

**Lincolnshire Agricultural Society**

**Annual General Notice Minutes**

Thursday 1st February 2024, 10am, Lincolnshire Showground

**In attendance:**

Matt Bagley, Robin Battle, Graeme Beattie, Robert Borrill, Nigel Bottom, Andrew Buckley, Sarah Burgess, David Burton, Ben Chamberlin, Diane Chennells, Michael Chennells, Helen Clarke, Laura Clarke, David Clough, Helen Clough, Richard Crust, Toby Dennis, Ben Duckworth, Roger Hansard, Richard Holmes, Chris Howard, Robert Howard, Andrew Howlett, John Lockwood, James Lockwood, Tom Marsden, Judith Marsden, James Matthews, Kate McDonald, Stuart Mckenzie, Henry Moreton, Jane Moreton, Mark Moncaster, Sandra Moncaster, Tim Needham, David Nelstrop, Robert Nelstrop, Alec Newlove, Charlie Nissler, Wendy Osgodby, Les Parker, Simon Pearson, Kath Phillips, Sarah Poucher, Andrew Price, Andrew Read, David Richardson, Margaret Robinson, Andrew Roughton, Graham Rowles Nicholson, Rev Alan Robson, Lizzie Saywell, Andrew Scoley, David Wallis, Ian Walter, Giles Walter, Ian Watson, Andrew Welch, Ruth Wilkinson, Robert Willey.

**Also in attendance:**

David Beech, Paula Cragg, Rosie Crust, Nicola Hurley, Alice Joyce, Verity Newcombe, Charlotte Powell, Suzy Stone, Harvey Welsh.

**Apologies:**

Ben Atkinson, David Bell, Anne Bottom, Geoff Bottom, Nigel Brown, Jane Burgess, Rupert Bryant, Liz Coy, Gordon Cummings, Simon Day, Tammy Doughty, John Dickinson, Ambrose Fowler, Janet Godfrey, Dawn Griffiths, Jim Godfrey, Michael Godson, David Hill, Jayne Hunt, Michael Ingham, Sarah McCorquodale, J Milligan-Manby, Peter Mottram, Ian Palmer, Richard Parker, Mark Poucher Jane Pridgeon, Michael Read, Shirley Richardson, Stuart Robertson, Chris Rothery, Sarah Scupholm, Alan & Sue Stennett, Sean Sparling, Lindsey Sutton, Amy Thomas, Peter Vergette, Kate Vickers, Steve Ward, Anona Willows.

**1. Chairman’s welcome and apologies for absence**

The Chairman, Andrew Buckley, welcomed Members of the LAS to the meeting and the apologies received were presented on the screen.

No other apologies were presented from the room.

The Chairman reported on the death of James Knight, who sadly passed away before Christmas. He advised that James was a Member of the Council for many years.

He added that Francis Dymoke had also passed away before Christmas and until recently was a Member of the LAS and a supporter of the society.

He advised that Clifford Bell had also passed away, who had previously been a cattle steward and a supporter of the LAS.

A moment of silence was held to reflect and to remember those and other members of the LAS who we had sadly lost since the last AGM.

1. **To confirm the minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2nd February 2023**

The Chairman commented there was an error included on the last minutes stating Steve Ward was retiring as trustee but remaining on the Show Committee. However, he was to remain as the Education Committee’s Chairman. The minutes have been updated accordingly.

No other matters arising.

RESOLVED that subject to the amendment, that the minutes were a true record.

The minutes were proposed Nigel Bottom and seconded by David Nelstrop. The President will sign the minutes after the meeting.

1. **To receive the Trustees Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the year ending 30 September 2023**

The Trustees report and Statement of Accounts had recently been made available on the website and a hard copy was available by individual request, the summary of the accounts were available on seats.

Andrew Price, Treasurer, then presented the Statement of Accounts.

Highlights for 2023:

* New CEO and new staffing structure providing stability to for the team.
* Trading highlight, as it was the first year without COVID revenue. LAS exceeded income against budget, but costs higher than expected:

(a.) utilities with the price rises in 2023.

(b.) professional fees with the projects being undertaken.

(c.) salaries, including recruitment, filled vacancies and minimum wage.

* Projects – Completed job package review, Joseph Nickerson refurbishment, giving basis for staff to develop LAS growth and increased sales
* Projects – Started NE Corner, wastewater stage 1 and 2 and Trafford Farm
* 10-year project – Looking at where LAS will be in future

Profit and Loss

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **19/20** | **20/21** | **21/22** | **22/23** |
| **T/O** | **£1,697k** | **£1,812k** | **£2,613k** | **£3,833k****\*land sale** |
| **Expenditure** | **£1,567k** | **£1,123k** | **£2,360k** | **£2.921k** |
| **SURPLUS** | **£130k** | **£689k** | **£253k** | **£925k****\*inc investment growth @13.5k** |

Accounts Balance Sheet

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Total assets** | **£14.33 Mil** | **£14.803 Mil** | **£15.17 Mil** | **£16.42 Mil** |
| **Total liabilities** | **£0.730 Mil** | **£0.5 Mil** | **£0.63 Mil** | **£0.952 Mil** |
| **NET WORTH** | **£13.6 Mil** | **£14.3 Mil** | **£14.54 Mil** | **£15.47 Mil** |

End of 2023 - where were we from annual accounts.

Three targets to achieve over last few years

* To have 25% over turnover as other operating income/ membership

 (a) Currently at 46.1% for year ending 2023. (excl one off revenue 16% same as last year)

* To have no bank borrowing

 (a) The facility was available, but it was not utilised in year 22-23. It might be required in 2023- 2024, due to investments timescale for releasing funds.

* To have a balance sheet of £15 million

 (a) Currently £15.47 mil up from £13.85 mil in 18/19

 (b) Very strong balance sheet net worth dropped from 98% to 94% - vat payment

2024 Plans

**Trading**

* 10-year plan
* Increased business focus and greater commerciality - particularly concentrating on sales, gross margins, and costs for events.
* Smarter/efficient for quotes - Insurance, professional fees, catering, repairs and maintenance
* Increased non trading income focus - returns from the investments/ rentals/ term deposits.
* New accounting software

**Investment**

* Cash from sale to petrol station, would need to be used to continue to strengthen society’s financial resilience and meet the charitable objectives.
* Finish wastewater management project on showground - stage 1 costs £295k. Stage 2 was potentially at £500k
* Number of Capex requests on Showground, such as WIFI, Members’ lawn, toilets and drainage at both Trafford Farm and Showground, would cost around £300-350k.

Proposer of accounts: Robert Willey

Seconder of accounts: Robert Howard

RESOLVED that

1. the Statement of Accounted were agreed and noted.
2. the current financial position was noted.
3. **To Elect Members of Council**

The Chairman announced that 36 Members had completed another term, as a Council Member. That all 36 Members wish to stand for re-election for a further two years.

These Members were:

Graeme Beattie, Rupert Bryant, David Burton, Andrew Buckley, Ben Chamberlin, Helen Clarke, Laura Clark, Elizabeth Coy, Helen Clough, Richard Crust, Simon Day, Ambrose Fowler, Peter Gilbert, Tom Garner, James Grantham, Chris Godson, Richard Holmes, Stuart McKenzie, Tom Marsden, James Matthews, Sandra Moncaster, Jane Moreton, David Nelstrop, Kath Phillips, Mark Poucher, Stuart Robertson, Margaret Robinson, Andrew Scoley, Sean Sparling, Alan Stennett, Caroline Thorlby, Giles Walter, Charles Welby, Ian Watson, Ruth Wilkinson, Andrew Welch.

The Chairman asked for someone from the floor to propose and second the re-election of the 36 Council Members.

Proposer of the re-election of Council Members: Nigel Bottom

Seconder of re-election of Council Members: Roger Hansard

There were two nominations to join the Council, Ben Atkinson. *(It was noted that Ben was unable to attend the meeting, due to him attending a funeral)*

Robert Nelstrop proposed the appointment stated the following:

 Ben Atkinson was the eighth generation of his family to farm in South Lincolnshire, from his home north of Bourne.

 The family arrived from Yorkshire in 1738 with two heifers and 16 bales of hay. They rented a blacksmiths shop from the Earl of Ancaster, before moving to Grange Farm and have remained there since.

 Robert added Ben was a very forward-thinking farmer and astute businessman. This enabled a significant expansion of the business, as well as their land in Hacconby, Dunsby and Rippingale Fens, Ben farms at Pinchbeck and had recently taken land near Digby.

 Ben grows cereals and root-crops and had been an enthusiastic adopter of regenerative establishment practices. Ben was passionate about agriculture and a great ambassador for our industry. He has served on numerous committees, such as drainage boards and Chair of his local NFU branch.

Kath Phillips seconded the appointment.

Ryan Kemp was also nominated to join the Council, proposed by Ben Chamberlain who stated that Ryan was best known as the lead singer in the Baltic Donkeys and would be an asset to the team.

Helen Clough seconded the appointment.

RESOLVED that

1. 36 Members of Council be reelected for a further two more years, as they had completed their term of office.
2. Ryan Kemp and Ben Atkinson be appointed as new Members of Council.
3. **To Elect a President for 2024**

The Chairman thanked the current President, Lord Lieutenant Toby Dennis, for his time as President and President Elect and presented a photo book gift.

The President was invited to address the Members.

The Chairman commented that the board of trustees supported the nomination of Ian Walter, as the new President.

There were no other nominations for the appointment and a show of hands from the floor supported Ian Walter as President.

Ian Walter was invited to address the Members and then exchanged seats with Toby Dennis on the top table.

RESOLVED that Ian Walter be appointed as the new President.

1. **To Elect a President Elect for 2024**

The Board of Trustees recommended that Chris Rothery be the President Elect for 2024. Chris Rothery was unable to attend the meeting, as he was overseas.

Richard Holmes proposed the appointment stating:

Chris Rothery was born in Brigg and attended his first show after WW2 and has only missed six shows since.

He shortly began work at Peacock and Binnington as sales director until April 1994, exhibiting at the Lincolnshire Show every year throughout this time.

Upon his retirement he was approached the help with the Health and Safety regime at the Showground where he later became a trustee of the LAS in 2012. Chris took the responsibility of honorary treasurer in 2015 and continuing until 2020 as well as being a part of the Show Committee and the Committee that start the Lincolnshire Farming Conference until his retirement in 2022.

Chris continued to be part of the Lincolnshire Show by organising a parade in the main ring for the 130th year in 2019 and continues to work with the team to plan parades. He also oversees the society’s interests in Trafford Farm.

Richard closed by commenting Chris was a family man, intelligent, nice and genuine. Having been a long-time friend and supporter of the Lincolnshire Show and Society, he would be an excellent ambassador for the LAS.

Fred Wallis seconded the nomination.

A video was shared from Chris Rothery thanking the society for the nomination.

RESOLVED that Chris Rothery be duly elected as President Elect.

1. **To Appoint Honorary Treasurer**

The Chairman announced that Andrew Price was happy to remain as the Treasurer for 2024.

There were no other nominations for the role.

Proposer: Tim Needham

Seconder: John Lockwood

RESOLVED that Andrew Price be appointed as the Honorary Treasurer for 2024.

1. **To Appoint Society Trustees**

The Chairman advised that trustees were eligible to stand for three terms of 3 years.

He highlighted that Graeme Beattie had completed his second term as trustee and will stand for re-election. That Fred Wallis had also completed his second term as a trustee and will stand for re-election.

Nigel Bottom had completed his third term as a trustee and will be retiring. The Chairman thanked Nigel for his time and input as a trustee.

The Chairman asked for a proposer and seconder from the floor.

Proposer: Kath Phillips

Seconder: Graham Rowles Nicholson

There were two new nominations for trustees, Ben Duckworth and Ben Atkinson.

Nigel Bottom proposed the nomination of Ben Atkinson stating:

 Ben started his career within the family Land Rover business and progressed through every level within this business. Service, marketing, but his first senior role was as their senior financial controller with a keen eye for finance, IT, processes, and efficiencies.

 He progressed as the opportunities came along to become Managing Director keeping all the skills he had learnt over the years, and now looks after over 150+ team Members, a turnover north of £100m and a large portfolio of owned commercial operations outside of car garages.

 Ben is a keen shot and can often be found supporting the local estates of Lincolnshire and Yorkshire. He is a keen supporter and sponsor of the Lincolnshire Show for many years, and many other local, regional, and national events. He sits on the main board of Jaguar Land Rover as Chairman of the Dealer Network, plus many other responsibilities.

 Ben had a calm head on a fast-moving life.

 Ben would bring a unique and welcome angle to many projects and further successes at the Lincolnshire Agricultural Society Trustee Board, and I had no hesitation in proposing him for the role.

Seconder: David Nelstrop

Ben Atkinson

Kath Phillips proposed the appointment of Ben Atkinson saying:

As described previously at the meeting he is a well-known, successful farmer.

A graduate from Newcastle University, a keen water skier and a good friend for almost 30 years.

He and his wife, Heather’s, work with local schools, open farm events and local charities including the LRSN mean that.

There was no hesitation in recommending Ben to the Trustee Board and think his knowledge of farming, the local community and his south of the county connections will be most useful.

A show of hands seconded the appointment of Ben Atkinson.

A show of hands from the floor supported the appointment of Ben Duckworth and Ben Atkinson.

RESOLVED that both Ben Duckworth and Ben Atkinson would be appointed on the Board of Trustees.

1. **To Appoint Auditors**

The Chairman advised that Streets Chartered Accountants expressed interest in continuing their services as auditors.

Proposer: John Lockwood

Seconder: Kath Phillips

RESOLVED that Streets Chartered Accountants be appointed as the auditors for 2024.

1. **To present the President’s Award for 2024**

The President’s award recognised excellence in either science, technology, the environment or land and business management, the award was made to an individual who had made an outstanding contribution to agriculture in Lincolnshire.

The Chairman announced this year’s winner, as Chris Howard. He advised that Chris had attended Caythorpe Farm Institute and returned home to farm in 1956. In the mid-sixties along with seven other Heath farmers a cooperative was set up growing and marketing frozen peas and Fresh potatoes known as, Branston Produce.

The potato business now called Branston Potatoes, continued to thrive and expand with Chris overseeing a number of acquisitions. Chris was Chairman from the early eighties until his retirement in 2010. By then the company had become Tesco’s biggest supplier of potatoes. Chris has remained a shareholder in the business which now employs over nine hundred staff and was the 100% supplier of fresh and prepared potatoes to Tesco.

Chris was also instrumental in the initial purchase and subsequent development of Spalding’s which grew to be one of the principal suppliers of agricultural spares in the UK. Out of this business another well know Local company Welvent was created of which he was chairman and an investor.

Chris also had been involved with numerous property developments and had various interests.

He had been a huge supporter of the Agricultural Society following in the footsteps of his parents and grandparents, being President in 2004. He has also been ably supported by his wife Jane and children.

Chris Howard accepted the award and addressed the Council.

1. **End of Year Update Review and Strategy Update**

The Chairman gave his end of year report.

The CEO presented a video showing the key highlights of 2023.

The Chairman thanked Tim Needham, Chair, Ali Bottom, Kath Phillips and Tim Sleight for their time and effort in collating the report, latterly assisted by Charlotte Powell and Verity Newcombe.

Tim Needham presented the outcomes from the strategy review.

He stated that the Strategy Committee was derived last year to discuss the investment opportunities for the LAS, as a result of the Brookfield Development funding.

The Committee had consulted with key groups including current and past trustees, Committee Members (Show, Education and Finance), staff, volunteers, Council and Members, local businesses and supporters of the LAS.

The Committee reviewed:

* Aims and objectives of LAS, and how it was perceived.
* Roles of Lincolnshire Showground and LAS
* The effectiveness of branding, communication and marketing
* What was the charity’s strategy?
* What was achieved and the effectiveness of the charity?
* Membership retention and ideas for increasing numbers.
* Financial requirements needed to fulfill LAS objectives.
* Environmental and sustainability
* Ideas for income opportunities to secure and grow the LAS.

The Committee’s overview of findings included:

* Better understanding of the aims and objective of the LAS.
* Improve the perception of the LAS by others and communicate the worthiness of the charity.
* Improve inclusivity.
* Better awareness needed regarding the current Education programme and how it’s linked to charity.
* Lack of awareness regarding Trafford Farm
* Importance of the Show

He outlined ideas and suggestions:

* Merge LAS and The Showground branding.
* Reaffirm and update the purpose of the LAS.
* Promote the aims and objectives, core values and goals.
* Develop LAS and the Showground as one entity linked by all activities and achievements.
* Broaden how the LAS was perceived and can operate within the wider agricultural industry e.g. food, nutrition, careers, business etc.
* LAS could be a hub and voice for all Lincolnshire related agricultural news, research and statistics.

He advised the following suggestions were made regarding the charity:

* Relaunch and define the charity work and identify bursaries and other sectors within the strategy, not just education.
* Market the charitable achievements better.
* Relaunch the Bursary Programme to be an effective known resource.
* Invest in an outreach worker to take our Programme to the community more effectively.

The Committee suggested expansion of the programme by:

* Widening the audience from nursery to further education, including University.
* Career opportunities for local businesses e.g. apprenticeships, training, and local vacancies.
* More than educational groups - Young Farmers, The Grey Pound, families and business partners.
* Suggestion for new Annual LAS Awards
* Engage with business partners for sponsoring.

They advised the need to improve the financial management, control and processes.

The Committee presented the suggested targets surrounding:

* Financial
* Budgets
* Heads of Departments had clear roles.
* New communication/branding strategies and website
* Environmental and sustainability
* Repairs and maintenance

They proposed the need for a strategy and business plan on the toilet provision, cattle sheds and the stables, as well as a plan to maintain the existing assets.

They further presentation additional ideas for consideration at the site, including:

* Agri- Café
* Tree Planting
* Park and Ride
* Festivals
* Accommodation
* Minibus
* Woodland educational activities
* Container storage land rental
* Forest School
* Dedication Scheme (Benches, trees etc.)
* New stables
* More concerts
* Weddings

Members were encouraged to speak to Tim Needham or the committee if they had any further comments or suggestions.

RESOLVED that.

1. The end of year report from the Chairman be noted.
2. The highlighted video of 2023 be received and celebrated.
3. The Strategy Committee report be reviewed and adopted by the society.
4. **Any other business**

i. Chosen Charity

The Chairman announced that the Board of Trustees had agreed to support Cancer Research UK for 2024. Representatives from the charity were invited to the meeting but we unable to attend. Members were encouraged to speak to one of the LAS team or visit [www.cancerresearchuk.org](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org) to find out more about the work of the charity.

RESOLVED that Cancer Research UK be awarded as the chosen charity for 2024.

ii. Strategy Committee - Presentation

Chris Howard suggested publication and circulation of strategy report to ensure targets were known wider than the organisation. The Chairman confirmed the Committee was outsourced to a third party to ensure its outcomes were revisited and agreed to circulate the document.

RESOLVED that the presentation be circulated to members and be regularly monitored.

Lincolnshire Agricultural Society

(A Company by Limited Guarantee)

Registered Office: Lincolnshire Showground,

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Company Registration No.1845726, Registered Charity No: 51565