

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 9 October 2019

Kibworth Cricket Club Fleckney Road, Kibworth, Leics, LE8 0HG

Present: Rick Hoyland – Trustee (RH)
 John Marriott – Nominated Trustee (JM)
 Caroline Pick – Retiring Trustee (CP)
 Jill Prior – Note Taker and Committee Administrator (JP)
 Tony Simpson – Honorary Treasurer (TSi)
 Tony Stott – Acting Chair and Trustee (TS)
 Simon Bentley, Director of Rutland and Leicestershire Wildlife Trust (Speaker)
 31 CPRE members and friends also in attendance

Welcome
Tony Stott (TS) welcomed all members and Simon Bentley and thanked them for attending the AGM.
AGM Business
<p>TS highlighted that it was currently an important time for CPRE nationally due to the charity undertaking a major rebranding exercise.</p> <p>TS welcomed Louise Hall informing the meeting that she had recently joined CPRE National Office in the role of Volunteer Development Officer. This role would involve trying to increase membership and encourage new volunteers across the Region.</p> <p>TS invited members to read the papers that had been shared with them to understand the work that CPRE Leicestershire had carried out over the past year. TS also emphasised that the main focus during the year had been the Strategic Growth Plan and proposed A46 Expressway and this work would continue incorporating climate change as well.</p> <p>TS informed the meeting that Caroline Pick (CP) was retiring from her role as Trustee due to her 6 year duration coming to an end and expressed his deep thanks for all the hard work and effort that she had put into the Branch during this time which he had found invaluable. TS commented that CP would remain on the SGP Task Group where her valuable input into the SGP and proposed A46 Expressway would continue.</p> <p>TS also advised that John Marriott (JM) had recently agreed to join the Branch as a Trustee and outlined JM's background in transport which would be of significant benefit going forward. TS also advised that Helena Edwards (HE), who was unable to attend this evening, had also agreed to join as a Trustee and outlined her experience and expertise.</p>
Minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2018
The minutes of the previous meeting had been shared with all those present. CP proposed that these be accepted and TSi seconded this. All AGREED that the minutes were a true and accurate record of the 2018 AGM meeting and TS duly signed them.

Trustees Report

Rick Hoyland (RH) gave an overview of the Trustees Report which had been shared with all those present. RH also expressed his thanks to CP for her contribution to the Branch during the past 6 years and to this end commented that the 6-year term of office may need to be reviewed within the Constitution to offer more flexibility. RH welcomed the 2 new Trustees to the Branch and commented that Janie Martin had sadly stepped down as President for the Branch.

RH highlighted the SGP public meeting that had been held earlier in the year which had involved joint working with SELAG and WWRA and also drew attention to the swathes of countryside that could be lost due to the SGP and proposed A46 Expressway together with the proposed new housing developments.

RH also stated that the Branch was made up of a small group of volunteers and sometimes lacked local knowledge outside of Charnwood and Harborough and highlighted the need for more volunteers to enable the Branch to gain wider representation and urged members to talk to any of the Trustees following the meeting if they were willing to get involved..

Financial Report

Tony Simpson (TSi) gave an overview of the Branch's financial report of which a printed copy had been shared with all members present.

TSi confirmed that the Branch was in a healthy position and the main expenditure for the year had been on SGP Consultancy and administration costs. TSi also gave reassurance that there was a healthy balance of +£41k in the business savings account and confirmed that the accounts shared would be the final accounts that would be sent to the Charities Commission.

TSi outlined the procedure for any expenditure stating that it had to be in full agreement with the Trustee Committee and that any cheques raised needed to be signed off by 2 Trustees.

Questions from members

A member enquired how many members there were in CPRE Leicestershire and where did the membership income come from. TS replied that the income is from a share of subscriptions from members and also the Region has a share. TS also clarified that CPRE Leicestershire was a charity in its own entirety together with being part of the National Charity. TS stated that currently membership stood at approximately 250 and briefly explained the way in which National Office interpret membership numbers in working out the branch share of subscriptions.

Another member expressed her concerns over the new logo commenting that CPRE was losing its campaigning identity in relation to the countryside and how would this CPRE from other similar charities. TS replied that the new campaign was focussed on engaging more people and getting them to enjoy the countryside.

A further member commented that things needed to be changed within CPRE and endorsed the new logo and questioned where major changes were going to be made in the future. TS replied that the new logo would be introduced over the next few months and that the final strategy was being finalised with a view of engaging with younger people and understanding how they saw CPRE. Councillor Graves, also a member of the audience, echoed his support for CPRE and the need to engage with younger people. TS reiterated that CPRE has been seen as a negative organisation but was now engaging more with proper solutions going forward. TS confirmed that CPRE had always been about good planning and was hopeful that the new approach would reach a wider society.

Another Parish Councillor commented on his Parish's Neighbourhood Plan highlighting that there was a need for a positive approach so that what was required was protected as well.

Another member of the audience questioned whether the current planning issues and Government were being actively pursued by National Office. TS gave assurance that the National Office constantly lobbied Government around green belt issues and commented again that the new strategy to be introduced would make CPRE a campaigning organisation.

A further member of the audience questioned the current status of CPRE in relation to the SGP proposals. TS replied that the SGP had been endorsed by all Leicestershire Council but highlighted that Harborough Council were now having second thoughts and also stated that 3 MP's had written to the Members Advisory Group (MAG) opposing the plans for the SGP. TS also confirmed that CPRE Leicestershire were in constant contact with local MP's highlighting the names of Mr Edward Argar and Mr Neil O'Brien. TS commented that climate change had now become a key area of interest for Leicester County Council and gave reassurance that climate change impact would be a strong topic for CPRE Leicestershire in relation to the SGP and Proposed A46 Expressway.

A question was also raised around the timescale of the proposed new road and TS replied that a change in Government may have a major impact on any decisions made around the road. CP also highlighted that Theresa May as PM had stated that the UK would be carbon neutral by 2050 and that this timing coincided with the same timescale for the SGP.

The final question raised highlighted that Leicester County Council had recognised that there was a climate emergency and drew attention to a campaign that had been organised and the encouraging number of people that had turned up to understand more about this and made decisions about what they wanted LCC to look at. TS confirmed that CPRE Leicestershire was actively looking into this area as well.

Councillor Graves reiterated the need for people who were passionate to pass on their concerns to their local councillor so that these concerns can be highlighted to the Leaders.

TS thanked everyone for their contribution to the meeting and closed questions at 7.40 p.m.

TS highlighted that TSi wished to continue as Treasurer. This was proposed by RH and seconded by CP. **Unanimously agreed.**

TSi proposed that the following Committee members, who had nominated themselves for re-election be approved. Tony Stott and Rick Hoyland. **Unanimously agreed.**

TS welcomed John Marriott and Helena Edwards as a new member to the Committee and thanked them for standing for election. They were subsequently proposed and seconded. **Unanimously agreed.**

TSi proposed that Tony Squires, who was absent from the meeting, be re-elected as Vice President and RH seconded this. **Unanimously agreed.**

TS introduced Simon Bentley, Director of Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust highlighting that CPRE had a keen interest in nature and biodiversity and welcomed his talk on Creating Living Spaces