

## Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Friends of the River Crane Environment

The Twickenham Club

Church Street

Twickenham

26th November 2018 at 8pm

### Minutes

1.	<p><b>Attended by:</b> Rob Gray (RG) Chair Trustees –Frances Bennett, Alison Horwood, Alan Charles, Jane Satchwell, John Simpson (JS), Joe Pecorelli, Keith Martin, Martin O’Gara 24 members</p> <p><b>Apologies</b> Trustee: Gary Backle, Mike Day (attendance from item 5 onwards) Members: x 5 The Secretary held 4 proxy voting forms</p>
2.	<p><b>Minutes of the previous meeting</b> There were no matters arising discussed and the chair asked that the minutes of the previous AGM should be agreed Colin Cooper proposed and the members agreed.</p>
3.	<p><b>Reports and accounts</b> To receive and consider the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2018 and the reports of the Charity Trustees.</p>
3.1	<p>Report from Chair RG welcomed everyone to the 2018 AGM. A big thank you to all current and retiring Trustees, volunteers, members and partners who have helped make this a successful and productive year. RG gave an overview of changes to the trustee board over the period 2017-8.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RG said that the saddest event of the year was the loss of Dr Tim Elson, who died in January 2018. Tim had been part of FORCE as a volunteer and Trustee from the very start – he attended virtually every volunteer day; helped to build and manage our web-site; and was a constant source of generous and wise advice and he is missed.</li> <li>• Chris Hern was a trustee from the start, until he stood down as a Trustee in the summer of 2018. Chris is unsurpassed in his knowledge of planning and historical matters along the Crane valley and has been a major force in our planning work over the last 15 years. He has been a campaigner for much longer and, without Chris’s work over many years, large parts of the Crane valley would have been changed or lost before FORCE even got started.</li> <li>• Keith Martin has also been a trustee since 2003 and has decided to stand down as a Trustee at this AGM. Keith first inspired us with the value of the Mereway site as a haven for nesting birds, and he has continued to support us on wildlife issues ever since, as well as running his unsurpassable bird walks, and proving sage advice when most needed.</li> <li>• Frances Bennett is staying as a Trustee but is stepping down as Secretary, having held this role since the Charity was set up in 2004. We are currently seeing a replacement for the role.</li> <li>• Last year also saw the death of Chris Squire. Chris was a member from the start, came to many of our events and also audited our books for several years. He too will be missed.</li> </ul> <p>Trustees believe that we are in a period of unprecedented change, challenge and opportunity for FORCE and the Crane Valley and RG highlighted a few of the challenges and opportunities.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2018 finally saw the opening of Twickenham Junction Rough as a new public open space, realising a vision FORCE first had in 2008, of linking Twickenham Station with Crane Park along the river. There is progress on the final link of the Duke’s River walk along the back of the RFU Stadium, and we are now confident that this link will be in place in 2019.</li> <li>• The biggest challenge over the next few years will probably be the Heathrow third runway proposals – with secondary pressures from the growth of industry, housing, transport etc being at least as difficult to deal with as the airport development itself. It is for this reason that trustees have decided to engage directly with the Heathrow development team, notwithstanding our detailed and clear objections to the proposals in our submission to the Department for Transport consultation in March 2018. FORCE’s role throughout these discussions will be to deliver the Objects of the Charity, to protect and enhance the community and environmental value of the Crane valley.</li> <li>• In part due to the long running Citizen Crane project, Thames Water has identified the Crane as the UK’s first urban “smarter catchment”. The main work is due to start in April 2020 and FORCE is currently actively engaged with TW staff and others in devising the scope of the project – with our Objects being front and central.</li> </ul>
3.2	<p><b>Report from the Treasurer</b></p> <p>John Simpson (JS) the Treasurer made the following verbal report but referred members to the summary report in the Annual Review document. JS began by saying that the charity was in a healthy financial position with funding available to spend on projects and few fixed costs other than trustee expenses. Income over the year was Restricted income £6,012 Unrestricted income £36,947 Total £42,959 and expenses on charitable activity Unrestricted £4,394 Restricted £19,713 Total spending on charitable activity £24,107 Other costs included Independent Examination £530, and Paypal Fees £7.00. The largest spend of the year of £19,192 was funded through grants and paid for the services of TCV. Colin Cooper voted to adopt the accounts, Jane Satchwell seconded the proposal and members agreed.</p>
3.3	<p><b>Report from Charity Officers</b></p> <p>Trustees delivered progress reports on the charity portfolios. The reports can be viewed on the charity website: <a href="https://www.force.org.uk/assets/documents/agm-2018-officers-presentation">https://www.force.org.uk/assets/documents/agm-2018-officers-presentation</a></p>
4.	<p><b>Appointment of charity trustees</b> Members will be asked to confirm the appointment of Charity Trustees and elect those retiring in rotation.</p> <p>The following trustees retired in rotation and re-stood as trustee::          Rob Gray, Joe Pecorelli, Martin O’Gara, Mike Day          Colin Cooper proposed the re-election of all trustees and Alan Charles seconded the proposal. Members voted in favour.</p>
	<p>Keith Martin stepped down as a charity trustee and Frances Bennett stepped down as Company Secretary, but will remain as trustee. RG said that trustees are seeking to appoint a new Secretary to the charity.</p>
5.	<p><b>Members’ proposed resolutions</b></p> <p>Two resolutions are proposed by Chris Hern for consideration by members:</p>
5.1	<p>Non-disclosure agreements This resolution was in 2 parts:</p> <p><b>a) Before entering into any non-disclosure agreement (NDA) with any commercial organisation FORCE management board will inform members about the proposed parties to the agreement and the matters to be covered by such agreement, and will take into account any objections or concerns raised.</b></p> <p>RG responded on behalf of Trustees “In the case of the Heathrow NDA, trustees are of the opinion that in order to operate for the benefit of the public to protect and enhance the environment of the River Crane and DNR, a legal agreement with Heathrow is a “necessary part of doing business together”. Our objectives in signing the proposed NDA, and any other future NDA, is to advance the objects of the charity.</p> <p>In this case the intention of trustees is to actively engage with the proposals being developed for the airport and the surrounding area at an early stage and to put forward the case for protected and</p>

enhanced green corridors along the River Crane and elsewhere in accordance with our Objects. FORCE's position regarding a Third Runway remains as it was in March 2018, as set out in our objection submitted to the Department for Transport consultation, which can be seen on the planning pages of the web-site. The NDA with Heathrow formalises and defines the process of how confidential information will be shared between trustees and the developer. By the nature of the confidential agreement, trustees are not able to disclose matters to be covered between the parties to the NDA to members of the organisation. This would be the case with other future NDA's with other organisations. Trustees are of the opinion that requiring prior discussion with members regarding the signature of an NDA or other entry into confidential discussions would be an unnecessary and restrictive requirement upon the activities of the Charity. Trustees are not aware of equivalent restrictions in other organisations and note that operating with NDA's is a normal part of business for organisations. Trustees do not support this resolution."

**b) In no circumstances will it be appropriate for an NDA to be entered into by the FORCE Management Board the existence of which is kept secret and non-disclosable to members.**

RG responded to this resolution on behalf of trustees. The Trustee response to this resolution was: "Trustees regularly hold confidential discussions with interested parties including commercial organisations where there is no requirement or request to sign an NDA. Recent examples have included discussions in Hounslow with the developer of Hounslow Heath Golf Course, the Twickenham Station developer and organisations such as Thames Water developing long term strategies for the River Crane catchment. In all cases trustees respect the trust that has been placed by the other organisation in FORCE and trustees make use of these opportunities to influence plans for the benefit of the charity objects. As a matter of course Trustees regularly report to members on discussions with other organisations (including commercial organisations) through newsletters and by making use of FORCE social media, subject to the normal restrictions of business confidentiality and trust. There are also a project reports on the FORCE website. Responses to all planning applications can also be found on the website. All FORCE documents are put onto the web-site when they are in the public domain. There are no proposals to change these practices whether or not discussions are covered by an NDA. Trustees are of the opinion that it is not appropriate for an NDA to be entered into by trustees the existence of which is not disclosed to members. Trustees will take into account any concerns and / or objections that members raise as a result of these discussions. Trustees support this resolution." RG also commented that the NDA was not yet signed and that a statement had been included in a recent newsletter as well as in his report to the AGM

David Trigg asked how many confidential discussions were held in a year, to which RG said only one or 2 as a course of normal business. DT proposed that the members did not support the resolution. The resolution was put to a vote of members and failed.

5.2

Monthly news sheet

**a) FORCE relies on its membership for funding and support and is committed to communicating openly and informing its members about the work it does. To meet this commitment a short email newsletter not exceeding one page will be prepared after every management meeting setting out issues considered by the board and any response, and detailing progress being made on projects managed or supported by FORCE. From time to time the newsletter will seek the views of members on an issue.**

RG responded that FORCE is a voluntary organisation with no paid staff. There is a quarterly newsletter which gives members updates on the progress of projects supported and managed by FORCE. In addition there are several weekly reports made on social media. Additional information about individual projects can be obtained by emailing trustees through info@force.org.uk or through social media channels. Members (and the general public) regularly make use of these channels of communication. Trustees are of the opinion that it is not necessary to develop an additional monthly newsletter given that there are already multiple channels of communication available to members. Trustees do not support this resolution.

	<p><b>b) The Management Board may wish to consider whether such news sheet should be sent to all members or sent only on request, and, if the latter, whether a small additional membership fee might be appropriate.</b></p> <p>The production of an additional monthly newsletter is a matter of resources and priorities rather than funding. Trustees do not support this resolution.</p> <p>The resolution was withdrawn following discussion with Chris Hern, RG reassured him that although he is no longer a trustee it was important to keep in touch over issues such as Feltham Marshalling Yards.</p>
6.	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p>To deal with any matters that arise during the meeting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A member stated that the Environment Agency are collecting photos of DNR and River Crane in order to develop a report linked to the flow. RG said that FORCE were involved in the discussions.</li> <li>2. There was a discussion related to proposed developments in Feltham Marshalling Yards. RG said that we had not been involved in recent negotiations but as soon as trustees became aware we would post information on social media.</li> </ol>
7.	<p><b>Close of formal business</b></p>
	<p>After a short break there was a talk from <b>Colin Cooper CEO of South West London Environmental Network (SWLEN)</b> who chairs the Richmond Biodiversity Partnership. He discussed the work of this group and the plans to re-launch the habitat and species action plans for the borough in 2019.</p>

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