

Minutes of the 44th Annual General Meeting of the Otter Valley Association

held at

7.30pm Monday 12 June 2023 at the Peter Hall, Budleigh Salterton

PRESENT

Officers of the Executive Committee.

Chair - Bob Wiltshire,

President - Haylor Lass,

Treasurer/Membership - Martin Smith,

Secretary - Jane Kewley,

Also present in the room were Trustee Geoff Porter and 26 other Members of the Otter Valley Association and guest speaker Ed Parr Ferris from Devon Wildlife Trust.

Action

The Chair welcomed OVA Members to the meeting and introduced Executive Committee members present.

The Chair confirmed that a quorum was present.

1.00 APOLOGIES

The Secretary confirmed that apologies had been received from trustees, Chris Hodgson & Dee Woods together with members Nick & Gill Speare, Iain Ure, Jacqui Ruhlig, Jon Roseway, John & Joy Richards, Chrissie & Mike Calvert, Derek & Elizabeth Carter. Late received apologies Wes Healey and Pete Harvey.

2.00 MINUTES of the Previous AGM held on 17 May 22

The Secretary confirmed that the draft Minutes of the previous AGM on 17th May 2022 have previously been made available to Members and have previously been agreed by the Executive Committee as a true reflection of that meeting.

Trevor Waddington proposed and Peter Duke seconded the proposal to approve the Minutes as a true reflection of the previous AGM which was unanimously approved by the members by a show of hands. The Chair asked the Secretary to sign the Minutes on his behalf as a true reflection of that meeting.

3.00 MATTERS ARISING

The Chair asked the President to update the meeting on the approval by and registration with the Charity Commission of the updated OVA Constitution approved by the members at the 2022 AGM.

The President explained that while most of the updated Constitution had been approved by the Charity Commission, the wording of the 'Objectives' Clause which were largely unchanged from the previous Constitution were rejected by the CC as not in keeping with their current criteria for charity objectives to be for the 'public benefit'.

The President explained that he had made some minor changes to the wording of the Objectives to refer to 'Promote for the public benefit' instead of 'Encourage' for the various objectives. He confirmed that this was not considered to be a significant change requiring reapproval by members at an AGM.

The Charity Commission response is now awaited and once approved the formal application can be made to lodge the updated Constitution with the Charity Commission.

**Executive
Committee**

4.00 ANNUAL TRUSTEES REPORT and ACCOUNTS

The Chair confirmed that he had nothing further to add to his introductory comments in the Trustees Report which had been produced in sufficient time for all members to view it prior to the meeting, with further copies available at the meeting.

The Chair handed over to the Treasurer to comment on the Treasurers Report and Accounts included Trustees Report.

The Treasurer thanked Brian Leveridge for his help in preparing the accounts, and his 20+ years as the Independent Examiner. Thanks were echoed by the Members present.

The Treasurer asked if there were any questions arising. There were none raised by Members.

Heather Fereday proposed and Brian Leveridge seconded approval of the Trustees Report including the Accounts which was unanimously approved by the Members by a show of hands.

5.00 ELECTION of TRUSTEES as OFFICERS

The Secretary reported that there was only one candidate for each Officer post, all of whom had been nominated and seconded.

Chair – Haylor Lass

Vice Chair - Bob Wiltshire

Treasurer - Martin Smith

Secretary - Jane Kewley

The election of the Officers was carried by a unanimous show of hands of the Members present.

6.00 ELECTION of other TRUSTEES

The Secretary reported that nominations have been received for only 3 further Trustees to serve on the Executive Committee, each of whom had agreed to stand and have been nominated and seconded. The nominees are;

Chris Hodgson

Geoff Porter

Dee Woods

The election of the Trustees was carried by a unanimous show of hands of the Members present.

7.00 APPOINTMENT of the INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

The Treasurer advised the meeting that following Brian Leveridge's retirement from the role, David Connor had agreed to act as the Independent Examiner for the OVA. The appointment of David Connor as the Independent Examiner was proposed by Brian Leveridge and seconded by Trevor Waddington before being carried by a unanimous show of hands of the members present.

8.00 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.01 OVA Storage facility – the outgoing Chair made a plea to members to help find a small storage facility for the OVA equipment and publications which need to be relocated by the end of the month.

All

8.02 Future of the OVA – the President and newly elected Chair, Haylor Lass paid tribute to the outgoing chair, Bob Wiltshire who has guided the OVA through 5 difficult years with the Covid lockdowns and aftermath, and a perpetual shortage of people willing and able to take an active part in the organisation.

The President explained that there is plenty happening in our world for the OVA to take an interest and active part in, from the climate crisis, through changes in planning policy and farming practices to the growing realisation of the vital importance of our wildlife and its habitat.

In preparing for this AGM the Executive Committee were on the brink of having to propose closure of the organisation due to a lack of candidates for Officers/Trustees.

The President was planning to retire from the Executive Committee but agreed to the nomination as chair, for one year only, to obtain the seven trustees necessary for the continuance of the OVA. And to pick up the role of interim editor for the newsletter for the summer edition only.

The President explained that ideally another four or five trustees are required to restore a viable and active organisation and asked members to seriously consider what they can do for the OVA.

If becoming a trustee and being part of the Executive Committee does not appeal, volunteers could assist with the newsletter or one-off events, reporting to the Executive Committee. Members were asked to talk to one of the Officers/Trustees to discuss they may be able to contribute.

All

9.00 PROPOSED DATE OF THE NEXT AGM – will be confirmed at a later date.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.50pm