

## **British Humanist Association**

### **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting**

**Held 8 July 2017, 14.30–16.00, Bishopsgate Institute, 230 Bishopsgate, London EC2**

**Present:** Deborah Ainger, Mussa Ali, Shaima Ammal, Keith Anderson, Jenny Bartle, Mal Bride, John Catt, John Clayton, Iain Cockburn, Aaron Darkwood, Stells Desso, Jacqui Dickenson, John Dowdle, Cedric Duncan, Jamie Elmer, Solomon Ezra, Robert Garnett, Tamar Ghosh, Nicholas Groth Merrild, John Hanger, Steven Haynes, Jenny Headlam-Wells, Roy Heaps Alan Henness, Nigel Hilton, Brian Hodgson, Nicholas Hollinghurst, Deborah Hooper, Rachel Jones, Paul Kaufman, Toby Keynes, Jessica Layfield, Caroline Lees, Robert Lindley, Paul Lopez, Erica Lopez, Stef Lorenz, Ewan Main, Derek Marcus, Richard Mascal, Thomas McDowall, Tag McEntegart, John Miles, June Mitchell, Peter Morgan, David Morris, Tam Neal, Len Newton, Lauren Nicholas, Blakeley Nixon, Rory O'Kelly. Gordon Ogilvie, Guy Otten, Alan Palmer, Barry Phelps, Naomi Phillips, David Pollock, William Quinn, Susan Quinn, Ken Richman, Michael Rickwood, Jeremy Rodell, Patricia Rogers, Anthony Ryan, Alom Shaha, Imtiaz Shams, Brian Simpson, Chris Smith, Richard Stein, Ian Symons, Ariadne Tampion, Carrie Thomas, David Thomas, David Tooley, Moira Turner, Mike Turner, Lucy Wainwright, Amy Walden, Phil Walder, Ray Ward, Deborah Waters, Julian Webb, John White, Ray White Liam Whitton, Alexander Williams, Peter Wills, Anthony Keith Wilson, Jane Wynne Willson.

**Staff in attendance:** Andrew Copson (Company Secretary), Luke Donnellan, Jay Harman, Wendy Kurman, Catriona McLellan, Simon O'Donoghue, Iyabo Ojo, Tony Pinkney, Teddy Prout, Kathy Riddick, Edward Robinson, Isabel Russo, Suraiyya Samiya, Ian Scott, Boyd Sleator, Rachel Taggart-Ryan, Fred Tomalin, Richy Thompson, Andrew West, Liam Whitton.

**Apologies for Absence:** John Allen, Lindsay Allen, Jane d'Ardenne, Michelle Beckett, David Bruck, Baroness (Lorely) Burt, Sally Burton, Simon Bull, Neil Camp, Lord (Martin) O'Neil of Clackmannan, Hilary Collins, Les Collins, Kathy Condon, Graham Cooper, Julia Copson, Emma Dogliani, Lord (Alf) Dubs, Anna Gray, John Gregory, Marion Gregory, Ray Hall, Daphne Hardy, Joan Harpin, Baroness (Dianne) Hayter, Ramon Henson, Charley Jarrett, Graham Kingsley, John Leeson, Adrienne LeMan, Elaine Lever, Clive Lewis MP, Sheridan Lynch, Fokina McDonnell, Mary McKeown, Pat McKeown, Diana Naumann, Iain Paterson, Maggie Platts, John Ricketts, John Robertson, John Sharp, Christine Simons, Janice Taverne, Lord (Dick) Taverne, Mark Wardrop, Michael Watson, Mary Walker, David Wright, Karol Zuchowski.

**Adoption of Standing Orders:** On the proposal of Tamar Ghosh (Chair of the Board of Trustees and the AGM) the Standing Orders were adopted by the meeting.

**Declarations of Interest:** The Chair reminded those present that members speaking should declare any potential conflict of interest in relation to any item.

**Tellers:** The meeting appointed the Company Secretary as Timekeeper and Jessica Layfield and Guy Otten as tellers.

**Minutes of the AGM of 9 July 2016:** On the proposal of the Board, the minutes were approved *nem con*.

**Matters arising from the minutes:** There were no matters arising.

**Chair's address:** Tamar Ghosh reported on the past year's activities highlighting Humanists UK's many successes and hard work ahead. She paid special recognition to Vice Chair Patricia Rogers' immense contribution and announced that she would now be standing down as Vice Chair. Tamar also thanked Andrew Copson, John Adams (Treasurer), and David Pollock (Trustee) for helping her to learn her new role in the past year as well as the staff at Humanists UK for their enormous achievements. Special thanks was given to Director of Operations Catriona McLellan.

Tamar noted that the Board are investing in strategic initiatives by using some of the reserves to extend the reach of Humanists UK. Tamar highlighted as one strategic milestone on the evolving image that would give us the flexibility to reach out to new audiences and to invest in new activities.

A number of questions were asked by members.

**Election to the Board of Trustees:** The Company Secretary announced the results of the elections to the Board of Trustees. The following candidates were elected (in order of election):

Williams, Alexander

Beckett, Michelle

Bartle, Jenny

Phillips, Naomi

Thanks were expressed by all those present to all candidates who stood, whether successful or not and special thanks to Jeremy Rodell for his considerable service and immense contribution on the Board in previous years. Thanks were expressed by the Chair and all those present to Trisha Rogers who left the Board this year.

**Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2016:** John Adams (Treasurer) presented key figures from the annual accounts. The Treasurer noted that 2016 was a very successful year in financial terms that allowed the organisation to take on three additional full-time staff. The Treasurer reported a decrease in legacies but explained that legacies cannot be planned for and are therefore treated as windfall. Membership subscription income is on the rise and ceremonies income has also increased. There is large increase in expenditure in Pastoral Support and Education and Promotion. The report and accounts for 2016 were accepted *nem con*.

**Re-appointment of Auditor:** Knox Cropper were reappointed as auditor *nem con*. A review of the auditors will take place in 2018.

**Remuneration of Auditor:** The Board was authorised to determine the remuneration of the auditor.

**Special Resolutions:** In order to bring in specialist knowledge more easily in the future as Humanists UK grows and its operations diversify, and in order to make the Board more representative geographically and ethnically, the meeting adopted the following resolution:

To amend 22.3 of the Articles of Association as follows (additions in bold, removals in square brackets):

*The number of trustees shall be not less than four and not more than [fifteen] **seventeen**, of whom up to twelve shall be elected by members of the Charity.*

To amend 27.1 of the Articles of Association as follows (additions in bold, removals in square brackets):

*The trustees may appoint up to [three] **five** members to be trustees in order to provide expertise to the Charity or to make the Board more representative of the membership.*

**Any other Business:** There was none.