
RE AGENDA ITEM 2 – MINUTES OF THE AGM 2019

Minutes of the 57th Annual General Meeting of the Devon Wildlife Trust, held at the University of Exeter, Stocker Road, Exeter on Saturday 16 November 2019 at 11.00am

The President, Prof Iain Stewart MBE, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He explained that the Chair of the Board of Trustees, Suzanne Goodfellow, was unable to be present due to bereavement. 231 members were present (the highest attendance in DWT's history).

The President chaired the meeting. All voting was carried out by a show of hands.

1. Apologies for absence

Nick Atkinson, Rebecca Bower, Rebecca Broad, Andrew Burns, Kay Callis, Suzanne Goodfellow, Pamela Keetch, Dave Leggett, Pam Mercer and John Walker

2. Minutes of the 2018 AGM held on 10 November

The minutes were approved and signed.

3. Trustees' Annual Report

In the absence of the Chair of the Board, trustee Dr Mike Moser presented the Report. He reminded members that the Trustees' Annual Report, which was a legal requirement, was contained within the full accounts, on pages 1-32 and he then presented an overview of the range of Devon Wildlife Trust's activities during 2019-20.

Mike Moser proposed that the Trustees' Annual Report be adopted. David Bailey seconded the proposal and all being in favour, the Report was duly adopted.

4. Audited Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2019 and the Auditors' Report

The Hon Treasurer, Richard Clack, was pleased to report that it had been a good year. Unrestricted funds had increased and there were sufficient funds to meet the requirements of the Reserves Policy set by the Board of Trustees. This financial cushion meant that the organisation would be better able to deal with the challenges of grant funding. He encouraged all members to read the accounts, which contained details of the Trust's various sources of funding and how it spent its money. The Hon Treasurer thanked members and volunteers for their support. The Accounts did not reflect the enormous amount of unpaid work given by volunteers.

The Director of Resources and Marketing, Penny Mason, presented some key points: –

The Group's income had totalled £5,236,187 and expenditure £4,168,784. The result at year end was a significant surplus of £1,067,508. This was largely due to generous contributions from members and a large legacy. Unrestricted funds (excluding changes in fixed asset values) increased by £1,113,399. This had enabled DWT to set aside strategic (Designated) reserves of £1,000,000 that included a Strategic Development Fund of £835,538 to fund initiatives linked to DWT's Strategic Plan and funds linked to the enhancements to the estate and development of the Records Centre. The level of critical (Free) reserves had increased to £829,665. This was in line with DWT's updated Reserves Policy and meant that the Trust had sufficient unrestricted reserves to manage liquidity and risk and make planned strategic investments. Minimum critical reserves were set at £1m, but the current Policy defined a need for £2.2m strategic reserves to support

some of the key priorities in DWT's Strategic Plan. Levels of reserves needed to reflect the needs of the charity and the context it was in, but the Charity Commission's view was that between 3-6 months running costs of a charity was appropriate. Income had performed really well in the year and DWT had a diverse range of income sources. DWT had updated its ethical investment policy. Tight budgets over recent years had led to underinvestment in some assets. DWT's small central team was overstretched and more should be invested in it.

Regarding DWT's trading subsidiaries, Devon Wildlife Enterprises had made a small surplus. Devon Wildlife Services had made a small deficit on its commercial activities and had had a mixed year (full details were included in the Trustees Annual Report).

In conclusion, the DRM said that the Group had achieved a clean audit and a good year end result. DWT was still hugely ambitious and had many challenges to face including the climate emergency.

The Hon Treasurer proposed that the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2019 be adopted. Nigel Rendle seconded the proposal and all were in favour. The Report of the Auditors to the Members was printed on pages 33-35 of the Accounts and they confirmed that the Accounts gave a true and fair view of the state of the Group's and Charity's affairs.

5. Election of Board members

It was noted that Mr RJ Clack, Mr FV Clarke and Mr TJ Smale were retiring from the Board. Mike Moser thanked them for their valuable contributions as trustees and gifts were presented.

The Board nominated Ms S Goodfellow for re-election. Jeanne Cooper proposed that Ms S Goodfellow be re-elected, seconded by Roy Jeffery, all were in favour.

The President then drew attention to the fact that the next six candidates had been proposed for election at the last AGM but he had omitted to call for a show of hands for each candidate. As recorded in a post meeting note to the Minutes of the 2018 AGM, to be sure of legitimate appointment, the Board subsequently co-opted the candidates and they therefore now had to stand for election at this AGM. The Chair called for a proposer, seconder and vote for each in turn.

Vicky Pope proposed that Miss RA Broad be elected, seconded by Barry Henwood, all were in favour. John Whetman proposed that Commodore AP Burns be elected, seconded by Tony Jackson, all were in favour. Julia McCord proposed that Mrs GD Castle be elected, seconded by Alan Ramage, all were in favour. Maggie Harbour proposed that Ms G McKenzie be elected, seconded by Sandy Evans, all were in favour. Vernon Clarke proposed that Mrs H Nathanson be elected, seconded by Hazel Davies, all were in favour. Peta Foxall proposed that Prof VD Pope be elected, seconded by Julia McCord, all were in favour.

The Board nominated Miss RM Bower for election. Nigel Rendle proposed that Miss RM Bower be elected, seconded by Roy Jeffery, all were in favour.

6. Appointment of the Auditors

The Hon Treasurer proposed the re-appointment of Francis Clark and that the Board be authorised to decide their remuneration. David Robertson seconded the proposal and all were in favour.

The Chair closed the formal meeting at 11.53am.