

EAST OF ENGLAND AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY,
 EAST OF ENGLAND SHOWGROUND, PETERBOROUGH.
 A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE.
 REGISTERED IN ENGLAND, CERTIFICATION OF INCORPORATION 1589922.
 REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 283654.

MINUTES of the THIRTY-NINTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING for MEMBERS of the ABOVE-NAMED COMPANY, held on TUESDAY 3rd NOVEMBER 2020 @ 6pm via Zoom

Present:

Rt Revd Stephen Conway, Bishop of Ely	President
Dr David Llewellyn	Incoming President
Mr R Bramley	Chairman
Mr C D Reynolds	Joint Vice Chairman
Mr J S G Paton	Joint Vice Chairman

Mr M Andrew	Mr R Barnwell DL	Mr I Beeby	Hon. G Bowyer	Mr N Burman
Mr A Davies	Revd G Dodgson	Mrs A Goodall	Mr B Gotting	Mrs K Graves
Mr B Harris	Mr N Harris	Mr R Hayden MBE	Mr P Horrell	Mrs C Myland
Mr J Orbell	Mr J Parrish	Mr JSG Paton	Mr S Peck	Mr D Reynolds OBE
Mr A Riddington	Mr N Rome	Mr M Sly	Mr J Wallace	Mrs B Wheat
Mr R Wilkinson				

Members:

Mr H Fowler	Mr W Haire	Mr J Hawksfield	Mrs M Orbell	Mr Stewart Papworth
Mr P Tate	Mr J Tribe	The Rt Hon Lord Taylor of Holbeach CBE		Mr R Wilson

In attendance:

Mr A Beattie	Interim CEO
Mrs A Queenborough	Chief Operating Officer
Mr Q Arnold	Finance Director
Mr R Tate	Chairman Showground Services Ltd
Mr J Lunn	Venue Director, Showground Services Ltd
Mrs A Rodziewicz	Note Taker

As a consequence of the global coronavirus pandemic and the Government's restriction on holding large meetings the 2020 AGM was held virtually via Zoom.

1. Notice Calling Meeting, Apologies for Absence

The Chairman read the Notice.

Apologies

Council Members

It was taken that Council members who had not registered for the Zoom link to join the AGM had in turn presented their apologies.

Honorary Life Vice Presidents, Honorary Vice Presidents and Members

It was taken that the HLVPs, HVPs and Members who had not registered for the Zoom link to join the AGM had in turn presented their apologies.

A minute's silence was observed for Mrs Margaret Allanby, Mrs Barbara Beazley, Mrs Margaret Brooks, Mrs Paddy Clark, Mr Stephen Papworth, Mr Jon Phillips and Mr John Ward.

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 26th June 2019

For accuracy the minutes to reflect that Mr R Barnwell DL was a Vice Lord Lieutenant at the time of the 2019 AGM.

The minutes were adopted with the aforementioned change.

Proposed by Mr D Reynolds OBE, DL and seconded by Mr J Parrish.

There were no matters arising.

3. Annual Report and Accounts

The Chairman spoke of the devastating effect the pandemic had on both the country's and Society's economy, as like all event venues the Showground had to close its doors to the public. This resulted in no third-party events being held (which is the Society's main source of income) and the Society / SGS having to cancel its own major activities including Equifest, Festival of Hunting, Just Dogs Live, Kids Country Food and Farming Day, Winter Stock Show, the East of England Farming Conference, the Peterborough and Bedford dinners, lectures and seminars.

The pandemic also necessitated the postponement the June AGM and March and June Council meetings in the hope of being able to hold them in person. However, restrictions were tightened and the only course available was to hold this AGM and following Council meeting virtually via Zoom.

The Chairman applauded the adaptability and resilience of both the Society and Showground Services staff, who have adapted well to new methods of working from home, social distancing and furlough where appropriate. Regrettably some difficult economic decisions had to be taken with a number of redundancies in order to streamline the business.

The Kids Country Programme adapted its offering by creating video presentations and on-line learning closely linked to key stages 1&2 to assist schools with lockdown learning.

The Marshal Papworth short course had to be cancelled though the team continued to provide support and counselling for those students already in the country studying for their Masters.

During this period contact was re-established with Marshal Papworth alumni and the success story of a graduate who is making a real difference within their community is published in the latest Society News.

The Development Committee and the Trustees are continually working to develop the Society's plans for the future and the Audit, Risk and Remuneration Committee, acting independently of the Board, have scrutinised the Trustees decisions and the due diligence process.

The Chairman viewed the next 2 or 3 years as a transition period during which the Society will acquire a new home and focus its energies on a robust and sustainable future based around its core principles of Agriculture, Agri Education and Rural Life.

Referring to post Brexit the Chairman considered the Society's role as a facilitator to offer genuine help to farmers and growers to tackle the challenges that lie ahead and adjust to the new thinking.

The pandemic also affected the sale of the land South of Oundle Road, resulting in the withdrawal of the original purchaser. Then following a period of renegotiation a further sale has now been agreed to another party. Matters are at an advanced stage and are now in the hands of solicitors.

The Chairman congratulated The Revd. Geoff Dodson on his recent ordination who together with a small team had been progressing the review of the Governance and Articles of Association which was reported upon further during the subsequent Council meeting.

Concluding the Chairman said that all the various strands, i.e. the sale and development of the Showground, the transition to a new home, a business case for the future and a review of governance were all part of a jigsaw with all the pieces needing to slot into place to cement the strategy and drive forward the Society's vision for the future.

The FD presented a summary of the Annual Report for the year ending 31st December 2019 which had been circulated to Members of the Society and posted on the Society's website with hard copies available on request.

Questions were invited and no questions or comments were raised.

The adoption of the Annual Accounts was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by the Hon. G Bowyer with a majority vote in favour confirmed by the Vice Chairman, Mr C Reynolds.

4. Election of Officers for 2020/2021**4.1 Honorary President**

The Chairman expressed the Society's sincere thanks to the outgoing President, the Rt. Revd Stephen Conway, Bishop of Ely, for both extending his term of office and his fulsome support of this Society; adding that he was delighted the Bishop will remain as Patron of the Marshal Papworth Fund.

Bishop Stephen replied that it had been a huge privilege to have been the President for an extended period. The Society was doing remarkable things and is set fair for a great future. It is not only about promoting the place of agriculture in our economy and in our culture but it is also about how we work intergenerationally with introducing our young ones to understand the food they enjoy but more importantly the Society's work with young people overseas through the Marshal Papworth scholarships to make a huge difference in their own country.

Concluding Bishop Stephen assured the Society of his ongoing support into the future to advance the cause of the Society in all of its varied work.

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The Chairman announced that Dr David Llewellyn, Vice Chairman of Harper Adams University had been invited to become the Society's President for 2020/2021 and had kindly accepted.

Dr David Llewellyn's earlier career involved posts at Queen Mary, University of London, King's College London and the Institute of Psychiatry.

He joined Harper Adams in 1998 as the Director of Corporate Affairs. He took over as Principal of Harper Adams University College in September 2009 and became the founding Vice-Chancellor of Harper Adams University in 2012.

As well as other accolades David was a Fellow of the Institution of Agricultural Engineers and of the Royal Agricultural Societies; and among other appointments he is currently the Chair of GuildHE and a member of the agri-food industry Agri-Skills Leadership Group.

Concluding the Chairman proposed the formal appointment of Dr David Llewellyn as President of the East of England Agricultural Society for the ensuing year. Seconded by Lord Taylor and the Hon. G Bowyer with a majority vote confirmed by the Vice Chairman, Mr C Reynolds.

**Dr David Llewellyn was unanimously elected as the Society's President for 2020/2021.**

Dr David Llewellyn thanked the Society for the honour of being appointed its President. Thanks were also given to Bishop Stephen for his dedication and service to the Society especially over the last year.

Dr David Llewellyn continued saying Harper Adams was the largest establishment for higher education for education and related disciplines with students from the UK and beyond. Harper Adams is steeped in farming, research in agricultural practise, animal health and welfare as well as work with a large number of business over the food chain. These courses/initiatives of generating the next generation of agriculturists and supporting those already in the industry correlate well with the Society's objectives.

Harper Adams already partner the Marshal Papworth Fund and it had pleasure in welcoming students from Africa.

Concluding Dr David Llewellyn said he looked forward to supporting the work of the Society and commended the resilience and adaptability demonstrated by the Society's team which was a quality equally applicable to agriculture in general.

**4.2 Members of Council**

The Chairman advised that the Board was fully aware of the articles requirement that Council and Trustees to step down for at least one year after a maximum of 9 years' service, which unsurprisingly affected almost 2/3rds of Council. A fair procedure is already being worked on in the background together with an overall review of governance and updating of the articles. For the time being until Council has had the time to review and comment on the work that the Rev. G Dodgson and his working group have been undertaking the Chairman proposed that in accordance with article 14.6 the 14 members of Council due to retire, some of which are caught by the 9 year rule, on this occasion are moved for re-election as Members of Council.

**4.2.1** A list of those members who had been nominated for re-election to Council pursuant to the Articles of Association was noted on the agenda and had been posted on the Society's website.

**The Chairman proposed the re-election of the 14 Members onto Council. Seconded by the Hon. G Bowyer and Mr M Sly and with the majority in favour confirmed by the Vice Chairman, Mr C Reynolds.**

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| 4.3 | <p><b>Auditors</b></p> <p>The Chairman proposed the re-appointment of Saffery Champness as the Society's auditors for the ensuing year; seconded by Mr M Sly and Mr J Wallace; with the majority in favour confirmed by the Vice Chairman, Mr C Reynolds.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Saffery Champness for their advice and help with the audit checks. The FD and his department had been thanked by the auditors for producing the accounts to a high standard.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 5.  | <p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><u>Winter Stock Festival</u></p> <p>Answering an emailed question received from Winter Stock Committee member, Mr Duncan Burton, asking for the Society's thoughts on Winter Stock 2021, the COO firstly acknowledged what a strong supporter Mr Burton was of the livestock activities of Society for which the Society was very thankful of.</p> <p>Mr Burton and the committee had seen a slow demise over the years with the festival and witnessed how the income and expenditure had been growing in different directions and increasingly so over the latter years. After the 2019 event it would be accurate to say the committee had anticipated it was the final year.</p> <p>The Society remains committed to considering alternative formats and in particular to ensure it continues with the all-important educational elements which are met at the moment through the College Challenge and the Young Stockperson of the year, notwithstanding prudent financials. A proposal had been put to the Trustees to consider that future events may be considered being held elsewhere and not exclusively on the Showground this proposal was also with a mind that it could be 2-3 years before the Society had secured a future home, with space to hold the festival, in line with its longer term strategy.</p> <p>This approach also led to an early exploration of whether the event could be hosted at the Melton Mowbray cattle market who have long supported and sponsored the event. Conversations also in this vein were also held with Thrapston.</p> <p>The COO said the Society aims to put on an appropriate programme of events subject to current and future restrictions that satisfy the aims and objectives of the Society, demonstrate our support of British farming, welfare standards and emphasis on quality in a post Brexit world. The 2021 budget includes investment towards supporting activity around livestock and would expect to resume further refinement of the detail of what this may actually turn out to be with the committee at an early point next year.</p> <p>The COO concluded saying she was more than happy to discuss further off line with Mr Burton before then.</p> <p><u>Dog Show</u></p> <p>Mr J Orbell advised that currently the 2020 judges have been contacted regarding appointments for 2021 and these are being sent to the Kennel Club for approval. The Kennel Club are allowing breed clubs who have cancelled in 2020 to have an extra show in 2021 and already 10 have asked to attach to our show – which will increase entries.</p> <p>The Secretary and Show Manager are considering extending the show, if they can, to 4 days to allow for social distancing. The committee are asking the Kennel Club they be exempt from benching which will not only help on social distancing but will also be quite a financial saving.</p> <p>As far as the actual show, if it does take place, all breeds will be timed and exhibitors may have to leave the Showground as soon as the judging is over to avoid unnecessary contact.</p> <p>There being no other business the meeting closed at 6.35pm.</p> |
|     | <p>East of England Showground, Peterborough PE2 6XE <a href="http://www.eastofengland.org.uk">www.eastofengland.org.uk</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |