

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

MINUTES of the FORTY THIRD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING for MEMBERS of the ABOVE-NAMED COMPANY, held on TUESDAY 3RD SEPTEMBER 2024 at 6pm at the MARRIOTT HOTEL, PETERBOROUGH BUSINESS PARK, LYNCH WOOD, PETERBOROUGH

Present:

Mr C D Reynolds		Chairman		
Mr S R Roberts		Vice Chairman		
Mr M Andrew JP	Mr I Beeby	Mr J Behrens	Mrs V Bliss	Mr N Burman
Mr A Clarkson	Miss E Craven	Mrs C Donovan	Miss A Goodall	Mr T Martin
Mr M Middleton	Mrs C Myland	Miss A Rome	Mr J Wallace	

Honorary Vice Presidents, Honorary Vice Presidents and Members:

Mr R Barnwell DL	Mrs A Beeby	The Hon. G Bowyer	Mr R Bramley	Mr A Davies
Mr H Fowler	Mr S Harris	Mr J Hawksfield	Ms A Morton	Mr J Orbell
Mrs A Page	Mr S Papworth	Mr J Parrish	Mr JSG Paton	Mr N P Rome
Mr J Tribe				

In attendance:	Mr A Beattie	Interim CEO
	Mr D Furey	Incoming CEO
	Mr Q Arnold	Finance Director
	Miss R Trolove	Agricultural Manager
	Mr S Jacob	Nominated Trustee
	Mr J Spencer	Nominated Trustee

1. Notice Calling Meeting, Apologies for Absence

The Vice Chair advise he would predominantly be leading the meeting as although the Chair was present he had only just been discharged from hospital.

Apologies:

Council Members – Mr PGR Horrell TD DL and Miss K Worboys
 EEAS Chief Operating Officer – Mrs A Queenborough

Honorary Life Vice Presidents, Honorary Vice Presidents and Members

Lord Iveagh	Lord Taylor	A F Farms	Mrs M Fyfe
Mrs G Hayden	Mr R Heygate	Mr F Hinch	Mr & Mrs Hope
Mr D Jones	Lt Col J Kaye LVO DL	Mr D Lee	Mr R Maudlin
Mr RT Nicholls	Ms J Plummer	Mr D Reynolds OBE	Mr & Mrs A Riddington
Mr M Sly	Mr R Sly	Mr R Squire	Mr C Spokes
Mr J Wake	Mrs I Wheat	Mr & Mrs B Wilkinson	Mr & Mrs R Worboys
Mr S Worboys			

The AGM was recorded for minuting purposes.

Opening the meeting the Vice Chair welcomed everyone to the Forty-Third AGM of the East of England Agricultural Society. He advised that the Members were welcome to join the following Council meeting though could not vote on any motions raised.

A minute's silence was observed to remember the members, friends, colleagues and Society supporters who had passed since the last AGM as well as anyone we had not been made aware of - Mr J Bates, Mrs N Bird, Mr B Brodie, Mr P Dickens, Mr A Jacobs, Mr P Marsom, Mrs M Orbell, Mrs M Precious, Mr J Reynolds, Mr J Riddington, Mrs S Riddington, Mr D Sly.

2.	<p>Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held 8th June 2023 As there were no matters arising Mr T Martin proposed the approval of the minutes. Seconded by Mr R Bramley. Approved by all.</p>
3.	<p>Directors Report and Annual Accounts The Vice Chair on behalf of himself and the Chairman acknowledged that producing the annual accounts was down to the efforts of the office team, Trustees, volunteers and supporters.</p> <p>The Vice Chair continued highlighting the following:</p> <p>Marshal Papworth - The calibre of the students attending the Marshal Papworth Certificates Awards was exceptional and the opportunities given to those on the courses was life changing.</p> <p>Festival of Hounds –It was would not have been possible to organise and deliver an event of this calibre without the enthusiasm and organisation of the COO Mrs Alison Queenborough.</p> <p>Other events – The Society will continue to embrace the next generation who will be the future leaders of agriculture businesses, education and food industry in the future.</p> <p>Transition period - Communication does need to improve as progress has been made even during this period, for example, a number of scholars going through our Scholarship Programme and a Trustees Away Day has been arranged to build on the Scholarship Programme as well as how to fund other programmes and activities aligned to agriculture, food and education which members have said are integrals for the future of the Society; also to be considered is research development, knowledge transfer and how to achieve this while not duplicating what is already been done.</p> <p>The Vice Chair thanked the Chair and the Board who have been so supportive over the past year and introduced the incoming permanent CEO, Mr Duncan Furey.</p> <p><u>Questions were invited</u></p> <p>Q. The Property Committee is listed as a working committee but it has not met for some years which raises the concern as to whether the committee is liable for decisions / actions taken without their knowledge.</p> <p>A. The Committee has not been disbanded and does still exist with the thinking to reconvene it sometime over the next 12 months to provide a sense check. The Board had delegated the responsibility to the Deal Team, who have done and are doing an inordinate amount of good work. Regarding liability – the Property Committee has no liability regarding the decisions and actions taken during the time the Property Committee was not meeting.</p> <p>Q. The new Chancellor could make taxation an issue for the Society’s development which would not have happened if the development had moved more quickly.</p> <p>A. I agree and consider there could be planning changes that could have an impact on the development e.g. affordable housing percentages.</p> <p>The current aim is to go for planning on 15th October and there is not much that can be done until the Society is in receipt of the funds from the development as the Society cannot spend money it does not have.</p> <p>Q. Is there a contingency plan/fund in place?</p> <p>A. We do have a contingency fund but would not have had one if activities, which cost a significant amount of money, had continued.</p> <p>When the Society is in receipt of the land sale funds these will be invested and the interest will be used for charitable activities/events. The Investment Committee will be asked to advise on how to achieve capital growth and use of income as it is vital these balance.</p> <hr/> <p>Taking the floor, the FD advised the accounts for year ending December 31st 2023 had been externally audited, formally approved by the Trustees and were now laid before the Society membership to be formally adopted.</p>

	<p>The auditor is Azets (formally Rawlinsons) and it was their first year as audit partners bringing a fresh pair of eyes and was pleased to report that it was a clean and unqualified audit with no adjusting items.</p> <p>2023 was the second full year of transition for the Society with many of its historical income streams now ceasing and the new increases in investment income not yet on line. At the request of the Trustees, 2023 was a year of carrying on with its programme of charitable activities while being conscious of keeping expenditure to a minimum and a lot has been achieved in that year with a much-diminished workforce, 3 of which were part time.</p> <p>The Statement of Financial activities on page 21 under Net Expenditure (which excludes investment gains and losses) is 545km made up of 250k for the general fund and 295k for restricted funds, primarily Marshal Papworth. This compares to 522k in 2022 which is very comparable to last year even though both income and expenditure have dropped dramatically this year. The drop in income and expenditure being due to no longer operating the Championship Dog Show or running a Food and Farming Day.</p> <p>While the Society is in the transition period, it is living off its reserves and reserves are defined as the unrestricted, non-operational cash and investments. The year ended with reserves of 5.65m which was a slight increase on the 5.43m the previous year; driven mainly by controlling costs and favourable investment gains. Importantly reserves remain high and can quite comfortably, if needed, support the Society through a number of years of transition.</p> <p>Cashflow on page 23 shows a 254k decrease in cash of which 228k was from the general fund and the balance was from restricted funds. Cash levels at the end of the year were just shy of 2.3m.</p> <p>The Marshal Papworth fund (detailed on page 35) dropped during the year from 2.066m to 1.858m. Now that it is below the 2m mark, it is expected that the fund will now continue to reduce and eventually be completely depleted on the assumption the current level of student scholarships are maintained and no additional funding is sourced.</p> <p>Summarising, the FD said 2023, excluding the Marshal Papworth fund, with the Society still in transition had actually increased its reserves by 0.2m with net expenditure controlled at 250k and cash outflow to 228k.</p> <p>The Vice Chair thanked the FD for talking through the accounts and expressed the Board's appreciation for steering the finances over the last year.</p> <p>The Vice Chair also thanked Trustees Messrs. Adam White and James Wallace for being helpful, constructive and challenging during the budget process.</p> <p>The adoption of the Annual Accounts was proposed by the Richard Bramley and seconded by the Chairman with the majority in favour.</p>
<p>4</p> <p>4.1</p> <p>4.2</p> <p>4.2.1</p> <p>4.2.2</p>	<p>Election of Officers for 2024/2025</p> <p><u>Honorary President</u> - It was felt inappropriate to announce the name of the invited President as although they had been invited to become President they had not yet formally accepted.</p> <p>On behalf of the Society the Vice Chair expressed a sincere thank you to the outgoing President Mr James Saunders Watson for his support and involvement during the past year.</p> <p><u>Members of Council</u></p> <p>In accordance with Article 14.6 and 14.6.2 the 8 Members of Council, listed below, retired: Mr M Andrew JP, Mr I Beeby, Mr N J Burman, Mr P G R Horrell TD DL, Mrs C Myland, Mr N P Rome, Mr P Sharpley and Mr J Wallace.</p> <p>On behalf of the Society the Chair thanked those retiring for their input, dedication, companionship and support they had given over so many years; and whose knowledge and experience would hold the Society in good stead for the future.</p> <p>Under Article 14.6 a nomination seeking re-election was received for Miss Anna Goodall. Proposed by the Mr T Martin and seconded by Mr Richard Bramley. Agreed by the majority.</p>

4.2.3	It was noted that Miss K Worboys and Mr Chris Guest had stood down last year.
4.2.4	<p><u>Nominations for election onto Council</u> The Chairman proposed the following nominations for election onto Council: The Hon. George Bowyer –seconded by Mr J Wallace. Agreed by the majority. Mr Richard Bramley - seconded by Mr J Wallace. Agreed by the majority. Mr Andrew Davies - seconded by Mr J Wallace. Agreed by the majority. Mr James Parrish - seconded by Mr J Wallace. Agreed by the majority. Mr Michael Sly - seconded by Mr J Wallace. Agreed by the majority.</p>
4.3	<p><u>Election of Auditors</u> The Vice Chair proposed the re-appointment of Azets under the provisions of Section 384 of the Companies Act 1985 as the Society’s auditors for the ensuing year. Proposed by Mr J Wallace. Seconded by Mrs C Donovan.</p>
5.	<p>Society Update The Interim CEO reported the following: Peterborough City Council (PCC) has assured the development will be put to committee with a recommendation for a decision on 15th October. The delays in planning are entirely related to PCC losing their Head and Deputy of Planning and having a case officer overseeing the application. AEPG have generated a very large amount of support from various stakeholders and has addressed all issues raised and beyond with the information provided for an outline planning application. A non-determination application has not been submitted as it would take time for PCC to consider and accept it. The initial outline planning permission was not registered by PCC until several months beyond the due date and if a non-determination application was pursued it would add a further 18months/2 years to the project as well as increased costs, with no guarantee it would be successful. Work continues to work collaboratively with PCC planners to push through planning as quickly as possible with the developer extremely keen to progress and will sign a contract hopefully towards the end of this month which would be an exchange of contracts with planning completion.</p> <p>Q. What is the likelihood of planning receiving application approval? A. Reports are being written the indications are PCC will support it. All 42 consultees have been successful and signed off. AEPG are working closing with the assigned case officer to ensure any questions have been fully addressed. The Trustees have recently engaged LSH to ensure that when the final deal is presented the Society has fulfilled all its charitable objectives and compliant with charity law. The Deal Team was set with an initial target regarding a receipt for the Society which it is envisaged with be exceeded by a significant amount.</p> <p>Q. Has anything been received regarding Section 106? A. An initial aspirational figure has been received from PCC and AEPG have appointed a number of experts to mitigate Section 106 costs with an aim to reduce it by approximately £10m. The other question is affordable housing and government policy.</p> <p>Q. What about SIL money? A. There is a Section 106 on this development and the SIL is a community infrastructure levy that is very similar in that it supports local infrastructure. There are other uncertainties regarding deductible costs such as depth of foundations and highway costs which are being strenuously worked on to reduce in order to receive the best possible receipt. Future housing charges are also being worked on to reduce the Section 106. A huge amount of work continues until the deal is submitted to the Trustees for approval.</p> <p>Q. Is it likely to have the developer signed up as quickly as mentioned?</p>

A. The developers are fully aware of the situation with the planners and have approved the work carried out by the Promoter Team and do not see any potential restrictions for them in the contract subject to the legal clauses being agreed.

There are a number of developers who are at an earlier stage and are walking away from deals because with the new government there are so many unknowns.

Those things are being worked on and also by external independent experts not just work being done in house.

Q. My concern is the delay?

A. It is in the interests of the Society and Developer to sign sooner rather than later?

One cannot make decisions with hindsight; it is about making the right decision with the right information provided at the right time which is independently verified.

Q. How is the land split and will there still be a leisure centre?

A. Part of the deal is structured so AEPG taken on that area of land and develop it, which is key to unlocking the planning on the rest of the site. The Local Plan application was for only 650 houses and by developing the leisure facility (which was a condition of the Outline Planning Application), there it will enhance the land value because the developers and PCC recognise the value that would come to the city from having the leisure facility – it will generate in excess of £50m per year to the local economy.

The Society was offered a percentage share of that but the Board, at that time, decided it was not core to the Society's charitable activities so have enhanced the sale value the charity will receive as a consequence of not receiving a percentage share.

Q. Will the money received include that percentage.

A. Yes.

RASC Conference 2024

Miss Ruth Trolove, Agricultural Manager of the Society received EEAS funding to attend the RASC Conference in Scotland and talked through the highlights of the conference as follows:

The grant received covered the cost of the conference and a contribution towards travel and accommodation.

The conference took place in Scotland and was split into 4 key sessions being the pre-tour, the next generation, the CEO and the main conference and I attended the next gen and main conference.

The Next Generation session was a 1.5 day event and the attendants from across the commonwealth were under the age of 40.

Graeme Parker spoke of his journey to his cattle hoof trimming business

Jim Shanks the only commercial tomato grower in Scotland focused his talk on perseverance.

There was a visit to Saughland farm run by Ben and Owen which was particularly relevant as both are under the age of 30

There was local EEAS representation from:

Tom Martin spoke on how the Society sponsored his attendance at the 2016 Conference and how that led to the creation of Farmer Time as well as how agriculture can be weaved into the curriculum and benefits the children and farmers involved.

and

Mike Duxbury from Bedfordshire who spoke of his business Inclusive Farm which aims to show that those with a wide variety of abilities can work on a farm as well as giving them the opportunity to have hands on experience. Mike was the first blind student to attend a Warwickshire Agricultural College in the UK.

The Next Generation Dinner provided an opportunity to open up conversation beyond the conference and agriculture.

The main conference Speakers

Ken Sloan from Harper Adams University spoke of how he used his lack of agricultural knowledge to his advantage and how the university had welcomed more students in recent years from a non-agriculture background.

Sarah Miller, CEO of Quality Meat Scotland spoke on the creation of the brand of Scottish meat making it something to be proud of.

Professor Jude Capper of Harper Adams University spoke of her vision for the future of the livestock industry by using science and statistics which were easy to understand and digest.

Minnete Batters, Baroness Batters spoke on how she relied on others to delivery while she was at the NFU and trusting the relevant teams to supply her with the correct information. She drove home the importance of finding a balance in work and taking time away for yourself.

Marla Calico spoke of the importance of agricultural societies, fairs and shows within the community, and how the societies help its members saying shows, events and fairs are good for mental health by encouraging people outdoors into a different setting and socialising.

Summarising Ruth said she had met so many interesting people and was taking away that community is an essential point. Our Society is still delivering for the community, even if not holding its own events through:

Education with the Jake Hankins Award, Kids County and Marshal Papworth Scholarships to promote knowledge transfer.

Sponsorship to the Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire Young Farmers Rallies and Thrapston Fat Stock Shows which promotes the industry and promotes social engagement. Plus the loaning of equipment to Heckington Show and a local Pony Club.

Funding scholars such as Milly Fyfe and Liz Genever who have made the most of our Scholars Programme and using their knowledge to educate and advocate in the agricultural community. Tom Martin used his grant to create a renowned educational programme.

AGM and Council meetings provide an opportunity to catch up and network.

Even though our Society's name is not always front and centre but we are helping to provide support for events and I believe we can do more and as we move into the grant funding era we need to reconnect with those in our counties to ensure we fund areas that are relevant and meet the needs of the community.

Ruth thanked the Society for awarding the grant to attend the conference saying the next conference will be held in South Africa and would encourage anyone with the time to attend.

The Scholars Programme started a year ago giving an opportunity for members to apply for grant funding to attending life changing and career defining courses, events and experiences. During that time eight applicants have applied and four have been awarded a grant.

A video was played from Milly Fyfe who received funding through the Scholarship Programme to participate in the TV Presenter One-to-One Coaching programme.

The Vice Chair thanked Ruth for sharing her experience and those on the Scholars Committee who pushed hard to start the programme.

The Scholars Programme started a year ago giving an opportunity for members to apply for grant funding to attending life changing and career defining courses, events and experiences. During that time eight applicants have applied and four have been awarded a grant.

	<p>The Vice Chair invited the newly appointed permanent CEO, Duncan Furey to say a few words. Duncan said he was looking forward to joining the Society's Executive Team and while the Society is making a significant transition actually very little would change as it will continue to deliver its aims and objectives, for example many activities will continue but will just not have a physical location and the Society will not run events.</p> <p>During his career he has been both a grant writer and grant maker having worked for a number of foundations and therefore aware of the complexity of awarding money well.</p> <p>He was aware of the huge amount of work required before the Society is awarding grants with the need for a balance between monitoring, evaluation, learning, how much money to give and the staff required to do that.</p>
6.	Any Other Business There being no other business the meeting closed at 7.30pm.
	FitzRoy House, East of England Showground, Peterborough PE2 6XE www.eastofengland.org.uk