

# WORCESTERSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST

## Minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting held at Lower Smite Farm on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2019

D.J.Mortiboys in the chair and 55 members present

The Chair first asked the meeting to remember Bert Reid who had passed away in his 77<sup>th</sup> year, having served the Trust in so many ways over four decades, including a spell as Chair.

### 1. Apologies

Apologies received from R J Gillmor, O & L Goldfinch, D & R Howell, C & W Johnson, P M Morris.

### 2. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2018

The minutes had been previously circulated. Approval was proposed by L L Butler, seconded by S D Young and agreed *nem con*. The minutes were signed by the Chair.

### 3. Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising

### 4. To receive and adopt the Report of Council

The report had been previously circulated. The Chair, David Mortiboys, having reminded the meeting that as always it was the Trust members either engaging in volunteering or supporting financially who enabled all the work the Trust was doing for wildlife, presented Council's report in an innovative visual manner. Included amongst many achievements was mention of 100 school visits totalling 4000 children during the year to Lower Smite Farm or The Knapp and Papermill; 350 wildlife patches pledged; 10,247 species recorded over the past 50 years on the Trust's reserves; advice given to 171 farms and projects through our partnerships with Severn Trent Water and Natural Networks; 200 green-winged orchids recorded in a field at Hollybed Farm Meadows nature reserve where two years before there was only one.

The Director, Colin Raven, then summarised the Trust's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year and showed a video about Dropping Well Farm which the Chair had previously referred to as the most ambitious project the Trust had ever undertaken.

Adoption of the Report was proposed by P J Scriven, seconded by P Orwin and agreed *nem con*.

### 5. To receive and adopt the Report of the Honorary Treasurer

The report had been previously circulated. The Honorary Treasurer, John Blakiston, first gave an overview as to how the Trust's finances are operated and then specifically turned to the accounts for 2018/19. Referring to the chart accompanying the report and giving visual explanation of the figures, the Treasurer highlighted that incoming resources for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 were £2.30 million of which £407k was given by donors or funding bodies for a specific restricted purpose and £371k was designated by the Trustees for defined purposes leaving a balance of £1.52 million to be used to meet the charity's objectives without any such restriction or designation. Expenditure was £1.99 million resulting in a surplus of £379k million for the year after adding £73k gains on investment movements. Net assets stood at £14.96 million, chiefly the nature reserves and investments of £2.51 million.

The Treasurer considered that income and asset figures were healthy and pointed out that full copies of the accounts and auditors' statement were available on request. There were no questions of the Treasurer.

Adoption of the Report was proposed by S D Young, seconded by G R Martin and agreed *nem com*.

## **6. To elect Members of Council**

The Chair invited the candidates to identify themselves. The proposal by M D Needham to approve the election of members retiring by rotation, R J Gillmor, G R Martin, P M Morris and P J Scriven was seconded by R W D Pannell and approved *nem con*.

Linda Butler was then thanked on the occasion of stepping down from Council for all her work for the Trust, another volunteer who had served as Chair.

## **7. To appoint Auditors**

The Honorary Treasurer's proposal that Thorne Widgery Accountancy Limited, who had served the Trust well and were specialists in charity auditing, continue as auditors was seconded by C.J.N.Greensmith and approved *nem con*.

## **8. Memorandum and Articles of Association**

Introduced by the Honorary Secretary, Richard Cory, a resolution proposed by Council and seconded by P J Scriven to simplify The Trust's Memorandum and Articles of Association, make gender neutral, bring up to date, and to include two substantive revisions to The Objects of the Trust and length of time Trustees and Honorary Officers can serve, which had been detailed in the AGM Agenda, was unanimously approved by the members.

## **9. Any other business**

There was no other business and the meeting closed at 8:10pm.

The Chair then presented Wild Service Awards to Phil Adams (Practical work in Monkwood and Roving Volunteer on other reserves), Jackie Hardy (Longstanding member of Redditch Local Group Committee and biological field recorder on Trust reserves and elsewhere), Will Willetts (Regular worker at Monkwood and Hollybed Farm and Roving Volunteer elsewhere), Dave Vernon (Warden and lead volunteer for cattle grazing programme and butterfly recorder at Hill Court Farm. Recorder at Melrose Farm Meadows). The meeting was sad that the Award had to be made posthumously to Peter Beckhelling (Chair and longstanding member of Redditch Local Group) but pleased that his daughter Clare was present to accept and acknowledge receipt.

Presented to Paul Allen by the Chair was the 2019 Worcestershire Wildlife Medal, the Trust's annual award for outstanding service to conservation in the county. Paul, as Conservation and Countryside Manager for Wyre Forest District Council for more than 25 years, has led a highly committed team of staff and volunteers looking after a range of nature reserves and community green spaces in and around Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley. He has also acted as the Council's biodiversity expert in planning and development matters, championing wildlife protection in the District. Paul has been heavily involved in the important and effective Wyre Forest Grazing Animals Project, promoting the use of rare breeds, whilst he has headed the team which runs the Young Rangers Club, giving 8-14 year olds the opportunity to explore and experience wildlife found in and around the Wyre Forest District.

Paul then gave a lively and amusing talk about his experience with the Young Rangers Club.