



SUSSEX ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Registered charity 256936

www.sos.org.uk

18th July 2020

Minutes of the Fifty-eighth ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the members of the SUSSEX ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY held by Online Zoom Meeting due to the COVID19 pandemic on Saturday 18 July 2020, at 2.30 p.m.

PRESENT: 21 Members attending by Zoom were welcomed by President Alan Perry, with a further 41 Members having contributed postal or email voting slips.

- 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from four members – Val Bentley, Anthony Holden, David Howey and Matt Twydell. We apologise for the unusual circumstances with COVID19 which has meant that there will be some SOS members who might usually like to attend the AGM for whom attendance at Zoom Meetings would not be possible, and hence postal or email voting was made available to ensure that all members who wished to take part were able to do so.
- 2 THE MINUTES OF THE 57TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING were unanimously approved as a true and accurate reflection of that meeting. (Proposer Ted Merrikin/ Secunder John Newnham).
- 3 The amendment to **Society Rule 9(b)(iii)** was approved with just one vote against, and the rule will now read; "subject to the following provisions of this sub-paragraph" that any person who has held the office of a member of the Council for five such consecutive periods shall not be eligible for re-election as a member of Council at the Annual General Meeting at which the last of such periods comes to an end; or for appointment by the Council under Rule 18 at any time until after the Annual General Meeting next following the Annual General Meeting; provided that, should it not be possible to identify a suitable replacement candidate to Council to hold office, Council may, should the incumbent be willing, accept a proposal to reappoint the outgoing officer until such time as the position can be filled by a suitable replacement. At that time the incumbent will step down and the replacement will be co-opted onto Council in accordance with Rule 18 until the next following Annual General Meeting at which he/she will be able to stand for election. (Proposer Ted Merrikin/ Secunder Sue Walsh).

The amendment to **Society Rule 14** was unanimously approved and will now read; The Treasurer shall keep the accounts of the Society and shall make up the Annual Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet to the 31st December in each year which will be circulated amongst the members with the notice of the Annual General Meeting. The Treasurer shall produce at the Annual General Meeting for inspection by members, a copy of the examined accounts as at the 31st December of the preceding year, and the Treasurer shall confirm to the Annual General Meeting whether the examined accounts are identical to those previously circulated to members. The accounts will be examined in accordance with the rules of the Charity Commission by a suitably qualified firm of accountants who have experience in acting for Charities. The firm shall be appointed at the Annual General Meeting to examine and certify the Annual Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet in the ensuing year. If this firm for any reason becomes unable (temporarily or permanently) to perform its duties during its term of office, the Council may appoint an alternative firm to act in its stead until such time (not being later than the next Annual General Meeting) as the Council may appoint. (Proposer Brian Osborne/ Secunder Rob Yarham).

- 4 The REPORT OF COUNCIL, previously circulated to members, was presented by Mike Russell, Chair of Council, and adopted by the meeting. During his first year as Chair of Council, Mike outlined how he has been astounded at the amount of work that Council, Committee members and other volunteers put into the Society, and thanked everyone for their contribution throughout 2019-20. This year the COVID19 pandemic has brought many changes to our planned activities, but we have continued to function in every area where we are permitted to do so, particularly in relation to production of the Bird Report and Newsletter and with regard to planning and conservation issues. With the development of Zoom online meeting technology, Council and our committees can

continue to meet and discuss business on a regular basis. (Proposer Peter Plant/ Seconder Ken Smith).

- 5 The Treasurer presented the ACCOUNTS. He thanked Geoff Wenden our previous Treasurer for designing the accountancy package used by the Society for the last 15 plus years. He outlined why it was in the best interests of the Society to move to "Xero" (a web-based accountancy package). He also explained why Kreston Reeves had been chosen to carry out the examination of the Society's accounts. The transition has been a smooth one so far, and the new package is both easy to understand and capable of producing many types of report quickly. The Treasurer also thanked Tom Snow and Andy Stringer, our previous Examiners, for their work over many years in examining our accounts. The Treasurer confirmed that the Society is currently in a healthy position with net assets of £137,159.25, Gift Aid Income of £4,634.72 to date and current planned outgoings for approved projects of £12,676.34. The Treasurer also thanked current members who support the Charity by signing up to Gift Aid and all who pay their annual subscriptions by standing order. The Accounts were unanimously adopted at the meeting. (Proposer Chris Davis/ Seconder Mark Mallalieu)
- 6 RETIRING MEMBERS OF COUNCIL – Alan thanked Richard Black, Chris Lowmass and Graeme Lyons for their huge contribution to the Society.
- 7 ELECTION OF OFFICERS – The following Honorary Officers, being eligible without nomination, were re-elected ; Alan Perry (President), Richard Cowser (Conservation Officer), Mark Mallalieu (Recorder), Ted Merrikin (Treasurer), Dr Peter Plant (Sussex Bird Report Editor), and Robert Yarham (Press and Publicity).
- 8 ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF COUNCIL – The following members of Council, being eligible without nomination, were re-elected; Mya Bambrick, Jonathan Cook, Jonathan Curson and Mike Russell.
- 9 Following the approval of the amendment to Society Rule 9(b) (iii) above, it was unanimously agreed to re-appoint Chris Davis as Secretary and Anthony Holden as Newsletter Editor, until such time as a suitable replacement can be found. In response to a question from Audrey Wende, it was noted that a candidate for replacement of Anthony Holden appears to have been found but a date of transition has not yet been agreed. (Proposer Brian Osborne/ Seconder Rob Yarham).
- 10 Matt Twydell, nominated by Richard Black and seconded by Chris Davis, was then elected as Surveys and Projects Officer. (Proposer Richard Black/ Seconder Chris Davis)
- 11 Following the approval of the amendment to Society Rule 14 above, the appointment of Kreston Reeves as Examiners of the 2020 Accounts, was unanimously approved for the Society.
- 12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS – There being no other business relating to AGM matters, the meeting was closed at 15:20.