Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the RPS East Anglian Region which was held at The Apex, 1 Charter Square St, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 3FD

The meeting commenced at 11:29 on Saturday August 24th 2019

There were 20 attendees

1. Apologies for Absence

John Margetts
David White
David Pelling
Cliff Harvey
David Stevens
Richard Lewis
Ian Wilson
John Thompson
Dennis Kell

2. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting 2018

The minutes of the meeting were accepted. They were proposed by Nigel Rea and seconded by Sue Vaines.

At the end of the meeting the minutes were signed by the acting RO.

3. Matter Arising

Jonathan Vaines (JV) stated that Mark Stimpson, the RO at the time of the last AGM, had told the AGM that he proposed to set up a Young Members Officer in the region. This did not happen. JV, who is acting RO, stated that it is not within the remit of the region to specifically recruit new members into the society. The post would therefore not be filled.

JV also stated that David Collins had raised a point about holding more advisory days in the region and that he was happy to help in the organisation of the days. JV stated that David had not been called on to organise any such event but that his offer was appreciated and the region did manage to run an A only Advisory Day. Anne Miles pointed out that, currently, advisors on the ARPS panels are only allowed to advise on their specific categories. JV stated that ARPS advisory days going forward may change in that the regions may hold only Fine Art advisory days. All other categories may be held in Bristol, or be run by specific interest groups (e.g. the Nature Group).
Stewart Wall (RO for the East Midlands Region) stated that his region has been running a different kind of advisory day. The day centres around having people who have recently gained each of the distinctions to talk about their experiences in the process. This has been followed by a detailed review of the distinction process and David Jordan. Stewart stated that is has proved very successful. JV stated that the East Anglian Region has already arranged a day along the same lines also engaging with Dave Jordan. We hope to also run a further similar event in March 2020 in Norwich.

John Speller stated that the Travel Group have arranged two ARPS advisory day, but was unclear as when and where they would be held. He believed the first one would be in Bristol. JV did ask for feedback on the running of this event. JV also stated that our region are in discussion with Nature Group to run a specific Nature Advisory and Workshop. The Group will lead these Days with the support of the region.

4. Officers’ Reports

4.1 Regional Organiser’s Report

JV read out the Regional Organisers report. JV explained the history of the current situation in the region. JV stated that we have an active region with a committee, headed by JV as acting RO.

Several events have been held since the last AGM and more are already organised. JV stated that the region is trying to encourage members to organise activities in their localities, as the region is large and the membership widespread across it. It was reported that we have a small team able to run events and Advisory Days in Norwich. Events organisers are located in Cambridge and to the very west of the region. JV will appeal for other teams to be established within the more populated areas of the region.

JV stated that he will remain in place as acting RO for the present. We are now seeking a new permanent RO, and, that the RPS HQ and the EA Region Committee believe that it would be beneficial to have more than one candidate.

JV concluded by thanking the rest of the committee for their support.

4.2 Treasurer’s Report

Andy Swain (AS) talked through the current financial situation in the region and the activities affecting the accounts, in detail, since the last AGM.

AS stated that the RPS HQ expect events held in the region to break even.

Chrissie Hart asked how much of the yearly membership fees were allocated to the Region. The answer is approximately £1.40 per member. JV Stated that this figure is historical and was provided for the RO to communicate with the membership via posted newsletters. As
we now use e-mail for this the grant from HQ is not relevant but should be considered a monies used to assist in the running of events for the membership.

Discussion took place as to why we have to break even, when there is a large surplus in the region.

AS stated that the amount was actually held centrally, and that, due to the nature of the Barclay's account system, accessing the funds is very convoluted.

John Speller pointed out that the instruction from Bristol about not losing money is at odds with the Society's educational Charity message.

David Balcombe stated that one way to overcome amassing money was to arrange free events for the region's membership. JV stated that this is done and that a free event has been organised for November. Stewart Wall stated that the East Midland Region also arrange free events.

Chrissie Hart suggested that rather than have one or two large events, it might be better to arrange more events on a more local basis. JV agreed and stated that he would be happy to back and advertise any such events, but, stated that they would need to be organised by people in the locality.

JV also stated that the most popular type of events are practical events rather than talks.

Questions were asked about the size and actual locality of the Region members.

JV reported that there were 760 members in the region, as opposed to 790 at the last AGM. Matt Clarke has done an in-depth analysis of where people live and discovered that the membership is very widely spread across the region. JV stated that the RPS tend to allocate people to regions depending on postcodes, which is not always geographically accurate. Chrissie Hart asked if there were more members in areas that had large camera clubs. It was felt it was that greater concentration of members were in the large towns rather than by associated with clubs. Sue Vaines stated that many people only stay members so they can keep their distinctions, and will never be active.

AS gave details of the committee expenses claimed as part of the report, as the RPS state that volunteers should not be left out of pocket. JV stated that it highlighted the region's broad base, as the committee itself was made of people from right across the region, so a lot of travelling is required when events and committee meetings are organised.

Nigel Rea thanked AS for his very detailed account of the region's finances and expenditure.
5. Election of Officers

Regional Officer (acting)  Jonathan Vaines
Treasurer  Andy Swain
Secretary  Gill Beckett
Exhibition Secretary  Matthew Clarke
Committee Member  Moira Ellice
Committee Member  Nigel Rea

The officers were duly elected en bloc, having been proposed by Chrissie Hart and seconded by Dave Balcombe.

6. RPS AGM Points 4A & 4B

JV read out 2 proposals for the RPS AGM relating to the number of Honorary FRPS distinctions which the society are allowed to award per annum.

4A states that the number of FRPS Hons awarded each year should be capped at 20.

4B states that this should be capped at 11.

Previously the cap was 8 and then abolished.

The reasons for awarding of FRPS Hons was then discussed at length.

JV summarised the discussion by concluding that the attendees were in favour of resolution 4B and that member must also then vote against resolution 4A too. All members should vote at the AGM and all resolutions should carry a vote even if this is to abstain. Proxy would be best given to the Chair as this is a guaranteed attendee. JV stated that he'd give help to anyone who had trouble getting into the system to vote.
7. Member’s Exhibition

JV told the meeting that the committee had decided to change the Member’s Exhibition from an annual to a biannual event, due to the level of work involved.

JV stated that the committee would endeavour to find more venues to display each exhibition.

8. Any Other Business

No other business was presented to the EARPS Committee by 10th August 2019.

Ann Miles offered a vote of thanks to JV for stepping up to be acting RO after Mark Stimpson stood down.

JV concluded the meeting by stating that he intended to still be acting RO at the next AGM, but, handing over to a new RO, if the committee had approved a suitable candidate.

The meeting ended at 12:48.