



Minutes of the 192nd Annual General Meeting of the Suffolk Agricultural Association (SAA)

Meeting held on Tuesday 28th February 2023 at 11.30 am at Trinity Park

Present: 60 Members attended.

Officers in Attendance - Phillip Ainsworth, Ian Liddell, Helen Fomenko, Paula Slater, Margie Morris (minutes), Alex Tiunovs (AV Support)

Others in Attendance – Graham Mummery (Larking Gowen), Sarah Chambers (East Anglian Daily Times)

The SAA President, David Barker (DB) welcomed all to the Association's 192nd Annual General Meeting.

Before starting formal business, the meeting remembered Vice Presidents and Members of the Association who had passed away since the 2022 AGM. The Chaplain, Canon Brynn Bayman, said a few words and read out the names as follows:

Mr Bernard Adams, Mr James Baker, Mr David Barham, Mr Richard Barker, Mr Martin Bloomfield, Mrs Anne Dyball, Mr James Edgell, Mr Cyril Fidler, Mr David Goldsmith, The Honourable Jill Ganzoni, Mr John Hargreaves, Mr Tim Harris, Mrs Jane Kemball, Dame Clare Marx, Mrs Ivy Miles, Sir Richard Hyde-Parker, Mr George Paul, Mrs Judy Riggs, Mr Roy Spall, Mr Brian Stammers, Mr Richard Storer and Mr Michael Watson.

A minute's silence was then observed.

- **Apologies for Absence**

30 apologies were received.

- **To adopt the Minutes of the 2022 Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

The Chairman noted the minutes of the 2022 AGM had been approved by the Trustee Board. In turn all members present approved them.

- **Ordinary Resolution 1 - To Receive and Adopt the Trustees' Report and Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 30 September 2023.**

The Chairman Bill Baker (BB) gave an overview of the year, commenting on the investment in the two new toilet blocks being completed within budget and on time, opened by our President David Barker after the School Farm & Country Fair (SFCF) 2022, and now fondly known as 'Barkers Bogs'.

The Schools Farm competition theme for 2022 was 'Bees' and was won by Stoke by Nayland primary school.

The SAA commercial arm Trinity Park Events Ltd (TPEL) had a busy year delivering events despite the 'Covid Omicron variant' challenges in the early part of the year. TPEL hosted for the first time a 'UK

Live 80's festival' which was very well attended, and the county Harvest Festival was held at Trinity Park for the second time.

Education events such as the SFCF was held in April, thanks to Brian Barker and his organising team of volunteers.

Regarding the Show BB paid tribute to Bruce Kerr, senior stewards, stewards, sponsors and exhibitors, traders for their support. The Avenue of Trees officially opened to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee by the Lord Lieutenant offers a long legacy to mark the occasion and the Festival of Suffolk parade held in the grand ring with over 800 taking part from various organisations was a unique occasion.

Education. Outdoor farm visits took place at two locations over two days with 150 pupils visiting and the Farms Business competition was a great success.

BB thanked the huge number of volunteers who give up their time every year, particularly inspiring given the Covid impacts over the previous year.

Trustees' Report for the year:

Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 30 September 2022 – Simon Tucker (Treasurer):

The Treasurer started by noting that financial statements for the year ending 30 September 2022 received a clean audit opinion from the auditors, Larking Gowen, for both the SAA and TPEL and were approved by the Association's audit committee and by the full Trustee Board in February 2023.

Key figures from the consolidated audited accounts

Statement of financial activity	2022	2021	Change	2019
Total Income	£2,986,121	£914,738	£2,071,383	£3,398,411
Total expenditure	£3,306,490	£1,390,394	£1,916,096	£3,324,579
Operating gains (loss)	(£320,369)	£475,656	£155,287	£73,832
Investment gains	£382,799	£592,165	(£974,964)	£335,341
Revaluation of investment property	£40,000	£50,000	(£10,000)	N/A
Net Income for Year	(£663,168)	£166,509	(£829,677)	£409,173

First full year of activity for SAA since 2019 (2020 and 2021 Suffolk Show cancelled) but TPEL affected by Omicron variant of Covid for first six months and in the last quarter by National Mourning.

Balance Sheet	2022	2021	Change
Balance sheet total	£12,175,043	£12,838,211	£633,168
Investments	£5,052,094	£5,436,712	(£384,618)
Investment property	£890,000	£850,000	£40,000
Short term investments	-	£1,091,025	£1,091,025
Cash at bank	£37,648	£325,802	(£288,154)
Bank loans	£718,163	£788,355	£70,195

Trinity Park Events Ltd (TPEL)

	2022	2021	Change	2019
Turnover	£965,985	£391,408	£574,577	£1,391,799
Total expenditure	(£982,052)	£347,873	(£634,179)	(£1,302,462)
(LOSS) / PROFIT FOR YEAR	(£16,067)	£43,535	(£59,602)	£89,337
Balance Sheet Total	£156,961	£173,028	(£16,067)	(£136,691)

2021 Christmas parties reduced attendance of 1,000 owing to Covid and reduced numbers at other events for 6 months.

Key Points to note were:

- Clean audit reports for both the SAA and TPEL.
- Completion of the new toilet blocks (£1.07m) built to time and budget.
- Significant investment made into new Show Manager software to replace Showbiz.
- Suffolk Show returned with a very significant attendance of 97,218.
- TPEL traded profitably for the second half of the year.
- A budget has been set that reflects the significant issues including energy costs, payroll and contractor inflation.
- Currently operating with a reduced head count of 15 permanent staff versus 18 previously.
- The 2022 Christmas party season (a mainstay of TPEL income) was well received and well attended (4,085 attended against a plan of 3,600 visitors).
- Overdraft facility of £750,000 maintained. Cash flow is showing a year end negative position of c£150,000. 2022 year end £243,534 negative.
- Education remains at the heart of the SAA and a new full time education Officer has been employed.

The Treasurer proposed adoption of the accounts which was seconded by Mr James Black.

After a vote by those present and the unanimously supportive proxy votes the Chairman declared the motion carried.

- **Ordinary Resolution 2 - To elect Mr Stephen Fletcher as President of the Suffolk Agricultural Association.**

DB commented on Stephen's many years supporting the Association in various roles and wished Stephen and his wife Marion all the best for the 2023 year.

DB proposed as Ordinary Resolution 2, that the election of Stephen Fletcher (SF) be approved which was seconded by John Wall.

After a vote by those present and proxy votes received, other than three abstentions, all were in favour.

SF thanked DB for his kind words and for those who elected him. SF made particular mention of Andrew Fane, who would have been President but for the very sad loss of his wife Dame Clare Marx causing him to step away from the role. SF also mentioned John Kerr being unwell and asked his wife Jill, to convey our very best wishes and thank him for the guidance he had given SF over the years. SF concluded by saying how much he looked forward to working with everyone.

- **Ordinary Resolution 3 - To elect Bishop Martin Seeley as President Elect of the Suffolk Agricultural Association.**

David Nunn (DN) took great pleasure in proposing Bishop Martin as President Elect for 2023. Responsible for 160 serving clergy over 446 parishes he has immersed himself in many aspects of Suffolk life. Responding to local needs and encouraging communities at local and county level; particularly supporting agriculture and the rural community (including time riding on a combine during harvest at DN's farm). DN made mention of the fact that Bishop Martin had entered the House of Lords in March 2022 where his focus is on energy and the environment.

After a vote by those present and proxy votes received, other than two abstentions, all were in favour.

Bishop Martin replied by thanking all by saying what an extraordinary honour it was to be involved in this beautiful community, as well with the Association and very much looked forward to working with SF. The Bishop first visited the Suffolk Show in 2015 greatly enjoying the experience. 2024 being his last year in post before retirement the 2024 Show would be a highlight of his year.

- **Ordinary Resolution 4 - To elect a new Board Trustee, to re-elect current Board Trustees and elect a new Council member.**

Mr James Dinwiddy. James replaces Jonathan Long (first elected as a Trustee in 2017). BB expressed heartfelt thanks to Jonathan Long for giving his legal advice over recent years.

Bruce Kerr to be elected for two years having been the immediate past Honorary Show Director.

The following existing Trustees have put themselves up for re-election:

- Peter Over for 1 year (year 1 of 4 permissible).
- Bee Kemball, for 1 year (year 1 of 4 permissible).
- Eric Morton, for 1 year (year 2 of 4 permissible).

To elect the following to join Council.

Mr Duncan Haydon.

The proxy forms required this Ordinary Resolution to be voted on and whilst there were three abstentions all were asked to vote on as one resolution.

After a vote by those present and proxy votes received, all were in favour.

DB then mentioned members who have resigned from Council: Baroness Hazel Byford, Nicola Currie, and Alex Scott-Barrett. He took the opportunity to thank them for supporting the Association over a number of years.

- **Appointment of Honorary Life Vice President Awards**

The Chairman was delighted to award an Honorary Life Vice Presidency (HLVP) to David Barker MBE. David's involvement with the SAA began in 1980, then a member of Council since 1981, Deputy Director in 1993, Show Director from 1994-97, and supporting press and PR conferences. He was involved with the first committee of SFCF following the cancellation of the Show due to foot and mouth and has been President for two years during and post Covid. Given all of David's contribution to the Association and the county it was entirely fitting he be made an HLVP.

The Chairman then presented David with his certificate.

DB thanked all for the wonderful honour. He commented that he had had the time of his life working with an incredible group of people in what he described as the best club in the world.

- **Ordinary Resolution 5 - To appoint Larking Gowen as auditors for of the Association for 2023 until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting and to authorise the Trustee Board to fix their remuneration.**

The Chairman invited the Association's Audit Committee Chair, Karen Sharpe (KS), to make the proposal. KS thanked Larking Gowen for their work and advice.

The Treasurer seconded the proposal.

After a vote by those present and proxy votes received, other than two abstentions all were in favour.

- **To receive reflections on the 2022 Suffolk Show - Bruce Kerr (BK), then Honorary Show Director.**
After all watched a video capturing the main activities of the Show BK commented on how marvellous it was that finally, post Covid, the Show was back. No doubt the missed years and the Jubilee celebrations aided the come back event to be successful but there could be no doubt that the general public made the event what it was with very significant attendance numbers over both days.

BK thanked all the permanent team, past and present, as well all the volunteers, seasonal helpers and contractors for their tremendous support and patience over the last three years which had brought significant challenges all of which were overcome with both sensible forward planning and good humour.

BK also thanked the many other people who had supported him, particularly the Trustee Board. He wished John Taylor and his wife all the best over the next three years and as well John's Deputy for 2023, Nick Watts.

- **To receive a report on arrangements for the 2023 Suffolk Show from John Taylor, Honorary Show Director.**

John thanked Bruce and said that he and his wife Julia were much looking forward to working with the new President and his wife and thanked David and Claire Barker for all their help over the past year.

John summarised plans for 2023 as follows:

- 91 days to go – Show preparations going well.
- After last year's show we were sad to see Livestock & Equine Officer Elizabeth Payne leave after 27 years. Sophie King had been taken on as the new Livestock & Equine Officer; has excellent knowledge of the area and is fitting in very well.
- Employed a full time Education Officer, Shân Bendall, who has huge experience on how to enhance our education events.
- Judges booked and all prize schedules produced.
- New area for 2023 Farm4Future – The area will be divided into hubs with specialists from industry who will demonstrate changes and innovation.
- An agricultural display will be the first and last thing the general public encounter when enter and leave the showground at each of our three main gates. Farming Live will be at the Bucklesham gate with the story of Peas, Farm4Future at the Foxhall gate and Agricultural machinery at the Ipswich gate. All complimented with the Farm Discovery Zone where children can get up close to farming.
- Displays are booked and we have a packed schedule in our twelve rings.
Two new competitions will take pride of place in the Grand Ring and Working Hunter Ring, the Suffolk Show Jumping Grand Prix and Arena Eventing respectively.
- Ticket sales and Members/VP sales are positive and following on from two promotions in November and February we are slightly ahead of last year's numbers.
- Tradestand sales are coming thick with over 300 new enquiries and we have seen an increase in agricultural traders wanting to exhibit in 2023.
- Sponsorships has 95% of our budget already met.
- Contractors booked. Costs have significantly risen and will be the most significant challenge to manage over the next few years.

- Estate maintenance. Grass areas have been re-seeded and several buildings painted during the winter months. In February a working party will focus on the woodlands and Wildlife areas.
- **Any other business**
 - The Suffolk Agricultural Association Virtual Breakfast Briefing on 2nd March 2023 - details can be found on the website.
 - The School Farm and County Fair - Thursday 20th April 2023.
 - The Trinity Park Coronation Gates initiative - members were encouraged to make donations towards them.
 - The SAA 10th biennial Garden Conference - 2nd November.

With no further business the Chairman thanked all for attending and invited all to stay for a lunch and declared the meeting closed.