

## Digswell Lake Society

Minutes of the AGM held on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2020 (held via Zoom)

Started 19.34

Attended by 21 members

Simon Stebbings, Peter Neville, James Godbold, Jo, Mike Pye, Deborah Smith, Janet Mitchell, Mr Mitchell, Della Summers, Sue Fletcher, Shirley Dobrin, Gary Dobrin, Sally Burman, Zofia Jordan, Yvonne Rule, Alan Sparshott, David White, Paul Valente, Bob Leys, Ros, Rose

1. The meeting was held as a "Zoom" meeting in accordance with the provisions of the Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020 as extended by the Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020 (Coronavirus) (Extension of the Relevant Period) Regulations 2020.
2. Apologies were received from Miles Baron, Deborah Ronchetti, Eddie Cooper, Tom & Janet Gladwin, Valerie Richards, John & Margaret Breese, Jason Payne, Helen Crabb, Denise Beynon, June Thomas and Justine Reddick. Six proxy votes were received in favour of the proposed amendments to the Articles of Association.
3. 2019 AGM minutes were approved. Simon Stebbings proposed, Gary Dobrin (2<sup>nd</sup>)
4. There were no matters arising.
5. The Chairman reported that good ground water levels had improved the flow of the river. New/additional seats were in the process of being procured. Work parties would resume when permitted. Hedge laying along the bridle path & Bessemer Road boundaries had been extended. Sadly, there had been a theft of a beehive. The boundaries of the site could not, unfortunately, be made secure.
6. The Membership Secretary reported that 700 newsletters were produced for the membership with 112 new members joining through Covid restrictions, this compared with 56 in 2019 & 24 in 2018. Due to the delay in the date of the AGM & and the despatch of the newsletter there will be a number of lapsed memberships not yet identified. It is therefore likely that the true active membership was between 600 & 650 with a number of cheques having been received since distribution of the newsletter. Gift Aid claims are expected to increase. The percentage of members providing e-mail addresses is estimated at around 75%.
7. The Treasurer reported good balances being held primarily from the Graham Elliot donation and invited suggestions of any suitable projects that might be worthy of consideration. Improving the lake's water quality was a common suggestion. Shirley Dobrin confirmed that a contractor - "Pearl Drainage" - had already visited the site regarding this possibility and that the directors were waiting a quotation. James Godbold indicated that expenditure for tree surgery work should be factored into any reserve balances. A possible introduction of water lilies was proposed by Mike Pye. Della Summers suggested that the river island path could benefit from possible improvements as it was currently very boggy and close to the river bank in places at present. It was noted that this area is a flood plain and historic attempts have been made to stabilise the path with only medium-term effect. Willows have been planted in the area to provide a feature tunnel and also to reduce water levels, however with recent high ground water levels and increased foot traffic it was inevitable that the area identified would likely remain boggy for the foreseeable future. It was reported by Della Summers that a tree had fallen across Digswell Park Road into an adjoining field. This was cleared by Frank Casey (the owner of the adjacent land) and presumably HCC

Highways. (Post meeting this was identified as a tree that had been identified as having concern and its weight had already been reduced with the expectation that it was still healthy and had a good few years of life left in it.)

8. Re-election of directors. James Godbold & Deborah Smith retired by rotation and offered themselves for re-election. In addition, three new members had offered themselves for election (Zofia Jordan, Paul Valente and Jason Payne). James Godbold & Deborah Smith were re-elected. It was planned to co-opt the three new potential directors to ensure they are fully familiar with the rôle, with the aim of their being proposed at the 2021 AGM. One proposed post will be that of Company Secretary.
9. Peter Neville has advised that he holds a number of historic documents relating to his time as a director of the Society which he would wish to pass onto any new post holder and feels they have relevant historic significance & relevance.
10. Changes were proposed to the Company's Articles of Association. The proposed changes were intended to allow communications and Notices to be sent by email to Members and for documents to be transferred by electronic means or posting on the web site. The current Articles 58 & 59 would be replaced to achieve these goals. These changes were all approved by a show of hands without dissent. A discussion was had regarding ensuring security and e-mails being "blind copied" so as to conform to data protection etc.
11. The reporting accountant was re-appointed; proposed by Simon Stebbings & 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mike Pye
12. Questions were raised regarding sale of grazing land between DLS & Viaduct (former Sherriff horse grazing fields). DLS was aware of the situation and would support the continuation of greenfield and environmentally suitable use but did not feel appropriate to be involved further at this stage. It was agreed that contact would be made with Dick Stabler who represented the wider Digswell Residents Association regarding related matters going forward.

There was no other business and the meeting closed at 20.26