

Woodcraft Folk Annual General Meeting

(and Annual Policy Meeting)

Sunday 23 June 2019, 10:00 am to 12:30pm

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

Preliminary Agenda

1. Welcome & Introduction of Candidates for Election
2. Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2018 and Matters Arising
3. Election of Scrutineers and Tellers
4. 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 2018 be received and accepted."
5. Re-appointment of Auditors
"That Buzzacott LLP be re-appointed auditors and that they be paid for their services a sum to be determined by General Council."
6. Report of Standing Orders Committee
7. Consideration of Motions 1-4 and Amendments
[Company AGM to be adjourned for the consideration of non-company business]
- A. Consideration of Motions 5-13 and Amendments
- B. Consideration of Emergency Motions
- C. Other Non-Company Business
[Company AGM to be reconvened]
8. Declaration of Election Results and Appointment of General Council members
9. Other Business
10. Close of Meeting

Notes from Standing Orders Committee:

- Motions which alter the Governing Documents require two thirds of the votes held at the Conference in order to be carried
- General Motions (those which do not alter the Governing Documents) require a simple majority of votes cast in order to be carried
- Supporting Statements have been provided by movers of some motions for information, and to aid understanding and debate. For the sake of clarity they have been printed with the respective motions in this agenda, but do not form part of the motion to be amended or voted upon.
- The Company AGM shall comprise items 1-7 and 8-10. After the conclusion of item 7 (voting on motion 4), the AGM shall be adjourned to for items A-C (non-company business, to be conducted under Woodcraft Folk standing orders). After the conclusion of non-company business, the AGM will be re-convened for items 8-10.

7. Motions

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

Proposed by: General Council

This Annual General Meeting agrees to replace SO.26 (ii) * with:

Any individual member of the organisation may stand for election to General Council in the lay category as described in SO.26 (v)(a). If any candidate under 16 is elected they shall not be eligible to sit as a General Council member and will instead be appointed as an observer to General Council. The General Council member's place that they vacate shall remain empty for 2 years unless one of the following applies:

- a) The under 16 observer resigns, in which case the standard procedure for replacing a General Council member as laid down in the Articles of Association shall apply
- b) The observer turns 16, at which point they take the General Council member's place that has remained empty since their election as an observer.

Not more than 5 under 16 observers may fill these places at any one time.

Rationale:

There is a lack of clarity in the current Governing Documents about whether an under 16 can stand in a General Council election. This motion changes a part of the Standing Orders to clarify the situation in line with the Standing Orders Committee's current interpretation that does allow an under 16 to stand.

* SO26(ii) currently reads:

If any candidate to General Council is under 16 they shall not be eligible to sit as a General Council member and thus not elected. If they win the ballot they shall be eligible to be appointed as an observer to General Council by the Annual Gathering. The General Council they vacate shall remain empty for 2 years or if the observer resigns until the next Annual Gathering. Not more than 5 under 16 observers may fulfil these places at any one time.

Note from SOC: This motion seeks to amend the Standing Orders document. This motion is therefore taken as part of the formal company Annual General Meeting subject to the additional rules required by company law. It requires a two-thirds majority of votes held at the Annual General Meeting to pass.

Motion 2: Participation of young people

Proposed by: Camden Venturers

Motion: This AGM agrees to give to any member under 16 present a vote of their own to use in all votes on all motions. We recognise this requires a change to the articles.

Rationale: We are an organisation that seeks to encourage the participation of young people and be led by them. We should centre their views in decision making.

Note from SOC: This motion seeks to change the Articles of Association in a way that is not specified in the motion. SOC will prepare a proposed wording for that change that would achieve the aims of the motion in time for the Final Agenda.

Motion 3: Reacting to discussion

Proposed by: Camden Venturers

This AGM agrees that all motions should be amendable following debate at annual gathering if a consensus can be reached that would enable a motion to pass rather than fall.

Rationale: We frequently find bits in motions to change and then come up with a good solution in discussion. But the rules mean we can't then implement that change. The SO article 20 only allows motions to be broken up and sometimes changes aren't about making things smaller but making things clearer or adding bits.

Note from SOC: This motion seeks to change the Standing Orders document in a way that is not specified in the motion. SOC will prepare a proposed wording for that change that would achieve the aims of the motion in time for the Final Agenda.

Motion 4: Remote Participation

Proposed by: Glasgow Kelvingrove District

This Annual General Meeting notes the 2016 motion passed to allow AGM participation without physical attendance.

This Annual General Meeting also notes the 2017 motion that was intended to take the 2016 motion in parts so delegates could choose the scope of the changes. Due to insufficient attendance the 2017 motion could not be acted upon but an indicative vote was held and the results are noted below.

This Annual General Meeting further notes that General Council Plans for remote participation were put on hold pending the trial of the re-launched Annual Gathering in 2018.

This Annual General Meeting therefore agrees to enable remote participation through allowing proxy voting as a mechanism to enable groups and districts to vote in advance.

Notably to :-

Amend SO.8 to delete part (ii) (a) "No delegate shall hold more than one voting card"

Enable a system where proxy votes can be given with a preference allowing for preferences "for", "against", "abstain", and "proxy to decide"

General Council will make all progress possible to allow remote participation for the 2019 AGM with full implementation by 2020 when:

- Proxy votes will be allowed before the meeting, from the date of publication of the final agenda to the day before the physical meeting. Voting on elections held at Annual Gathering will only be available remotely during the event to allow for late nominations.
- Remotely during the meeting at the same time as participants at the meeting vote. Remote participants will be able to vote in:- both the Annual General Meeting and Annual Policy Meeting and elections held at Annual Gathering.

Rationale:

It is currently possible for proxy voting for our Annual General Meeting, this motion will extend proxy voting to our Annual Policy Meeting which will enable voting in advance.

Increasing remote participation would increase the spectrum of Woodcraft Folk members' views, beliefs and values represented at the AGM. This is in line with woodcrafts core aims and principles of direct consensus-based democracy and decision making.

People in remote locations should not be denied their vote purely based on a geographical basis. Neither should members who are unable to attend the meeting in person for other reasons.

This motion would make our democratic processes more accessible and help improve equality throughout the Woodcraft Folk membership body.

Postal voting and direct communication link at the time of the event, e.g. Skype, text, video or voice call are both feasible and potentially highly effective in encouraging Woodcraft Folk to be recognised and supported by members as a UK wide organisation. Remote participation will increase visibility of Woodcraft Folk's structures and strategy by involving more members in our democratic process. Decision making will be improved through wider engagement.

Historical Information:

2016: Motion 6 - passed

This Annual General Meeting agrees that future Annual General Meetings will, if possible, allow participation without physical attendance. Appropriate systems will be put in place to ensure all groups are able to engage without necessarily travelling to the meeting.

Proposed by: General Council

2017: Motion 1 – meeting not quorate so indicative vote taken

This Annual General Meeting notes the 2016 motion passed to allow AGM participation without physical attendance.

This Annual General Meeting therefore agrees that from the 2018 AGM forward participants will be able to vote:

- Remotely before the meeting, from the date of publication of the final agenda to the day before the physical meeting.
- Remotely during the meeting at the same time as participants at the meeting vote. Remote participants will be able to vote on/in:

- Company Business.
- Elections for GC, SOC and any others held.
- Policy motions taken as part of the Annual Policy Meeting.

Rationale:

This motion is to implement the changes requested last year. The plan is to take the motion in parts and vote on the bullet points individually so delegates can choose the scope of the changes.

Proposed by: General Council

Results of indicative vote 2017:

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

Note from SOC: This motion seeks to amend the Standing Orders document. This motion is therefore taken as part of the formal company Annual General Meeting subject to the additional rules required by company law. It requires a two-thirds majority of votes held at the Annual General Meeting to pass.

A Motion 5: Increase in Group Registration Fees

Proposed by: General Council

This Annual General Meeting notes that:

Since 2016, Group Registration fees have been £125 per group plus £12.50 per child.

That in 2017 a motion proposed that future rises in group registration should be incremental to reflect rises in costs.

That most of the core infrastructure costs are staffing costs.

And agrees that:

Groups fees should be increased annually by Average Weekly Earnings as measured by the Office for National Statistics for the previous year, rounded down to the nearest 10p with effect from 1 Jan 2020 and on 1st Jan each year thereafter.

And agrees that:

Group fees should be increased as a one off in 2020 to "catch up".

Groups should pay £135.20 per group and £13.50 per child from 1 Jan 2020 onwards.

And agrees that:

This AGM re-states the principle that no group or district should close due to inability to pay their registration fees.

This AGM encourages those districts which are able, to continue to make solidarity payments in addition to their registration fees to help ensure that no group closes due to lack of funds.

Motion 6: Increase in Membership Fees

Proposed by: General Council

This Annual General Meeting notes that:

Since 2013, individual membership fees have been £30 (full fee) and £12 (unwaged).

That most of the core infrastructure costs are staffing costs.

That a third of our active members are unwaged.

And agrees that:

Individual membership (full) fees should be increased annually by Average Weekly Earnings as measured by the Office for National Statistics for the previous year, rounded down to the nearest 10p, with effect from 1 July 2019 and on the 1st July each year thereafter. Unwaged fees should remain static at £12.

And agrees that:

Individual membership fees should rise as a one off in 2019 to "catch up" to £34.40.

Motion 7: National Pioneer Camp

Proposed by: Camden Pioneers

This AGM agrees that to build friendships between children across the country they must have ample opportunity to meet. To this end a national pioneer camp should be set-up to run every 3 years. It should be able to be attended by every pioneer once as a way to strengthen bonds with the Woodcraft Folk and make friends with children from other areas that a pioneer wouldn't otherwise get to meet.

Rationale: The venturers get their own camp and we go camping a lot and think we should have our own camp too.

Motion 8: Accessible Democracy

Proposed by: Camden Venturers

This AGM asks General Council to work to produce a group night pack to help make motion making fun and accessible. It should tell groups how to word motions and give ideas on activities to help come up with motion ideas. We note that General Council may form an interested committee of leaders and young people to carry out this motion as they are often pressed for resource. Any activity pack should contain a jargon buster and also have fun activities to teach young people about the democracy of the Woodcraft Folk and why it is important and how it works.

Rationale: Thinking up ideas for motions can be difficult and no-one knows how they should be written.

Motion 9: Participation of all groups

Proposed by: Camden Venturers

This AGM agrees that the location of all future annual gatherings shall be determined by picking the location that is the most accessible for the most groups, in line with budgets. This should be determined by distance and by public transport and by on site facilities. The AGM requests that General Council make public a document showing that this has been adhered to and the basis of decision each year.

Rationale: Attendance at annual gathering struggles every year. We should not exclude groups simply by access.

Motion 10: Action on Climate Change

Proposed by: Camden Venturers

This AGM agrees that all national and regional camps should be using sustainable energy sources to produce 20% of the power needed to run any such camp by 2021.

Motion 11: Helping Others

Proposed by: Camden Venturers

This AGM agrees that The Woodcraft Folk should choose a yearly cause that fits within our charitable objectives and that groups should be asked to hold an event to raise money for that cause. The cause should be decided by Annual Gathering and a list of suggested activities be given to groups.

Rationale: In group nights we talk about how important it is to help other people. This will give us a good way to do that and make sure that more people know about The Woodcraft Folk because we'll raise money for the same thing.

Note from SOC: Our charitable objects are

The objects of the organisation are the advancement of education and the empowerment of children and young people for the public benefit by:

1.4.1. encouraging children and young people to participate in society, improving their lives and others through active citizenship;

and 1.4.2. promoting the interests and welfare of children and young people

Motion 12: Badge work and accessibility

Proposed by: Camden Pioneers

This AGM notes that the scouts and the guides are much better at making their badges fun and relevant than the Woodcraft Folk. This AGM agrees that existing badges should be updated and new ones developed to reflect the modern world we live in and equip out young people with life skills they need.

This AGM recognises that the attainment of badges can sometimes be linked to the achievement of tasks and so is not always accessible to members who are unable to perform those tasks, no matter how hard they are trying. To make sure we welcome and work with all children this annual gathering would like it acknowledged that a child may earn a badge through their efforts, regardless of end achievement. Those who try their hardest to contribute should be recognised as producing the end result.

We note that General Council may form an interested committee of leaders and young people to carry out this motion as they are often pressed for resource.

All current badges should continue in circulation until new badges or updated guidance on badge activities can be issued.

Motion 13: Expanding our Reach

Proposed by: Camden Venturers

This AGM requests that all groups be asked to promote themselves within their local community to raise the profile of the Woodcraft Folk and attract more members. Groups should be surveyed on their efforts once a year to help the Woodcraft Folk gain an understanding on promotional reach.