

DURHAM COUNTY LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Minutes of the fifty first Annual General Meeting of the Society held on Saturday, 21 November 2015 at 10.30 a.m. at County Hall, Durham.

1 Apologies for absence

Lord Barnard, Brenda Flynn, Richard Hird, Dorothy Meade, Pat Mussett, Roger Norris and Mike Syer.

2 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the fiftieth AGM, previously circulated, were adopted and signed as a true record by the Chair (Dr. Stokes).

3 Matters arising

Dr Banham said that the AGM was later in the year partly to avoid clashes with other events and partly because of the long search for a Journal Editor (covered in Item 5). Also, because of the crucial issues raised in the Report to Council (Item 4), the David Reid Memorial Lecture would be arranged at another time.

4 Report of Council 2014/15

Dr Banham presented the Council's report. Members present were keen for the Society to maintain its traditional commitments to publishing and to a talks programme. Discussion centred on the following five posts requiring to be filled in 2016 :

Treasurer
Programme Secretary
General Editor
Journal Editor
Webmaster

Arrangements for the posts of Journal Editor and Treasurer are dealt with in Items 5 and 6 respectively.

Miss Gill and Mrs Atkinson agreed to act as Programme Secretaries and arrange a Talks Programme starting in Spring 2016, which would include the David Reid Memorial Lecture.

Mrs Ludbrook agreed to work with the Secretary to improve and maintain the Website. Dr Banham thanked her for the work she had already done to improve the Website.

It was agreed that General Publications should continue to be overseen by an Editorial Sub Committee, which should be strengthened, by co-option, to become an Editorial Board. Mr Heesom agreed to join this Editorial Board.

5 Report on the Journal Editorship

Dr Stokes outlined some details of the negotiations with Mr Hamilton referred to in the Report of Council. In the end these had not proved fruitful and Mr Hamilton had withdrawn his offer. However, the Secretary had made a further request for help via a Media Release [also sent to appropriate contacts in his e-mail address book]. As a result the Society had an offer to take on the Journal Editorship from Dr Mark Egan of Jersey, who is a member of the Society and has written for the Journal. Dr Egan is also a member of the History of Parliament Group, having previously worked in the House of Commons.

Miss McCollum said that she and Mr Mussett saw no difficulty in the new editor being based outside the County, as they had dealt with articles largely by e-mail for a number of years and arrangements for designing and printing the Journal were dealt with electronically.

Dr Banham said that Dr Egan was currently moving to Jersey and it would be February 2016 before he could start working on Journal 81.

This was accepted and it was resolved to co-opt Dr Egan as the Journal Editor and to thank him for his support.

6 Accounts and Balance Sheet for 2014/2015

The Accounts and Balance Sheet were approved by the meeting. Dr Banham noted that Dr Burdon had expressed a desire to retire as Treasurer at the 2013 AGM and had kindly continued until a successor could be found. Mr. Wallis, a member of Council, offered to become the new Treasurer taking over at the end of the financial year (31 March 2016).

This offer was accepted and Mr Wallis' appointment confirmed. A vote of thanks was then passed in recognition of Dr Burdon's work as Treasurer over the past decade.

In view of the clear intention of the AGM to continue providing publications and talks to members in 2016 and beyond, there was no support for abolishing or reducing the subscription.

7 St. Mary-le-Bow Trust

Miss McCollum and Dr. Banham were re-appointed as the Society's representatives on the St. Mary-le-Bow Trust.

8 Any Other Business

Dr Stokes referred to the Society's membership of the County Durham History & Heritage Forum and the review of the role of that organisation which was taking place. Mrs Pinder suggested that it would be advantageous for the Society to integrate its news to members with the Forum's electronic Newsletter. It was agreed that the Council would look at this in 2016.