

SCOTTISH SOCIETY FOR CROP RESEARCH

Annual General Meeting 2017

James Hutton Institute

Dundee

Wednesday 10 May 2017

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from 28 members of the Society. Forty eight members of the Society and staff of the James Hutton Institute were in attendance.

2. Minute of the 2016 Annual General Meeting

The Minute of the previous meeting of 18 May 2016 was accepted as a true record.

3. Adoption of the Minute

The adoption of the Minute was proposed by Mr Gordon Rennie and seconded by Dr Keith Dawson. This received the approval of the meeting.

4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising which were not to be covered by the Agenda.

5. Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2016

The audited accounts have been received from the auditors, Messrs Henderson Loggie of Dundee and were considered by the Committee of Management (CoM) at their meeting on the morning of 10 May 2017, at which it was agreed that they constituted a true record of the Society's financial affairs. The adoption of these accounts was proposed by Mr Ewan Grewar and seconded by Mr Eric Anderson. This received the approval of the meeting.

6. Chairman's Report

In my report a year ago, I talked about the problems affecting agriculture and horticulture, with the uncertainties caused by referenda past, present and future; how little has changed! However desirable or undesirable such political events might be, their negative impact on business is unquestionable, much of this fuelled by the sheer uncertainty for the future which they create. At such times, it is more important than ever that businesses of all kinds should be efficient, and utilising the best knowledge and technology available. It is also vital that there exists a strong research base. As this country finds it virtually impossible to compete on labour costs with other parts of the world, the only hope for the future of business is to have the very best technology available, and, crucially, to be allowed to use this to the full.

The Society functions in a number of different ways, from being a voice for growers, processors and consumers, through to encouraging research for which there is a scientific need yet it is not otherwise supported. In part, the Society fulfils its remit through an involvement in the organisation of a number of indoor and outdoor meetings, always seeking to widen the knowledge base and to improve the profitability of growers. At this point, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Chief Executive of the James Hutton Institute, Professor Campbell, and all of his colleagues for the support they give to the Society.

In the past 12 months, indoor meetings have been held by the Cereal, Potato and Soft Fruit groups, again with a notable increase in the numbers attending over previous years. The summer events on cereals, soft fruit and potatoes also enjoyed excellent attendances. Increasingly, we are seeing the involvement of machinery manufacturers, and those producing specialised equipment for agriculture and horticulture, which is greatly appreciated, and of value to the Society members.

The funding for the Society's activities is provided by the interest earned on a range of investments. These have continued to perform well, with the accounts audited to 31 December 2016 showing a further increase in the Society's assets to over £803k. This has allowed the Society to continue the financial support given to its three Sub-Committees, of £8000 per annum. In addition, support has been given to one-off projects on Potato Cyst Nematode, the continuation of support for raspberry breeding, and the evaluation of potatoes in Kenya with the specific aim of providing humanitarian benefits for a malnourished population due to the very poor performance of their local potato cultivars (echoes of the Society's own origins).

The Society's membership is steady at just under the 300 mark, made up of annual and life members. At £15 per annum and £150 for life membership, we continue to represent excellent value! An additional category of corporate membership, at a cost of £150 per annum which allows up to ten members of the company/organisation to attend all of the Society's events, has now been introduced. I would encourage everyone with the interests of our industry at heart, to join the Society and so to further strengthen the force of our arguments in the corridors of power.

I conclude my report with thanks to the Committee of Management, the Trustees, the Honorary office bearers, and the Secretaries and Chairmen of the three Sub-Committees. I also wish to acknowledge with thanks the vital role undertaken by Mrs Pam Cassidy in facilitating the affairs of the Society.

7. Election of Office Bearers and Committee of Management

Following the retiral of the Chairman, Mr Alistair Redpath, the Committee of Management of the Society have proposed the current Vice-Chairman, Dr Keith Dawson, as Chairman and Mr Eric Anderson as Vice Chairman. No other nominations

were received. All of the members of the Committee of Management (Messrs. Euan Grewar, Colin Herron, Gordon Rennie, Peter Thomson and Professor Colin Campbell-Chief Executive of the James Hutton Institute *ex officio*) have indicated their willingness to serve for the period 2017 - 2018. Again no other nominations were received. The proposal that the above individuals be so appointed was moved by Dr Bill Macfarlane Smith and seconded by Mr Alistair Redpath. This received the approval of the meeting.

The Honorary Secretary and the Honorary Treasurer do not stand to be appointed or re-appointed at an AGM. However as has been the practice of the Society for many years, following the resignation of the Honorary Treasurer, Mrs Beth Corcoran, the new senior Finance Officer of the Institute, Mr Derek Leslie, had intimated his willingness to take on this post. There being no other proposals for this post, the meeting indicated its approval of this appointment

8. Appointment of Financial Advisers

The appointment of Messrs Speirs and Jeffrey as financial advisers was proposed by Mr Gordon Rennie and seconded by Mr Ian Ivory. This was approved by the meeting.

9. Appointment of Trustees

Professor John Hillman, Mr Ian Ivory and Dr Stuart Wale, with the addition of the Chairman, Dr Keith Dawson *ex officio*, have all indicated their willingness to serve as Trustees (they will also sit on the Committee of Management). Mr John Whitehead, after over forty years of service to the Society and its predecessors, has intimated his wish to stand down, both as a Trustee and from the Committee of Management. In thanking him publicly for his long and committed service, the Chairman intimated that the Committee of Management had decided to award him Honorary Membership of the Society in recognition of these services. He will be succeeded as one of the Trustees by Mr Eric Anderson, the incoming Vice-Chairman. No other nominations had been received for the positions of Trustees. The appointment of the above was proposed by Mr Gordon Rennie and seconded by Mr Alistair Redpath. This was approved by the meeting.

10. Appointment of Auditors

The appointment of Messrs Henderson Loggie, as auditors, was proposed by Professor John Hillman and seconded by Mr Gordon Rennie. This received the approval of the meeting.

11. AOCB

The 2017 outdoor events will be as follows:-

Cereals in Practice 6 July - Saphock Farm, Oldmeldrum, Aberdeenshire

Fruit for the Future 13 July - Dundee campus of The James Hutton Institute

Potatoes in Practice 10 August - Balruddery Farm

The current membership of the Society includes two Corporate members. Further applications in all three categories of membership are in progress.

Prior to the conclusion of the AGM, the incoming Chairman, Dr Dawson, made a presentation to his predecessor, Mr Redpath, of an inscribed Quaich, in recognition of his many years in that role.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the 2018 Annual General Meeting was fixed provisionally for Wednesday 23 May.

13. SSCR Lecture

Mr Redpath then introduced the guest speaker, Mr Guy Smith, Vice President of the National Farmers Union.

The title of his lecture was, “Life before 2020 – where is the wind blowing”.

DRAFT