

Minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting of Environmental Protection UK held 24th February 2021 via Zoom

Present:

Lord Whitty, outgoing President
Professor Jim Longhurst, incoming President
Christopher Fry, Chair Board of Trustees, (West Midlands Division)
Graham Jukes, Vice-President
Neil Turner, Vice President
Robin Whitehouse, Chair of Noise Committee
Robin Lancefield, Chair of Land Quality Committee
Sarah Legge, Acting Chair of Air Quality Committee
Alan Bratt, Special Trustee
John Murlis, Special Trustee
Bob Deller, Trustee (East Midlands Division)
Professor Sir Stephen Holgate, Vice-President.
Neil Macdonald, Special Trustee
Stephen Moorcroft, Special Trustee
Ulya Vasan, Special Trustee
Ruth Calderwood, City of London Corporation/Trustee
Peter Mitchell, Financial Consultant
John Merefield, Individual Member (South West)
Bernard Fisher, IACEM
David Rudland
Clive Hadfield, IChemE
Keith Cotton,
Elizabeth Ovenden, Ackworth Quaker Meeting
Stephen Turner, President of the Institute of Acoustics
Louise Siddorn, Vice-Chair of Land Quality Committee
John Bynorth, Environmental Protection Scotland
Karen Toomer
Sarah Robertson
Vanessa Tanner, EPUK Secretariat

1. Introduction and Welcome by Chair of Trustees.

Christopher Fry, Chair of Trustees welcomed Members to the AGM of the Society, the first ever on Zoom.

2. Apologies for absence:

Dr. David Muir, Chair of Executive Sub-Committee/Trustee (South West Division); Keith Budden; Richard Mills: Paul Cooney, Trustee; Sally Dilks, Environment and Public Protection Team Leader, Mansfield; Nick Marks, Environmental Control Officer, London Borough of Newham; Peter Atchison, PAGEoTechnical Ltd, Lord Julian Hunt Vice President; Alison Simmons, ERS, Publica Group.

3. To agree the Minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting held on 26th February 2020.

The minutes had been previously circulated and are also available on the EPUK website.

Proposed: John Merefield

Seconded: Graham Jukes

At this point Professor Sir Stephen Holgate gave a presentation focussing on the tragic case of the death of Ella Adoo Kissa-Debrah.

There were a number of questions and comments from the AGM to which Sir Stephen responded. Many drew attention to the lack of enforcement powers and the acute need for an independent inter-disciplinary approach which is solution driven. EPUK should gather example of good practice such as that shared by Ruth Calderwood from London City Council which involves local citizens in measuring pollution levels. Those cases could then be used as exemplars for driving forward the connection between the areas of government responsible for making pertinent decisions regarding air pollution, and also noise levels in towns and cities. All this needs to be in conjunction with health professionals. The overall feeling is that further deaths attributed to air quality must be prevented.

4. To note the accounts for year ended 31 March 2020.

The accounts had been previously distributed and are also available on the website. CF highlighted that it takes £26,000 simply to run EPUK and we need to ensure that is covered by our income.

Proposed: Neil Turner

Seconded: Robin Whitehouse

5. To receive a Trustees' Report by the Chair of Trustees.

The report had previously been circulated. CF raised his concerns regarding the Divisions and stressed the importance of resurrecting all of them. In the past they served well for local events and seminars. He also drew attention to our valuable links to European and International organisations such as EFRA and IUAPPA.

Ulya Vasan, Trustee, was invited to present the 2021-2026 Financial Development Plan. In summary, the aims of EPUK are to invest in staff and the website; improve Trustees' choice in policy advocacy and improve member services. Funding is required for Communications and Marketing plus events such as Noise Action Week and Clean Air Day as well as a hybrid Conference. This funding will need to come from increased subscriptions, in particular Local Authorities, Gold Membership, Universities and private companies and also from charitable organisation grants. Christopher Fry mentioned the bid we are about to put in for Noise Action Week.

Liz Ovenden mentioned her experience in gaining funding recently and has collated a list of charitable organisations which she is happy to share. Neil Turner expressed his optimism for the future of EPUK in all three policy areas.

It was felt that Clean Air Day is an important feature of the EPUK calendar. Sarah Legge clarified that the Society does not run the event but just supports the campaign which is run nationally. Christopher Fry mentioned our new links with like-minded organisations such as CIWEM as well as the Institute of Acoustics. John Murlis made reference to the newly branded EPUK Development Plan and COP26 and the inextricable link between climate change and air quality.

6. To thank Lord Whitty the former President for continuing in the absence of his successor.

Under Regulation 48 of the Articles of Association the Board of Trustees recommended election of a new President of Environmental Protection UK and Members were asked to accept the recommendation and appoint Professor James Longhurst under Regulation 88.

In his speech as outgoing President, Lord Whitty thanked everyone involved in EPUK. He felt that voice of EPUK ought to reflect public opinion and that air quality should be raised in its profile. He will continue as Vice-President and support EPUK and the Environment Bill. However, it is just as important to back individual Bills with an environmental theme. It would be great to reproduce another 1956 moment and tackle many aspects of air quality, noise and land quality. Lord Whitty will be on the Environmental and Climate Change Committee from April and will be a voice within Parliament. He reiterated that now is a good time for EPUK with prospects of more funding and the resources in the form of our membership.

Christopher Fry again thanked Lord Whitty and handed the chain of office, virtually, to Professor James Longhurst and invited the AGM to agree his appointment.

Proposed: Board of Trustees Seconded: Sarah Legge

7. Address by the new President of Environmental Protection UK.

Professor Longhurst's incoming President's address, see appendix 1.

Christopher Fry thanked Prof Longhurst and mentioned that Members need to use their influence to encourage more Universities to join EPUK. Birmingham University is already on board and Neil Turner is working with a contact at Salford University. JL agreed to promote EPUK within his circles adding that a Learning Package online would stimulate such membership within the university world.

8. To note that under Regulation 49 of the Articles the Board of Trustees recommend the re-election of the following as Vice-Presidents.

The Lord Hunt, Professor Sir Stephen Holgate, and the Lord Whitty. Members were asked to ratify these appointments under Article 88 and Honorary Membership to each under Article 3.

Proposed: Board of Trustees Seconded: Graham Jukes

9. Election and re-election of Honorary Members of EPUK under Regulation 3(a).

There were not any Honorary Members re-elected.

10. To appoint Independent Examiners for the period ending 31 March 2021.

Agreed by the AGM that Taylorcocks Chartered Accountants be appointed.