

Woodcraft Folk Annual General Meeting

Sunday 23 June 2019, 9am – 1pm

At Biblins Youth Campsite, as part of Woodcraft Folk Annual Gathering

1. Welcome and Introduction of Candidates for Election

Pip Sayer (Chair of General Council) opened the Annual General Meeting and welcomed delegates and observers.

Pip declared nominations to General Council and Standing orders Committee closed at 9.30am.

2. Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2018 and Matters Arising

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2018 were accepted without amendment.

3. Election of Scrutineers and Tellers

4 scrutineers were elected:

- Owen Sedgwick-Jell
- Debs McCahon
- Becca Sayers
- Jack Brown

4 tellers were elected:

- Tom Brooks
- Ralph Sleigh
- Millie Burgh
- Ellen Gibson

4. Consideration of the Annual Report and Accounts

Sarah Welsh (Director of Finance & Operations, Joint CEO) & Roland Susman (National Treasurer) introduced the Annual Report and Accounts. They explained the financial position of the Organisation had remained broadly the same as the previous year, with the exception of a generous legacy donated in 2018 by the late Lionel Reed for which Woodcraft were thankful. The legacy was being used to invest in the growth of the movement.

Questions:

In response to questions from the floor they explained that;

Debtors and creditors shown in the accounts were costs incurred up front, like site fees for Common Ground (International Camp 2020)

The legacy would be used to invest in growth.

The legacy was not restricted to a particular purpose.

General Council had decided how the income was to be used, and considered the families feelings in that decision making process.

The Organisation are not aware of any future legacy pledges.

Sarah McDonell (Office coordinator) confirmed that Legacy In Memory leaflets had been previously mailed out to members, are available from Folk Office and more information could be found on the Woodcraft website.

Fundraising for Biblins, target set at £25,000 was to be used to invest in the preliminary plans for the new building.

Decision: That the annual report and financial statements of Woodcraft Folk for the year ended 31 December 2018 were received and accepted

5. Re-appointment of Auditors

In response to questions from the floor, Roland confirmed that it is good practise to change Auditors routinely, that Woodcraft Folk undertook a tendering process 2-3 years ago and that this would be under review.

Decision: Agreed that Buzzacott LLP be re-appointed auditors and that they be paid for their services a sum to be determined by General Council

6. People we have lost

Pip lead a minutes silence to remember members we had lost in the last year.

7. Candidates for election

The list of Candidates was read out:

General Council (16-24 years)

2 Places-2 Candidate

Meena Begley

Robin Lyster

General Council (lay)

5 places-8 Candidates

Sapna Agarwal

Josh Dodd

Joe Flannagan

Jeremy Hudson

Edmund Moriarty

Stanley Richardson

Stuart Walker

Tom Whitfield

Standing Orders Committee

3 places-4 Candidates

Richard Kirkwood

Jeni Dixon
Ralph Sleigh
Ash Taylor

8. Report of Standing Orders Committee

Jeni introduced herself and expressed her great pleasure at chairing the wonderful Standing Orders Committee. She introduced Standing Orders Committee – Alicia, our wonderful Vice-Chair, David, Iris, Mia and Richard. Iris and Mia are both Venturers, who have worked really hard on developing the governance jargon buster which many present had enjoyed reading. For those new to Annual Gathering or even those who are not, Standing Orders Committee are an elected group of people, independent from both staff and General Council. Our role is to know, understand and help you all apply our constitution, Articles of association, basically all the Woodcraft rules for both debate and voting on motions.

This year is a constitutional year, which means we can accept motions which change these rules and brilliantly members had risen to the challenge and submitted many of these motions, who knew governance was so popular?

Our Woodcraft rules are rather confusing, because of how we're set up as a Charity and a company. We've put notes into the agenda, please do read them as they're trying to help explain how we will interpret changes proposed. My specific thanks to David for all his time and work in developing these notes.

We have two parts of our AGM and voting is different at each one. Each group in Woodcraft is allowed a vote and there is an extra vote for each district. The first part of today is officially known as the Annual General Meeting or AGM. Motions 1-4 will be debated and voted on as part of this AGM. During this part we allow votes of groups and districts that are here – you will know if you have a vote as you'll be holding a card. We also allow groups and districts who aren't here to vote in the first part with something called proxy voting – where you ask for someone who is here to hold your vote. If you have a voting card it is Green. If you are also holding a proxy card it is White. Please take a minute to check the number of voting cards you have and their colours. Thank you. That is important because in the second part of the meeting we change rules. This part is called the Annual Policy meeting and at this part proxy cards are NOT allowed. Motions 5 – 13 fall into this part of the meeting.

For our two different parts to go ahead we need a certain number of people or votes to be present. And then for certain types of motions we have different rules for them to pass. It's complicated and annoying – our role is not to judge the rules but as I said to understand, apply and follow them. And where we can to find ways through them!

So as to the numbers. For both parts of the meeting to go ahead we need to have 1/5 of all registered groups or 100, whichever is lower – this is called being Quorum.

We have 285 registered groups and so need at least 57 people holding votes here.

We have 87 of votes here in person plus 24 proxy votes for the AGM.

I am therefore pleased to say we are Quorum.

In total we received 17 motions. We worked with the proposers to merge a couple of these together leaving us with a total of 13 ordinary motions. We also received 2 emergency motions; of which we accepted one and rejected the other as it related to information that would have been known at the time of the motion deadline.

We received a total of 5 amendments to these motions. In our debate we will open the motion, then debate and vote on the amendment before returning to the debate and vote on the motion either changed or unchanged, depending on the amendment vote. Where there are two amendments we will vote on amendment one and then debate and vote on amendment 2.

Many of these motions are technical and I would like to thank all proposers but particularly Camden Venturers and Glasgow Kelvingrove District for their patience and understanding as we teased out their motions. I'd also particularly like to thank Alicia, David and Mia who did a huge amount of work supporting the amendments and interpretations of these motions.

We have carefully arranged the agenda for the motions taking into consideration the following factors 1. Which part of the meeting they belong in, the AGM or the APM; when we received them and where possible prioritising those submitted by young people. We ask you to pay special attention to motions 3 and 4; whilst they are different motions the impact of passing or rejecting one may influence your opinion on the other. We will debate them separately but we urge you to consider your views on them together.

Some more information on numbers.

Motions 1, 3 and 4 will require 2/3 of the votes present to pass. This will be taken as 2/3 of the votes currently in the marquee when we vote; so we will need to count you – when we do so please sit still!

As motion 2 amends our Articles of Association, which is a legal document under company law, our articles state that we need to have 75% of all possible votes, that's both groups and districts, for it to pass. This is part of the discussion where we allow proxy votes. So we need to have 284 votes held here at Annual Gathering. I'm sorry to say that including proxy votes we only have 111 votes here. Therefore, as this motion 2 cannot pass we shall be moving the agenda around and going straight from motion 1 to motion 3. If we have time at the end of all other motions we will return to motion 2 for an indicative debate.

The proposers of motion 13 have withdrawn as they believe their current strategy sufficiently covers their request.

Standing Orders also oversee the elections at Annual Gathering. This year David and Mia are taking on the roles of returning officers. We received 4 nominations for 3 positions on Standing Orders Committee and therefore did not need to re-open nominations. We had 7 positions for election to General Council, 2 for 16-24 and 5 for lay members. We received 2 for the lay members and 1 for 16-24 and therefore needed to re-open nominations this morning.

If anyone here has not followed all the detail of what I've just said you are not alone. For anyone who has – well done! Please do ask if something confuses you. We will be here all day and we will be working with our meeting chairs to help them to ensure the debates are fair and accurate.

Finally, rules are only one small part of making debate and democracy work. The other key elements are cooperation, consideration and respect – all central Woodcraft Values. As you deliberate and debate these motions please do it with friendship, peace, cooperation and respect for your folk comrades as I'm sure you all will.

The report was agreed

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

9. Motions

Motion 1: Clarification regarding under 16's elected to General Council

Proposed by: Millie Burgh-General Council
Seconded: Ash Taylor-Londin DFs

David Neibig explained the rules currently in the Standing Orders Document and how the motion would change that.

No one spoke for or against the motion.

Decision: Motion Carried

Motion 2: Participation of young people

This motion required 75% of the membership to be present to pass. As this percentage was not present it could not pass. Conference would debate the motion in an indicative discussion at the end of the meeting

Motion 3: Reacting to discussion

Proposed by: Abi Hay-Camden
Seconded by: Sophie Holden-Highgate & Holloway

The following members spoke for the motion;

Sophie Holden-Highgate & Holloway
Claire Slocombe-Glasgow Kelvingrove

The following members spoke against the motion;

Jenny Thompson-Bristol
Jonny Helm-Teddington

Right to reply-Abi Hay Camden

Tellers called
103 votes in the room
For 51
Against 39
Abstentions 13
Threshold 68.9

Decision: Motion fell

Motion 4: Remote Participation

Proposed by: Stanley Richardson-Glasgow Kelvingrove
Seconded by: Claire Slocombe-Glasgow Kelvingrove

In response to questions Claire Slocombe explained how the rationale presented linked to the motion.
Jeni Dixon explained how proxy votes work and if there was a technical failure whilst using remote participation those with connection would carry the vote, all delegates would sign a disclaimer agreeing to this prior to the event.

The following members spoke for the motion;

Sophie Holden-Highgate & Holloway

No one spoke against the motion.

Tellers called
106 votes in the room
For 102
Against 1
Abstentions 3
Threshold 70.6

Decision: Motion carried

Lily MacTaggart (V-Camp organising Committee) took the chair from this section.

No proxy votes could not be used for these motions. A majority was needed for these motions to pass.

ANNUAL POLICY MEETING

Motion 5: Increase in Group Registration Fees

Proposed by: Kerry Stapleton-General Council
Seconded by: Sophie Holden-Highgate & Holloway

The following member spoke for the motion;

Ashley Gullen-Teddington

The following members spoke against the motion;

Linda Osborn-Southwark

Decision: Motion carried

Motion 6: Increase in Membership Fees

Proposed by: Kerry Stapleton-General Council
Seconded by: Sophie Holden-Highgate & Holloway

The following members spoke for the motion;

Sasha Das Gupta-Newham Watersmeet
The following members spoke against the motion

Jenny Thompson-Bristol
Rachel Lunnon-Bristol

Decision: Motion carried

Motion 7: National Pioneer Camp

Proposed by: Abi Hay-Camden
Seconded by: Stanley Richardson-Glasgow Kelvingrove

Amendment 1 to motion 7
Proposed by: Joel Cockerill Evans-Welsh DFs

The following members spoke for the amendment;

Carmen Mallison-Pocock-Teddington
Theo James-Lucas-Bath

Eric Lucas-Bath

The following members spoke against the amendment;

Shaun Wakefield-Bradford
Sophie Holden-Highgate & Holloway

Tellers called
For 35
Against 27
Abstentions 19

Decision: Amendment 1 to motion 7 Motion carried

No one spoke for the amended motion

The following members spoke against the amended motion;

Claire Slocombe-Glasgow Kelvingrove
Angus Forbes-Newham Watersmeet

Point of information-Jenny Thompson-Bristol/Biblins announced that Biblins will be holding a Pioneer Camp and that other woodcraft Campsites & centres also hold Pioneer Camps.

Right to reply; Camilla McCready-Pay-Camden

Decision: Amended Motion fell

Motion 8: Accessible Democracy

Proposed by: Camilla McCready-Pay-Camden
Seconded by: Joel Cockerill Evans-Welsh DFs

No one spoke for or against the motion

Decision: Motion carried

Isabel Stewart took the chair from this section

Motion 9: Participation of all groups

Proposed by: Jordan Lopez-Camden
Seconded by: Sophie Holden-Highgate & Holloway

Amendment 1 to motion 9
Proposed: Tom Brooks-General Council

Tom explained plans for the locations of the next 3 years Gatherings the rationale behind the decisions.

The Chair confirmed that if Amendment 1 carried amendment 2 will automatically fall.

The following members spoke for the amendment;
Pip Richards-Cambridge

The following members spoke against the amendment;
Sophie Holden-Highgate & Holloway
Monika Eady-Ealing & Hammersmith

Tellers called
For 44
Against 25
Abstentions 9

Decision: Amendment 1 to motion 9 carried Amendment 2 to motion 9 automatically fell

Motion 9 as amended

Tellers called
For: 57
Against: 17
Abstentions: 6

Decision: Amended Motion carried

Motion 10: Action on Climate Change

Proposed by: Jordan Lopez-Camden
Seconded by: Eric Lucas-Bath

Amendment 1 to motion 10
Proposed by: Rowan Lambert Jones-Cardiff
Proposer accepted amendment

Decision; Amendment to motion 10

The following members spoke for the amendment;
Ash Taylor-London DFs
Bronia Housman-Bristol

The following members spoke against the amendment;
Joel Cockerill Evans-Welsh DFs
Pip Richards-Cambridge

Decision: Amendment 1 to motion 10 carried

Motion 10 as amended

No one spoke for or against the amended motion

Decision: Amended motion carried

Motion 11: Helping Others

Proposed by: Camilla McCready-Pay-Camden

Seconded by: Tyron Dunnill-Ealing & Hammersmith

No one spoke for the motion.

The following members spoke against the motion;

David Hall-Cheltenham

Stanley Richardson-Glasgow Kelvingrove

Sasha Das Gupta-Newham Watersmeet

Decision: Motion Fell

Motion 12: Badge Work and accessibility

Proposed by: Abi Hay-Camden

Seconded by: Meena Begley-Greater Manchester

Tom Gower General Council explained the badge work consultation process which had taken place amongst groups.

No one spoke for or against.

Decision: Motion carried

Motion 13: Expanding our Reach

Withdrawn by proposer

Emergency motion 1: The Environmental Emergency

Proposed by: Anne Draper-Bristol Pioneers

Seconded by: Bristol-District

Anne read out the motion in full.

No one spoke for or against the motion

Decision: Motion carried unanimously

Motion 2: Participation of Young People-Indicative discussion

Proposed by: Camilla McCready-Pay-Camden

No one spoke for.

The following members spoke against
Jenny Thompson-Bristol
Adam Senior-Cardiff

Right to reply;
Camilla McCready-Pay-Camden

Voting took place, voting was not binding but for guidance only.
Majority were against the motion.
Majority were however for wider youth participation

10. Election results

All elected for 2 years. General Council (16-24 years)

Meena Begley
Robin Lyster

General Council (lay)

Sapna Agarwal
Jeremy Hudson
Edmund Moriarty
Stanley Richardson
Stuart Walker

Standing Orders Committee

Jeni Dixon
Ralph Sleigh
Ash Taylor

Meeting ended