



Arboricultural Association
Minutes of the 54th Annual General Meeting

held on Monday 7th September 2020 via Zoom conference facility.

Present:

AGM Panel	Jaime Bray	Chair
	Stewart Wardrop	CEO
	Laurence Vine-Chatterton	Treasurer

Members *The AGM was attended virtually by 25 unique viewers.*

Apologies: No apologies were received in advance of the AGM.

(1) Welcome by the Association Chair

The Chair welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the Zoom meeting.

(2) Apologies for absence

As noted above.

(3) Minutes of the 53rd Annual General Meeting on 9th September 2019

The minutes were proposed for approval by Alastair Durkin and seconded by Martyn Thomas.

(4) Receipt of the Reports of the Board of Directors, September 2018 - September 2019

It was proposed by the Chair that the reports submitted and published could be taken as read and approved. There had been no questions relating to the reports submitted ahead of the AGM. The reports were proposed for approval by Paul Barton and seconded by Alastair Durkin.

Reports submitted (*see Annual Report 2020 pages 4 - 12*):

- (a) Chair
- (b) Financial Performance (1st January 2019 to 31st December 2019)
- (c) Professional Committee
- (d) Education and Training Committee
- (e) Media and Communications Committee
- (f) Arboricultural Association Trading Limited

(5) Receipt of the summary accounts of the Association for financial year 2019

The Treasurer delivered a brief overview of the Association's finances for 2019.

The reports were proposed for approval by Paul Barton and seconded by Alastair Durkin.

(6) Presentation of the budget and performance for 2019 and re-forecast data on 30th June 2019

The Treasurer presented a summary of the accounts and budget information, including the audit summary from the Auditors. The Association's revenue had grown again to £1.46 million for 2019 with an initial budget forecast of £1.58 million for 2019. The 2019 surplus at £43,138 maintaining the record of delivering a surplus in line with both the budget and the reserves policy.

Most of the Association's reserves remain tied up in the Malthouse property and the current mortgage repayments will be completed in 2021.

Due to coronavirus the Association activities 2020 have been greatly reduced and expected turnover is forecast to be £915,000 with a net loss forecast of £107,000. To ensure adequate

cashflow reserves for 2021 the Association has taken out a £200,000 loan via the Government Business interruption scheme (NatWest Bank). The Treasurer remained confident that the steps taken over the past 6 months will ensure that the Association was taking all necessary steps to ensure that the Association not only remained a going concern but was in a position to quickly take up opportunities when then arose. The Treasurer then thanked the staff at headquarters for their continued efforts and a successful year.

(7) Appointment of Auditors for 2020

The Chair suggested that the Association reappoint Hazlewoods as auditors for 2020.

Alastair Durkin proposed the suggestion and Paul Barton seconded the proposal.

(8) Report of retirement of Trustees during the period AGM 2019 - AGM 2020

From 7th September 2020, two Trustee positions will become vacant as Jaime Bray and Navin Sehmi are retired from the Board by rotation.

(9) Election of Association Trustees for the term AGM 2020 - AGM 2021

There were two nominees for the two Trustee positions available. The Chair therefore declared that both Navin Sehmi and Paul Barton were elected Trustees of the Association.

(10) CEO Update

The CEO made a short presentation highlighting the areas of resilience that both membership and the accreditation schemes represented. That both our membership and accreditation scheme numbers look like reaching records levels, despite Coronavirus, represents a superb result. Challenging times are ahead, and we are now in the position where we have to develop forward looking plans, some of this has already started with a meeting day held with all Trustees and staff to map out both opportunities and priorities.

Cashflow, as with any other business, remains key and it is reported daily; it represents the key current business measure. Managing expenditure and allow making very selective, targeted, investment will remain a priority as will continually reviewing our cost and overhead structure, especially once the furlough support ends.

Due to the steps taken both in 2019 and more recently in 2020 the Association is now attempting to flatten the curve of the recessionary cycle by becoming even more fleet of foot in readiness to take up opportunities when they arise. We see signs of training activity recovering and we plan to restart training at AA HQ in September this will be utilising the HQ building as a Covid secure training facility. We will continue to offer free webinar output which, in addition to raising both our public and international profiles, has brought significant benefit through information sharing with our multitude of partners. Our relationships with both our partners and government has continued to grow, once again raising the profile and influence of the association. We are pleased to report that the long-awaited careers portal for Horticulture should be delivered by year end, Arboriculture will feature prominently within it.

Planning has started for our key events next year namely the Arb Show and Conference we fully intend, CV19 allowing, that these will be bigger and better than ever. Our social media activity has underpinned the superb technical and innovative content delivered by our technical team; our social media reach has exceeded over 50,000 followers.

In summary, challenging times are undoubtedly ahead but the Trustees and staff are making every effort to ensure that not only does the Association continue to further arboricultural activity for its members but that it is in a position to rapidly take up new opportunities when they arise.

(11) Questions received in advance of the AGM

Henry Girling – Letter dated 18th August 2020 – Question 1. AA Perpetual Award – no indication that any effort has been made to progress the matter – why not?

- The Trustees initially discussed the matter at the November 2019 Trustee meeting.
- It was proposed that as the Association already had an annual award in place any additional awards would need to be considered on their individual merits, upon receipt of a recommendation. This proposal was to be reviewed at a future Trustee meeting; this remains the case.

Henry Girling – Letter dated 18th August 2020 – Question 2. Landscaping the AA HQ – can we have a progress report?

- The planting along the western boundary is establishing well, with very few failures in the native hedging and all the standard trees doing well.
- The area to the north of the site alongside the road has not yet been planted but the serpentine mown path is now established, and the grass/wildflower areas are being managed to control unwanted weed growth. Due to the position of the overhead power line we intend to adjust the position of the path slightly, keeping more of it under the power line, thus maximising the available planting area for larger trees.
- If budget resources allow, we will plan for planting in the coming season.

(12) Date and venue of 55th AGM

The next AGM will be held at Loughborough University on 6th September 2021. (Post-AGM note: the 2021 AGM will be held online on September 2nd.)

(13) Any other business relevant to the AGM

There had been no questions relating to the AGM submitted ahead of the AGM.

The Chair thanked his fellow Trustees, the AA staff and the members attending.

Meeting Closed