

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the
Royal Cornwall Agricultural Association
held at The Pavilion Centre, Royal Cornwall
Events Centre on Wednesday 15 July 2021**



In the Chair, The President Mr John Willis, welcomed those present to the meeting.

**TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING IN
AUGUST 2020 (VIRTUAL)**

The minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held 'virtually' in August 2020 were read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

APOLOGIES

The Secretary confirmed that we had received apologies from The Hon Evelyn Boscawen, Mr J A Coode, Mr A M J Galsworthy, Lady Carew Pole, Sir Richard Carew Pole, The Rt Revd Tim Thornton, M J Simmons, Lady St Levan, Lord St Levan, P Vincent, D Nicholas, Lt Cmdr N J Trefusis, R Hancock, J P Oatey, P J Sobey, R Laity, W R Davey, C P Richards, R J Thompson, Miss K Emmett, A G James, L Pascoe, Mrs Simon Bolitho, P J Olds, Lady Banham, P M Bickford-Smith, Mrs S Eustice, J Stanbury, P Lobb and F J Dyer.

**TO RECEIVE THE FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER
2020**

The Chairman invited Mr Brian Harvey of PKF Francis Clark LLP to present the financial report.

Mr Harvey said in previous AGMs he mentioned on numerous occasions the importance of the weather on the three days of the Royal Cornwall Show and the correlation between that and the financial performance of the Association, but if only the weather was all that we had to worry about at the moment.

2020 will live long in the memories as the year where the world went into lockdown due to the Covid 19 global pandemic and every business, indeed every individual had been impacted one way or another by this and the Royal Cornwall Agricultural Association was no different.

The Royal Cornwall Show usually held in June was initially postponed to September before being cancelled, all of the staff of the Association were placed on furlough at some point in the year and many other events that would have taken place at the Events Centre or in the Pavilion Centre were cancelled. Whilst every effort had been made to manage costs as effectively as possible and make the best of a difficult situation, this as one might expect had impacted the financial performance of the Association for the year ended 30 September 2020 and would ultimately hit the reserves of the Association.

The Association was in a fortunate position that they went into the pandemic with substantial reserves built up over many years that would allow them to come out the other side relatively unscathed, whilst many other businesses had not been so lucky.

Looking at things in more detail as outlined on the income and expenditure account, the cancellation of the show meant that there was no or minimal admission or other show related income in the year.

Mr Harvey said that the show was carrying forward, as deferred income, £373,000 of trade stand receipts, £6,300 of sponsorship receipts and £32,000 of admission receipts in relation to the 2020 show that it was hoped would be carried forward towards the 2021 show which was now being carried forward towards the 2022 show. Clearly this assisted the cashflow of the Association in difficult times.

With regards to other income annual members' subscriptions of £49,415 was the balance paid by members during the year, where no refund had been requested, and these were therefore essentially charitable donations by the members in the year and much appreciated.

Site lettings fell to £73,410 from £190,246 in the prior year which was largely due to the vast majority of events in the second half of the financial year being cancelled or postponed and there was a similar story for Pavilion Centre lettings (always shown as net of the expenses) and this year showed a deficit of £5,044. Actual pavilion letting fell to £62,025 from £101,921 due once again to postponements and cancellations.

The final piece of income included were the receipts in relation to claims made under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme which amounted to £122,423. Over the year to September 2020 all members of staff were furloughed at some time and this scheme had reimbursed the association for a % of wages costs that have continued to be incurred and this had and still continued to be the case.

Overall income for the year was £359,367 being almost £2m lower than the 2019 equivalent figure.

In terms of show expenditure the cancellation of the show saw costs reduced to a minimum albeit some costs in relation to the show had been committed prior to the decision to cancel the show being made. Overall expenditure for the year was £899,450 which was £1,368,780 less than incurred last year.

The implication of the above being that in aggregate the accounts showed a deficit for the year before any gains or losses on investments of £540,083 compared to a surplus of £179,867 in the prior year, this being the first year, for some time, where a deficit was reported for the Association.

Whilst it was clearly very disappointing to report any deficit, Mr Harvey said he believed that the position could have been considerably worse. In fact, whilst the budget reported in the financial statements was the one approved in a pre Covid world last January, he undertook an exercise with the Secretary and the Officers of the Association to consider what the implications of a cancelled show might have on the finances of the Association.

At that time three scenarios were considered depending on when the decision to cancel the show might be made and the best of these showed a projected deficit for the year of just over £800,000.

Whilst these budgets did not include any furlough income the fact that final figures proved better than these is testament to the efforts of all involved to manage costs in very difficult circumstances. He said that he believed many other associations across the country would be looking at accounts showing a far more concerning position at this time.

In terms of the Balance sheet the fixed assets had decreased to £2,942,134 as depreciation had exceeded capital expenditure in the year.

As expected, some of the capital expenditure budgeted for the year had been deferred to the current year or beyond.

At the year-end, cash at bank was £711,858 which, perhaps surprisingly, was £54,710 greater than 2019. However, this was somewhat of a false position. Ultimately, the funds remain in the bank at the expense of creditors that are £525,000 greater than at this point last year.

Also there is in total £448k of deferred income, being largely related to amounts received in the year relating to the cancelled 2020 show. These funds having been retained as a contribution now towards the 2022 show.

Even if, as we all hope, a 2022 show will be able to go ahead this income will not be received again but the costs of holding the show will need to be incurred, the implication being that the cash currently held will be used to fund the 2022 show.

Mr Harvey said it had always been instilled in him that cash was king and it was imperative that this remained in the Association's thoughts as we move forward and that cash was closely monitored.

Overall net assets at 30 September 2020 stood at £4,633,657, a £245,342 reduction on 2019. Interestingly the net assets were last at this level at 31 September 2017.

The Chairman thanked Mr Harvey for his comprehensive review and there were no questions raised in response to the report.

TO CONFIRM THE APPOINTMENT OF THE AUDITORS – PKF FRANCIS CLARK

Mr Robert Sloman thanked Mr Harvey and his team for the huge amount of work they had carried out over the last year and said it was beyond expectations. He also said that it was an appropriate moment to say that our investment portfolio had held up well and as at 30 June 2021 stood at £2,047,533. He said there was a huge amount to thank people for at the moment and said he hoped to return to a more normal year next year.

Mr Sloman subsequently proposed the re-appointment of PKF Francis Clark for the coming year and the proposal was seconded by Mr Jonathan Coode and passed unanimously.

RE-ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT FOR 2021 & PRESENTATION OF BADGE

Michael Williams confirmed that Mr John Willis had been elected last year at the 'virtual' AGM and said it was a huge pleasure to propose his re-election and say thank you for taking this on for another year. The proposal was seconded by Andrew Eustice.

RE-ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT ELECT FOR 2021 & PRESENTATION OF BADGE

Sir Ferrers Vyvyan proposed the re-election of Mrs Alexandra Bolitho for a further year. The proposal was seconded by James Williams.

Both badges were subsequently presented.

TO ELECT 12 PERSONS TO THE COUNCIL TO SERVE FOR THE ENSUING THREE YEARS

The Secretary explained that the Association's system meant it was time to elect new people to Council – as listed below.

Eastern Division

E G Bailey
Mrs S Borton
R D Nancekivell
P E Roose
E G Sleep
J L Stanbury

Western Division

G Blight
Mrs E Bowden
W T Burley
R A Edmond
M S Hosking
R H Olds

Irrespective of Locality

Mr A C Brewer
Mrs V G Daniel
Mrs S M Dudden
M P Roberts

Their election was proposed en bloc by the Chairman and seconded by James Eustice.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Discussion took place about the difficult decision to not go ahead with the 2021 show and the Secretary said he felt it had been the right decision for the Association and that he had received comments to indicate others felt this was also correct for us. It was noted that the Devon County Show did go ahead and that some one day shows were also due to go ahead in Devon. The Great Yorkshire Show also went ahead on a somewhat reduced basis.

It was confirmed that the Association's Council had elected a new Chairman, Sir Ferrers Vyvyan and Vice Chair, Mrs Catherine Mead, well known in the county, amongst other things, as the owner Lynher Dairies, the makers of Cornish Yarg cheese. A presentation was subsequently made to Mr Michael Williams who had retired as Chairman and Sir Ferrers said it was a sad day but thanked Michael for his continued support and service over the last 25 years, dating back to his Presidency in 1996. Sir Ferrers also referred to a note from Jonathon Coode saying that both Michael, and his wife Sarah, had given so much to the show and Michael had contributed wise council, patience and wisdom. Mr Williams was presented with a painting by Neil Pinkett and Sarah Williams with flowers. Michael Williams subsequently gave a speech and talked about the unusual and unpredictable situation we all find ourselves in with Covid and said he would have preferred to retire in better circumstance, but said it was fortunate that the Association had been in a good position to weather the storm and he hoped they would be able to build their reserves back up again and resume a normal service. He said he would look back on his time with nothing but pleasure and enjoyed being part of something really worthwhile and thanked the Secretary of the Association and his team for making a Chairman's life easy. He also thanked his wife Sarah for her company and all her support which made his life a lot easier. He said it was a great pleasure to hand over to Sir Ferrers Vyvyan a good friend. Sir Ferrers said he was looking forward to his new appointment and said he knew that he would have good advice and council from his Vice Chair, Catherine Mead who he welcomed and said he felt well supported by her and the Secretary and his team. He added that hopefully we have a show to look forward to next year.

The Secretary advised there were three RCAA events being planned – Cornwall Young Handlers day on Wednesday 25th August, Cornwall Equestrian Show on Sunday 5th September and the Cornish Winter Fair on Saturday 20 November 2021.

A presentation then took place of a new trophy "The James & Margaret Eustice Perpetual Challenge Cup" for the best team of 5 beef animals which, James Eustice said, was an

prize given by them due to the impressive turn out for the new classes at the 2019 show. The Chair extended his thanks and the Secretary said this would be a wonderful new addition to the trophy cupboard.

Mr Harvey announced the result of the earlier vote by Council for the four people who would be newly elected to the GP committee as being Mrs Elizabeth Bowden, Mr Roland Nancekivell, Mr Michael Roberts and Mr Julian Stanbury.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4pm and the Secretary advised that tea was being served in the lounge, but asked everybody to be mindful about social distancing wherever possible.