

Minutes of Woodcraft Folk AGM 2017

Held Saturday 23 September at the Birmingham & Midland Institute, Birmingham

Morning session

The morning session was chaired jointly by Sonia Kelly (GC member) and Tom Gower (GC Vice-Chair).

[The company AGM was convened]

The minutes of Annual General Meeting 2016 were accepted without amendment.

There were no matters arising.

The candidates for election were introduced.

Report for Standing Orders Committee

David Neibig gave the report.

The meeting was quorate for company business because there were 65 votes present (including proxy votes) and quorum for company business is 61.

The meeting was not quorate for policy motions (i.e. motions 1 to 6) because proxy votes cannot be counted for policy business.

The policy motions (1 to 6) would be debated and voted on. The results would be purely indicative but GC would take the results into account when making decisions during the year.

The voting system for motions and elections was explained.

The election system would be Single Transferable Vote. Voting for the elections would be open over lunch. Nominations for the elections had been reopened in the morning and the elections were now competitive.

Two tellers (Tom and Arwel) and two scrutineers (Jack and Clare) were elected.

Consideration of the Annual Report & Accounts and the motion: "That the annual report and financial statements of Woodcraft Folk for the year ended 31 December 2016 be received and accepted."

Jon Nott, General Secretary, presented the Trustees Annual Report

Roland Susman, National Treasurer, presented the accounts.

The motion regarding the annual report financial statements was carried.

Re-appointment of Auditors: motion that Buzzacott LLP be re-appointed auditors and that they be paid for their services a sum to be determined by General Council.

The motion was carried.

Obituaries

A minute's silence was held for those members who had died since the last AGM, followed by the saying of the Envoy.

Speech by guest speaker – Lloyd Russell-Moyle, MP for Brighton Kemptown

Lloyd, a former Chair of General Council started by saying that being at the AGM felt like a homecoming. He welcomed the positive news from the Trustees Annual Report and passed on the following message of support from Jeremy Corbyn MP:

“My good friend Lloyd Russell-Moyle MP is bringing my message to the Woodcraft annual meeting. I am a huge supporter of the principles and traditions of The Woodcraft Folk of peace, protecting and sustaining the natural world and the rights of all people to live in peace and dignity.

Through many Woodcraft camps I have learned so much and enjoyed the wonderful sense of community. Everywhere I go somebody always says to me how much they learned from Woodcraft. My solidarity support and greetings to you all and my best wishes for the great future in helping to make a decent world.”

Lloyd was looking forward to 2020 International Camp and informed the meeting that Jeremy Corbyn commits to come to join us there and to camp with us.

Lloyd reported that he is pleased to share an office with Woodcraft Folk's other MP, Alex Sobell.

Woodcraft gives young people political awareness, which is very important. Woodcraft gives young people the skills to make a difference in the world.

His Woodcraft experience had a great effect on him. Many Woodcrafters go on to take up roles working for communities and society.

Youth work (particularly open door youth work) is very important. It has been decimated but Woodcraft remains a key pillar.

Woodcraft needs to work with similar organisations (including Scouts etc.) to make sure that voice open voluntary youth work is heard in parliament.

Lloyd offered to pay Woodcraft's fee for affiliation to the British Youth Council.

Lloyd reported that he will chair the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Youth Affairs and hopes that Woodcraft Folk will play a big role.

Woodcraft Folk's role is to remind country it cannot solve problems through war. These are dangerous times. We must talk to solve problems.

Brexit will prevent much other vital parliamentary work. Hopefully Woodcraft and others will sustain international cooperation.

Tend to think EU policies are often better than stuffy Westminster. Better to shut down Parliament than leaving EU. Important to keep playing our role in the world. Co-operation is about giving up a little bit of autonomy because of greater power of the collective.

Lloyd ended by saying that he will continue to be a Woodcraft member and I hope many more Woodcraft members will join him in parliament.

Break for lunch – ballot box opened

Afternoon session

[The company AGM was adjourned to discuss policy business.]

The afternoon session was chaired jointly by Stuart Walker (chair of GC) and Nadia Asri (Chair of DFs)

Announcements

The meeting welcomed Steve and Michael, two employees at Mondelez (better known as Cadbury's), who had cycled from Land's End to John O'Groats raising funds for seven charities, including Woodcraft Folk. JustGiving page is still open. Thanks and applause.

Sophie Holden: Venturer Committee elections. Nominations wanted.

Motion 1

Proposed by Ralph Sleigh

Questions

- Harry Stapleton (Exeter)
- Jenny Dixon (Blackheath)

Suggested amendments

- Anna [] ([Machynlleth])

Spoke for

- Adam Tucker (Leeds)
- Jack Walker (Newham and GC in personal capacity)
- Millie Burgh (Brighton and GC in personal capacity)
- Jack Brown (SOC in personal capacity)

Spoke against

- Harry Stapleton (Exeter)
- Sophie Holden (Highgate and Holloway)
- David Neibig (SOC in personal capacity)
- Kieran [] (Peckham)
- Eric Lucas (Bath)
- Ash Taylor (SOC in personal capacity)
- [Someone spoke for pioneer – Ella?]
- Hazel (Exeter)
- Lucy (Tine Venturers)

Right to reply: Ralph Sleigh

Decision: Taken in parts:

- Remotely before the meeting, from the date of publication of the final agenda to the day before the physical meeting.
 - For 36
 - Against 11
 - Abstentions 2
- Remotely during the meeting at the same time as participants at the meeting vote.
 - For 32
 - Against 11
 - Abstentions 5
- Company Business
 - For 40
 - Against 4
 - Abstentions 6
- Elections for GC, SOC and any others held
 - For 39
 - Against 6
 - Abstentions 4
- Policy motions taken as part of the Annual Policy Meeting (before)
 - For 14
 - Against 21
 - Abstentions 9
- Policy motions taken as part of the Annual Policy Meeting (after)
 - For 40
 - Against 8
 - Abstentions 2
- GC should come back with a plan for next year not involving constitutional changes
 - For 33
 - Against 14
 - Abstentions 3

Motion 2

Proposed: Holly Carter-Rich.

Amendment accepted.

Questions

- Jeni (Blackheath)
- Cathy Brown (Leicestershire)
- Hazel (Exeter)
- Ella
- Alicia Francis

Spoke for

- Jack (SOC in a personal capacity)
- David Neibig (SOC in a personal capacity)
- Millie Burgh
- Harry Stapleton (Exeter)

Spoke against

- Harry Stapleton (Exeter)
- Eric Lucas
- Pip Sayers (GC in a personal capacity)
- Ian (Bromley)
- Jenny (Harrow? Birkenhead?)
- Sam
- Richard Robertson

Right to reply: Holly Carter-Rich

Decision: For 37, 4 against, 6 abstentions

Motion 3

Proposed: Roland Susman

Decision [Carried]

Motion 4

Proposed: Kieran Kirkwood

Questions

- Sam
- Jennie (Blackheath)

Against

- Harry Stapleton (Exeter)

Right to reply: Richard Kirkwood

Decision: for 48, against 0, abstention 6

Motion 5

Proposed: Tom

Decision: for 45, against 0, abstention

Motion 6

Passed

Close of meeting

Election results

16 to 24

- Nadia Asri
- Holly Carter Rich

By-election (1- year): Pip Sayers

GC lay

- Tom Gower
- Stuart Walker
- Sapna Agarwal
- Millie Burgh
- Ralph Sleigh

SOC

- Jeni Dixon