

The Fire Brigade Society

Minutes of 2018-2019 Annual General Meeting

Held at the National Emergency Services Museum, West Bar, Sheffield

23rd February 2019

Attendance: Steve Dodge, FBS Events Manager, Richard Williams, FBS Membership Secretary and FBS Distribution Manager, Ralph Horton, FBS Publications Unit Managing Editor, Martin Kingsnorth Executive Supervisory Board Appointee, Graham Mitchell, FBS North East Administrator, Richard Hickman, FBS West Midlands Administrator, Simon Rowley, FBS Vehicle Recorder and 16 members. A total of 23.

(1) Welcoming Address:

The meeting commenced at 1402 hours, with Steve Dodge welcoming all those present and giving a potted history of the City of Sheffield. Matt Wakefield welcomed The Society members on behalf of the Museum Trust.

(2) Appointment of Chair: In his absence the President appointed Ralph Horton as the Chair of the meeting.

(3) Advice of Minutes Secretary: Richard Williams was appointed as Minute Secretary.

(4) Apologies:

Andrew Fenton, Adam Griffiths, Brian Jackson, Bob Smith, Colin Davis, Clive Stephens, Clive Shearman, Michael & Frances Wood, Jeff Clish, Graham Nobes, Jeff Sanders, Karl Sillitoe, Mike Smith, Steve Potter, Peter Williams, Howard Davis, Judith Oakley, Ivor Robinson, Richard Thompson, Mike Bunn, Andy & Dan Fish, Mike O'Keefe, Maurice Cole, Gordon Whitehead, Ron Henderson, Janet Rutt, Craig Hall, Brett Clayton, Sam Crosby, Stuart Runciman, Jon Hall, Claus Marott Pedersen, Rodney Orme, Nick Richardson, Matthias Stockebrand, Matthias Borchert and Mike Clark.

(5) A 'Moment of Reflection' :

Members were asked to stand and observe a two minutes silence for those members who have passed away since the last AGM: Mick Paul, George Walter Inns, Alistair Mc Donald, Graham Hibbert, George Dunlop, Raymond Stradling, Dave Berry, Morgan Chapman and John Redmond. We also remembered those members who have passed away in previous years and paid tribute to members of the fire and rescue services who have made the ultimate sacrifice protecting us.

(6) Receive and approve the minutes of the 2017 AGM:

The minutes of the 2017 AGM (previously circulated) were approved unanimously. Graham Mitchell proposed acceptance, and Simon Rowley seconded the motion.

(7) Matters Arising: There were no matters arising, or action points from the last AGM.

(8) The 2017-18 Annual Report:

The only addition to the Annual Report was a message from the President expressing continued satisfaction in the direction of movement of The Society.

(9 &10) (Items taken together) Receive the result of the vote regarding acceptance of: The Society accounts, and the Auditor's report, for the financial year to 31 March 2018 and acceptance of the 2019-20 Operational Plan:

As the votes cast for both ballots were the same on all returned papers, the results were identical. 74 papers were returned in time, 70 valid votes were cast for both propositions, and 1 against each. 3 papers were declared void as they did not have the member's name or membership number on them. Both propositions were therefore carried.

(11) The President's Address:

Ralph Horton gave a brief address regarding 'Engineering for the Future' and the 'The Challenges of Our Times' gleaned from the development of Rosenbauer's Concept Fire Truck. 'The Silver Society' will be in service longer due to the extended retirement age and the natural physical strengths of this group will need to be addressed by technology.

Volunteering, particularly for the fire and rescue service in rural areas, will drastically decline through factors such as the extended retirement age and the demographics of where people live. By 2050 it is predicted that 75% of the world's population will live in cities.

This phenomenon is affecting our Society as the membership gets older and less able, and fewer and fewer new, and especially younger members are joining, or coming forward to take over from the existing cadre of officers.

(12) Working Party Updates:

(a) Management Working Part: The fine tuning of the new management framework of The Society was ongoing, in this, our first year of the new structure. It will no doubt continue to evolve in the years to come, but so far the MWP feel that restructuring is going well. Outstanding items to conclude in the next Society year are; the revision of The Society Constitution, the development of the new website with the IT Manager, a review of The Society's paperwork and consideration of charitable status.

(b) Financial Working Party: The FWP's remit was to look at The Society's accounts structure, expenses and insurance. The new accounts now accurately reflect the yearly income and expenditure. In future years, the donations in the form of unclaimed expenses will be separated from other donations received. The insurance payment has been greatly reduced with no loss of cover. There was one account query from a member, which was answered to his complete satisfaction. Thanks go to Brian Jackson for his continued hard work.

(13 & 14) Consider notices of motion duly submitted in accordance with Constitution clause 20(2) and Transaction of business that may be specified for the meeting:

There were no motions submitted, and no other business notified for this meeting.

(15) Bob Herbert Award: (for Fire Covers published in the period April 2017-March 2018)

Simon Rowley was announced as winner of the Bob Herbert Award this year, for his article 'We must not forget what Fire and Rescue is all about' (Fire Cover 218).

(16) Other awards and presentations: There were no other awards or presentations.

(1500 - 1525 hours tea and coffee break)

(17) 2019-20 Annual General Meeting, National and Overseas Visits:

The 2019 National visit will be to Devon and Somerset FRS over the weekend of 15/16th June, with a FBS South West visit on Friday 14th June to proceed.

Due to the family circumstances of our local contact, the planned 2019 Overseas Visit to Belgium has had to be postponed to a later date to be confirmed.

The 2020 International visit will be on the weekend of the 20th & 21st June, directly following on from Interschutz, to enable members to attend both events should they wish.

(18) Any matters for the remainder of the AGM and the weekend:

Directions for the Sunday event were provided to those who had booked for this and there being no other matters the official part of the meeting was closed at 15.45 hours.

Guest Presentation:

Matt Wakefield and Holly Roberts gave a detailed and enthusiastic talks about the history and future plans for the Museum and about the developments with The Society Library, which it is hoped to have operational soon.

Question & Answer Session:

One question concerned a lack of response from the FBS Sales Unit. It was pointed out that the officer was a new appointee, and that the established officer tasked to guide him had, because of other domestic and Society matters, had been unable to afford the time required to mentor him. There was now more time available and it would be progressed in the very near future.

The question of social media and its role in The Society was raised, possibly as a recruiting tool. This is an ongoing item under consideration by the MWP and the IT Manager.

One member stated that he could not see the result of the vote on the website. The Minute Secretary stated that they were definitely there, as he had accessed them only the previous evening. One of the objectives of the updated website will be to standardise the location of various documents, and improve the headings to enable easier navigation.

One member raised a time management issue, as the Q&A session had to be truncated due to previous items overrunning. As this is the first time for many years that the AGM has taken this format, this was a 'learning curve', and will be addressed for future AGMs.