



Hastings & Rother Branch
Registered Charity No. 1097214

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

10.30 a.m. 26th October 2020

Via Zoom video-conference

Note: This meeting was postponed from 27th July 2020. It was held using Zoom video-conferencing during the Covid-19 pandemic, when in-person meetings of more than 6 were not legally permitted under Government guidelines. The documents for the meeting were sent to all members in advance in paper form, and members were invited to vote by proxy: to approve the Minutes from 2019, the Chair's report, Treasurer's report and accounts; to appoint the accounts examiner; and to elect committee members.

There were 68 participants (i.e. devices logged in), but as some of these represented 2 members, there were at least 75 members in attendance. The meeting was therefore quorate. 79 proxy voting forms had been received. Members voted in the meeting by a show of hands, with the Chair voting on behalf of those who had voted by proxy and were not present at the meeting.

1. Welcome

The Chair, Robert Hadland, welcomed members to the AGM, thanked them for joining by Zoom, and gave some notes about the conduct of the meeting as follows:

- As we were unable to hold our AGM on the scheduled date of 27th July 2020, this is a reconvened meeting.
- Quorum: a quorum consists of a minimum of 10% of members. Currently we have just over 600 members. Business Secretary Ken Saunders has received a total of 79 proxy and other votes. Consequently, we already have a quorum for this meeting.
- Voting: a number of resolutions have been put to the members. These are listed '1 to 5' on the proxy voting forms sent to all members. Ken Saunders has recorded all the 79 responses.
- With 2 exceptions, all 79 votes were cast in favour of the resolution. In 2 cases, there was 1 abstention. In no case was any vote cast against a resolution.
- I mention the above because asking people to vote in person today would be impractical. Nevertheless, if anybody here today did not vote by post or email and wishes to do so, at the appropriate time, I will invite them to identify themselves, to state their voting intention, and we will do everything possible to record it.

2. Apologies for Absence

None had been received and none were presented at the meeting.

3. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting and Special General Meeting

Note: In 2019 an additional SGM was held in order to present and approve the accounts, which had not been available at the AGM. Both sets of minutes have been available on the website from shortly after the respective meetings.

The minutes of the AGM held on 22nd July 2019, and SGM held on 23rd September 2019, were presented as true records of the meetings. The motion to accept the minutes of both meetings was proposed by Carol Crossley, and seconded by Josephine Noyce. The motion was carried unanimously.

4. Matters Arising

No matters were raised.

5. Chair's report

Robert Hadland gave the following report:

Our AGM this October will mark the end of an unusual chapter in the 30-year history of Hastings & Rother U3A. A series of unpredictable changes, all brought about by Covid-19, have been many and varied for all our members.

I believe that members will want to acknowledge the sterling efforts, (collective and individual) made by your committee, to maintain a semblance of normal activities at such a difficult time. In my role in the Chair, I have worked with this group of people who have striven constantly for the benefit of the entire membership. I have been glad of their support and welcomed their opinions, always expressed in a forthright and positive manner. In this context I am happy to report that George Webster will have a full and able committee for the year ahead. I also want to draw attention to the role played by numerous volunteers who work behind the scenes in a variety of important activities.

As you know, our choice of venue and format for the AGM was limited. Despite this, I have strongly encouraged members to get involved in the process and suspect that many members have been pleasantly surprised to find access relatively easy. Nevertheless, there is no substitute for the easy sociability of face-to-face contact. This applies especially to interest group activities and other social events and we hope to resume these as soon as it is safe to do so.

In conclusion, I want to offer my appreciation to all members of H&R U3A for your support during my term of office. I particularly want to thank you for your forbearance in understanding and coping with the many changes made necessary by the current pandemic. I was very encouraged to find that 600 members have renewed their membership despite the lack of many of our normal activities. We shall do everything possible to resume 'normal service' in the near future. With every good wish for the future.

There were no questions or comments.

6. Treasurer's Report & Accounts

Gail Oswald (Treasurer) noted that the accounts and a proposed budget for the coming year had been sent in advance of the meeting. The budget had indicated a variety of scenarios based on different

subscription amounts and membership levels. In the event, the number of members joining/re-joining (600) had exceeded expectations, so although there will still be a deficit, this will be much lower than feared.

Robert commented that in the previous year there had been what the members considered an excess in the reserves, and the subscription had therefore been reduced from £18.50 per annum to £12. In order to get back on track, it was necessary this year to increase the subscription to £15. Robert noted that in 2015 the subscription had been £17, so 5 years later the subscription is still £2 less than this.

There were no questions or comments. Lorna Couldrick proposed that the accounts be approved; this was seconded by Richard Collisson, and agreed unanimously.

7. Appointment of Examiner of Accounts for the next financial year

It was noted that there is no requirement for the U3A accounts to be audited, but the accounts are examined by an external examiner. Belinda Potter (AIB Caifs) was appointed as examiner; this was proposed by Mary Hughes, seconded by Ginny Edwards, and unanimously agreed.

8. Election of officers and committee members

Note: There can be up to 12 committee members, all of whom are Trustees of the Hastings and Rother U3A charity. Four of these are Officers, who are elected to specific roles: Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary (known as Business Secretary). The other committee members may swap roles or take on additional roles, and some of the work involved in running the U3A is taken on by non-committee members. Two additional committee members may be co-opted during the year, who must then be elected at the next AGM if they are continuing; similarly, if someone is appointed to fill the specific role of a committee member who leaves, they must be elected at the next AGM. All committee members are usually elected for 3 years.

Existing Committee Members continuing – no election

Gail Oswald	Treasurer (Officer)
Josephine Noyce	Assistant Treasurer
Carol Crossley	Venues Co-ordinator
Lynda Wood	Groups Co-ordinator
Jenny Meteyard	Minutes Secretary
Barbara Spackman	Speakers Secretary

Non-Committee Roles (no election needed)

Patricia Jobling	Database & Initial Enquiries
Valerie Greenwood	SUN Area Representative & newsletter
Rosemary Bartholomew	Newsletter Team leader (continuing)

New & renewing nominations – to be elected

George Webster	Chair (previously Vice Chair) (Officer)
Mike Wilson	Vice Chair (co-opted as committee member during the year) (Officer)
Raquel Berdichevsky	Business Secretary (Officer)
Bruce Henderson	Membership Secretary (appointed during the year to replace Chris Legg)
Ginny Edwards	Committee Member (co-opted as a committee member during the year)

It was proposed by Hilary Moore and Joyce McCartney that all those nominated be elected, and this was agreed unanimously.

9. Any Other Business

- Jenny Meteyard expressed particular thanks to Robert Hadland (Chair) and Ken Saunders (Secretary), who are retiring from the committee, for their hard work and dedication, particularly in the difficult times created by the Covid-19 pandemic this year. Both would normally have retired in July, so because of the postponement of the AGM, we have benefited from an extra 3 months of their time, and this is much appreciated.
- George Webster introduced himself as the new Chair. He thanked the members for entrusting him with the role, and hoped that he would be able to live up to the high standards of his predecessors. He thanked Robert as the retiring Chair for the sterling job he has done, and Ken as retiring (Business) Secretary for doing an excellent job over the past 5 years in keeping us all on track and legal! Gift Tokens have been purchased for both Robert and Ken and will be conveyed to them in due course, since presentation in person at the meeting is not possible. George also thanked the committee for the time and work they put in to make everything work. He commented that usually the meeting is followed by tea and scones, but in a Zoom meeting, the members will need to provide their own! George finished by thanking all those who had attended, and hoping that all members will stay safe.

11. Date of the next Annual General Meeting

The next AGM will take place on 26th July 2021. The format of this meeting will depend on circumstances at the time.

The meeting closed at 10.50 a.m.

Signed

Date

Minutes were taken by Jenny Meteyard.