake a competitive tendering process before the next AGM, which may result in the resignation of Saffery Champness and the Board appointing alternative auditors in respect of the current financial year. 98% of the votes cast were for the motion, 1% were against and 1% were abstentions.

QUESTIONS ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Ray Carter, Genevieve Wilson and Paul Rodgers then responded to questions on other aspects of IWA finance: the impact of the pandemic on the value of investments since the year end, the organisation's highest source of income since the beginning of the pandemic, detail behind lobbying and campaigning expenditure, movement in membership and related income, budgeting for legacy income and accounting for life memberships.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Following the announcement of the 2020 volunteer awards, the Chair recorded his thanks to Neil Edwards, retiring from the role of IWA CEO after twenty years, and to the trustees retiring on completion of their terms in office: Mike Palmer, Verna Smith, Ray Carter, Paul Strudwick and Chris Howes.

TRUSTEE QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

The newly appointed trustees introduced themselves to the meeting in turn. Members were then given the opportunity to raise questions to all trustees present. Responses were given to several questions, on: what long term governance structure the trustees propose, levels of membership deemed necessary for campaigning purposes, IWA's membership demographic and what action it is taking to encourage younger participants into the organisation, a model for the future, IWA's interaction with CRT, both examples of holding it to account as well as plans for working in partnership with it, any links the IWA has with other countries with extensive waterways and finally, how the new trustees would be accountable to members.

The Board agreed that such a question and answer session had been positive and dedicated sessions at regular intervals in the future would be beneficial to all. It welcomed hearing as many viewpoints as possible.

CLOSING REMARKS

The Chair reiterated his thanks to the trustees now leaving the Board, as well as to those just joining it and gave a final word of thanks to all attendees and members for their support of the Association.

The meeting closed at 1.35pm.