

Minutes

Annual General Meeting

17 September 2020

By Zoom

1. Welcome

Siraj Choudhury welcomed members to the meeting, explained the changes in format due to the current public health emergency and outlined the agenda, as set out in the calling notice for the meeting.

He introduced the members of the management team who were present and offered the meeting apologies from Dawn Welham who was attending a funeral.

He went on to explain to members the changes in date and format of the meeting in response to the pandemic. He explained that some members had submitted questions in advance and that questions could also be put by using the chat facility in Zoom. As many questions as could be answered in the meeting would be, with others followed up after the meeting if that were not possible.

2. Noting of minutes of 2019 AGM

Siraj explained that the minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2019 were not formally presented, given the fact that it would not be practical for members to approve them at this digital meeting. It was intended that those minutes (along with the minutes of this meeting) would be formally presented for approval at the next AGM.

3. Strategy update

Siraj acknowledged the achievements of Anne Godfrey as Chief Executive, noting the improvements in CIEH's financial position and membership growth during her tenure. He noted the considerable change in CIEH in recent years, noting that it was now a more impactful and streamlined organisation, better able to support its members. He recognised and thanked the Executive Management Team and the

Board of Trustees who supported the intense change and business turnaround activity which has occurred.

He drew attention to the successful campaigning work that CIEH was increasingly undertaking, as well as the 'I am Environmental Health' campaign work which sought better to explain the profession and the value that it added to society.

Debbie Wood (Executive Director, Membership and External Affairs) briefed members on the substantial work undertaken to support the profession during the public health emergency, to raise its profile and to support the wider governmental and public service response.

Siraj offered his thanks, and those of all members, for the very considerable hard work undertaken by the staff team since the start of the emergency. They had ensured that members were supported and that, through media coverage, the contribution of the profession to public health was recognised.

Siraj explained that trustees had recently undertaken significant development work, alongside the staff team, in reviewing CIEH's strategy. This would be shared with members once further work had been undertaken. By the same token, work on recruiting a new CEO was underway and members would be updated in due course.

4. Questions and answers session

In response to questions, members of the executive management team and Board:

- Explained that many sources of support had been drawn on by CIEH during the response to the crisis and that this included use of member networks in the nations and regions.
- Acknowledged that, in common with most professional bodies, there was a degree of 'churn' in member numbers – most notably at affiliate level which was viewed as something of a 'trial of membership'. It was emphasised that the aim is to keep as many of those in membership as possible.
- Explained that, while there was not a staff member with a distinct national focus on England (in the way that there was in Northern Ireland and Wales), the staff team had been working across jurisdictions to ensure that members and the profession were supported, wherever they were based.
- Noted the comment that the work of CIEH and the profession was clearly having an impact, given the recent speech made by the Prime Minister.
- Explained that, having had to adopt an agile working approach during the emergency, consideration was being given to the most effective medium-term plan in terms of working patterns and locations for CIEH staff.
- Noted the view expressed that a skills register for EHOs would be a useful tool in responding both to the pandemic and to end of the transition period following Britain having left the EU.

- Agreed with the view that the higher-profile position adopted during the emergency was something to be continued, within the constraints of the available resource and welcomed the ideas of members and others in this.
- Explained that there was a slight reduction in non-paying members (as a result of both policy changes and having more accurate data with a new CEM system) and an increase in paying member numbers (full data would be provided in the post-AGM communications).
- Confirmed that CPD requirements had been updated for 2020 and were available on the website.

5. Motions from 2019 AGM

The Chair confirmed that no motions had been proposed at the 2019 meeting.

6. Fellowships awarded in 2019

The meeting noted that the following members had been awarded fellowship in 2019:

Lisa Cobb
Zena Lynch
Jill Stewart

Siraj offered each of them congratulations on behalf of the Board and all members.

7. Annual report and financial statements

Christine Kanu (Director of Finance and Corporate Services) explained CIEH's 2019 financial performance to the meeting. She added that the 2019 report and account, along with the auditor's opinion – which was unqualified – were intended to be laid at the 2021 AGM.

She emphasised that, in the current year and given the impact of the pandemic, the immediate priority was ensuring CIEH's financial sustainability. She went on to explain the trustees' approach to risk management and the broad strategies in place to mitigate identified risk.

In response to questions, it was explained that there was no plan to reduce or remit membership fees given their vital importance to CIEH's sustainability but that the Board would consider the matter of membership fees between now and November.

Christine explained the accounting treatment changes which had necessitated a change to the way in which property interests were represented in the accounts.

8. 2021 AGM

Siraj Choudhury invited the meeting to note that it was planned that the next annual meeting would be held on Thursday 17 June 2021.

At that meeting it was expected that members would be invited to approve both the 2019 and 2020 AGM minutes, note both year's accounts and reappoint auditors.

Siraj noted that this would be his last meeting before his term of office as a trustee finished at the end of the year. He expressed his thanks to his Board colleagues (past and present), to those who served on CIEH's committees and advisory groups and to the CIEH team for the considerable support they had offered to him in his six years on the Board and during the three years he had served as Chair.

He thanked Dawn Welham for the significant contribution she had made to CIEH as President. He thanked Kevin Gould who served as a diligent and helpful Deputy Chair until July. He also thanked Jonathan Hayes who has served as Deputy in recent months. He wished the incoming Chair, Terenja Humphries, the best in her term of office.

Jonathan Hayes, Deputy Chair, reiterated Siraj's thanks to Anne Godfrey and the staff team. He noted the improvement that had been made thanks to the three priorities that Siraj had set out when he became Chair – good governance, financial sustainability and improving the perception of CIEH.

In closing the meeting, Siraj confirmed that the Board would be considering a motion to reappoint the current auditors (for the audit of the 2020 accounts) when it next met.