

SURREY WILDLIFE TRUST

MINUTES OF THE 50th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held Saturday 14 November 2009, 1.30pm

At University of Surrey Management School

Present

Approx. 100 Trust Members

In attendance

Ron Pritchard Chairman
Alan Jordan Menzies Accountants
Trustees
Trust staff

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Ron Pritchard welcomed members to the meeting.

Apologies were received from:

Prof. Sir Ghillean Prance
Prof. David Bellamy
Mary Adler
Heather Hawker
Angus Stovold
Barbara Webb

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the last AGM were agreed.

3 TO APPOINT OR RE-APPOINT THE PATRON, PRESIDENT, VICE PRESIDENTS AND HONORARY MEMBERS

The following were duly re-appointed:

Patron	Prof. Sir Ghillean Prance FRS
President	Dr. David Bellamy OBE
Vice Presidents	D Hulyer G Lucas OBE, FLS J Montgomery B Webb
Hon. Members	Sir David Attenborough Mrs J F Covey Mr C B Carr P Fernee

Dr A Lindley
D G Potts
M Sennett
Mrs M Adler MBE
Mrs J Pankhurst
Mrs M Harris

The above appointments were proposed and seconded from the floor with members voting. None against and no abstentions the motion was carried.

4 TO RE-ELECT TRUSTEES AS MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

The Chairman advised members that in future Trustees would serve terms of 1, 2 or 3 years depending on their length of service to start a new process of length of service. New Trustees would serve a maximum term of 9 years (3 X 3 year terms).

The following were the first group to stand for re-election:

Paul Collins
John Edwards
David Starkey
Pam Whyman

The above appointments were proposed and seconded from the floor. None against and no abstentions the motion was carried.

5 TO APPOINT THE AUDITORS

5.1 The recommendation was that the Auditors Menzies LLP be re-appointed.

The appointment was proposed and seconded from the floor. None against and no abstentions the motion was carried.

6 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE COUNCIL'S REPORT, THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND AUDITOR'S REPORT

6.1 The Treasurer Sue Rooke made a statement to Members.

- Sue Rooke Treasurer reminded members that the accounts were laid out differently from those of a commercial company as profit was not a concern for charities.
- The accounts showed all the resources and how they had been used. Some funds were restricted in what they could be used for, others were general funds for any charitable purpose.
- Income had risen and membership numbers now were above 26,000.
- The challenge was to bring the General Fund up to a target range of £600K - £1m.
- Trading results for NPWP were also a challenge but there was a new manager and a number of other changes which it was hoped would improve profitability.
- The recession had not hit the Trust badly so far but SWT was not complacent as the impact on the charity sector had lagged behind others.

6.2 The Auditor Alan Jordan introduced himself as Head of The Charitable sector at Menzies, he had taken over from Alan Skinner who was retiring. He gave an unqualified report to Members present. He explained the detail of SWT's financial affairs and that the Trustees Report was very sound.

7 QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

- **Q** A member queried the election of the Auditors as they had no knowledge about how good the auditors were and felt they couldn't easily vote.
A The response was that the Trustees recommended the auditors to the members as they knew they were happy with their work.
- **Q** The financial situation at NPWP was raised.
A The sawmill had come with the other land from SCC as part of the wider contract but was necessarily a separate trading company. It had always struggled to make a profit but SWT had widened the product range, invested in staff and buildings and it also made the countryside furniture for the county council as well as SWT and other wildlife Trusts. The company's profitability was being closely monitored.
- **Q** A member queried the use of an agency to recruit members.
A It was explained that this was the most cost effective way and used by all 47 wildlife trusts, many other methods having been tried in the past. The Chairman stated that increasing membership numbers were a way of demonstrating the Trust's connection with the people of Surrey. The CEO advised that on line recruitment would be available in 2010.
- **Q** The question of how SWT compared with other wildlife Trusts was raised.
A SWT is the largest Wildlife Trust in England on land managed but Essex WT, Devon WT and BBOWT receive higher annual incomes.
- The printing errors on the summarised accounts were pointed out and notes by members.
- The retirement of Vice President Barbara Webb was mentioned and thanks to her for her long involvement with the Trust were given.

7 FORMAL CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chairman closed the meeting at 2pm.