

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE INSITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT

FRIDAY 26th FEBRUARY 2021, 10am via video link due to COVID-19 restrictions

PRESENT: Chairman, Mark Robins (MR); Director, Victoria Bywater (VB) and 30 members of the Institute.

AGENDA NUMBER		ACTION
	<p>The Chairman welcomed all attendees. The Chairman confirmed a hyperlink to all papers relating to the SGM had been circulated to members on the 25th January 2021 via email and published on the Institute website.</p>	
1.	<p><i>To receive apologies for absence</i></p> <p>The Chairman confirmed apologies for absence from 38 members of the Institute.</p>	
2.	<p><i>Proposal to change the Financial Year End to the 31st December</i></p> <p>The Chairman explained that the current financial year end of the Institute is 30th June. Membership invoices are raised from 1st July annually; the Annual General Meeting (AGM) is then usually convened in October with the financial statement of accounts prepared ready for approval at the AGM.</p> <p>The Chairman further explained that by moving the financial year end to the 31st December, the Council believes that;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Membership renewal will shift to a more suitable time in the farming calendar year; 2. The Society for the Environment annual renewal will align with the Institutes year-end; 3. The Continuous Professional Development (CPD) reporting will be coterminous with the financial year-end. <p>The Chairman advised that if the financial year end were to change to the 31st December there would be a need to run an 18-month year, from 1st July 2020 to 31st December 2021 which would need to be notified to the Charity Commission. The Chairman confirmed that The Institute’s accountants have been consulted in this matter and are happy to support the proposed change.</p> <p>The Chairman further advised that for the year of change of year end, the membership subscription renewal date will need to be moved which will require careful management to ensure that no members are lost in the transition. The Chairman confirmed that the Council would agree how it wishes to administer the invoicing of the members over the transition period and ensure all members are treated fairly, not disadvantaged and properly notified in advance of the new procedures.</p> <p>The Chairman further advised that the date of the AGM would also need to be moved to accommodate the new year end with an AGM likely to be held in April (subject to the</p>	

	<p>timing of the Easter Bank Holiday weekend) and, as now, planned to coincide with an Annual Farm Walk.</p> <p>Discussion was held and support given by a number of those in attendance.</p> <p>Carl Atkin proposed to change the year end to 31st December, seconded by Mark Suthern, all agreed.</p>	
3.	<p>Proposal to form an ad hoc Executive Committee consisting of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer and Director with the authority to make day-to-day decisions as required Wording change in the Constitution to read as follows:</p> <p><u>Composition of the Executive Committee</u> The Executive Committee consists of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, the Treasurer and the Director. The Executive Committee may, with Council approval, invite the President to attend Executive Committee meetings without a vote. The Director participates without a vote in all Executive Committee meetings.</p> <p><u>Authority of the Executive Committee</u> Subject to applicable rules, procedures, restrictions, resolutions, and requirements of the Council or of the Constitution and Bylaws, the Executive Committee has the authority to make day-to-day decisions as required. The Council, at its next meeting, shall review Executive Committee minutes and may modify, reject or ratify any Executive Committee action.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked the current proactive members of Council for their ongoing enthusiasm and support for the Institute and suggested that this proposal would allow seamless day-to-day decisions to be made as required.</p> <p>A question was raised by a member regarding the limits of authority. The Chairman advised that the limits of authority ultimately remain with full Council for all decisions made by the Executive Committee as Trustees of the Charity and governed by the Charity Commission. The Chairman confirmed that the Council would therefore agree the limits of authority of the Executive Committee.</p> <p>A member suggested that the proposal was sound as it would enable Council to keep up the pace and not to go over old ground.</p> <p>John Giles proposed the formation of an ad hoc Executive Committee as worded above, seconded by Henry Matthews, all agreed.</p>	
4.	<p>Proposal to form an Advisory Board Committee consisting of any former Chairman of the Institute to meet annually with a purpose of advising the current Chair of Council as required</p> <p>The Chairman updated the meeting that the express purpose of a potential Advisory Board would be to support and provide non-binding strategic advice to the incumbent Chair of Council. The Chairman of the Council at any such Advisory Board, could call upon the good counsel of the Board and shall in return could report to the Board on the current and planned future activities of the Institute. The Chairman advised that the Advisory Board would not be required to bear any fiduciary responsibilities, rather it is constituted to allow the Chair to benefit from the knowledge and wisdom of previous incumbents ensuring that wisdom is not lost to the Institute.</p> <p>A member advised that any Advisory Board should be an informal sounding board only for</p>	

	<p>a Chairman of the Council but would use as a useful tool for historic decisions made by the Institute.</p> <p>Geoff Dodgson proposed the formation of an Advisory Board as worded above, seconded by Graham Redman, all agreed.</p>	
5.	<p>Proposal to create a new membership grade for Graduate Members for 3 years post-education set at 'retired' membership grade fee of £60/ year</p> <p>The Chairman advised that Student Membership grade is free for all students and that the view of the Council is that Student members are the future of the Institute. The Chairman further advised that the Council is committed to support students whilst they are in education and post education as they transition into employment.</p> <p>Discussion was held on the large number of student members in recent years and the importance of maintaining their membership.</p> <p>Martin Wilkinson proposed changing the proposal of 3 years post-education to 2 years.</p> <p>After discussion, Martin Wilkinson proposed to create a new membership grade for Graduate Members for 2 years post-education set at 'retired' membership grade fee of £60/ year, seconded by Rob Gazely.</p> <p>Further discussion was held on the possibility of sponsoring a Graduate member either by senior individuals or via the Branch network.</p> <p>The Chairman suggested he would raise the issue of sponsorship of a Graduate member at the Branch meeting being held shortly with all Branches of the Institute.</p>	MR
6.	<p>AOB</p> <p>The Director confirmed that there had been no further items received by members.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked all members for their attendance.</p>	

With no further business, the meeting closed at 10.45am