



## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Date/time:** 21 June 2017

**Venue:** The Marylebone, London

**Directors:** Tim Hampson

### **Attending**

#### *Board Directors*

Tim Hampson (TH)

Paul Nunny (PN)

Robert Humphreys

Matt Curtis (MC)

Paul Hegarty

Neil Walker

Susanna Forbes

Jo Dring

Jacopo Mazzeo

Mitchel Adams

Pete Brown

Richard Dakin

Peter Haydon

Tim Holt

Larry Nelson

Lotte Peplow

Roger Protz

Bill Simmons

Guy Thornton

Roger Warhurst

Paul Bailey

Martyn Cornell

Mike Dennis

Kate Hemsall

Rod Jones

Sue Nowak

John Porter

Ros Shiel (RS)

Nigel Tarn

Dale Tomlinson

Visiting: Matt Kierkegaard, beer writer from Australia

### **Apologies**

Peter Alexander

Michael Clarke

John Cryne

Iain Loe

Adrian Tierney-Jones

Ronald Atkins

Christine Cryne

Jeff Evans

Phil Mellows

Steve Wellington

### **Minutes of AGM held on 22 June 2016**

The minutes were passed

### **Matters arising**

There were no matters arising

## **Chairman's report**

TH summarised the previous year, highlighting growth in Guild membership and increasing popularity of events including annual dinner, which had 235 guests in 2016, and summer party. He thanked Frances Brace and Simon Jenkins for the Great British Pub Debate held in Leeds in September 2016. He thanked Jo Dring for her help in developing the new website.

He commented that at the last AGM, the committee (now Board) had committed to investing Guild funds into its future and highlighted several initiatives including training, which have been developed. A Secretary had been recruited to develop this higher level of activity.

On membership subs, he said these had not increased for 20 years and a discussion would be needed, so that we can sustain the Guild's new level of activity, without being dependent on reserves.

Rod Jones questioned the need to raise subs if we have ample reserves. TH said the current reserves would be likely to last only three years, and therefore the Guild Board is developing a three year plan and budget which is likely to propose an increase in subscriptions, and demonstrate how the money will be spent.

## **Finance Director's report**

PN explained that the financial accounts were more complicated this year, as the Guild had become a limited company in July 2016. A set of accounts for the nine months to March 2017 have been filed, but PN had also produced 12 months accounts for the purposes of comparison with 2015/16. He highlighted income and outgoings:

- Membership subscriptions: individual membership slightly down, but corporate members up
- Dinner: as tickets are subsidised, the higher number of guests at the dinner in 2016 compared to 2015 had resulted in a £4K+ loss at the event.
- Other events: City of Ale in Norwich, Great British Pub Debate incurred costs but were felt worthwhile, particularly as they took the Guild out of London
- New website: the largest cost at 12K (6K of this to be spent in 2017/18)

Overall, the Guild made a loss of 19K compared to profit of 5K in 2015/16. Reserves stand at 83K.

John Porter proposed acceptance of the Finance Director's report, seconded by Bill Simmons.

## **Removing the requirement in the articles for an auditor to be appointed in accordance with the Companies Act**

PN explain that the requirement was a heavy responsibility and under the Companies Act, not required for a company with the Guild's turnover. The onus would now fall on the Guild's directors. The amendment to the Guild's articles was proposed and seconded.

## **Secretary's report**

Ros Shiel summarised activity since her appointment as Secretary in September 2016, and outlined plans for future events.

RS advised she would plan to have a calendar of events ready at the start of 2018 so members could plan accordingly, but that the Guild should still run short-notice topical events – such as those on the CAMRA Revitalisation team and Public Health Misinformation – when appropriate. She also said events would be held outside London where possible, if enough members were interested to make them viable.

On the new website, RS advised that analytics showed fewer people were visiting the site, but were spending more time and visiting more pages. She requested that any members not yet registered to update their own page on the website should do so, and maximise this opportunity to showcase their experience and work.

The Secretary's report was proposed by Bill Simmons, seconded by Frances Brace.

## **Membership report**

Matt Curtis advised that the membership committee – himself as chair, with Bryan Betts and John Porter – was operating effectively in processing membership applications.

Since September 2016 when MC took on the role, 22 full members and 6 associate members have joined. 7 members have lapsed, usually because they are no longer writing about beer.

MC observed that associate membership, a fairly new category, was growing. It is designed to give emerging beer writers an aspiration to become full members. A mentorship scheme is in development to help these new members to develop,

MC clarified that individual membership – full or associate – was open to anyone who communicated about beer, including in house/consultancy PRs. He asked existing Guild members to encourage others to join and pointed out that the new website included an online joining form, making the process much easier.

Nigel Tarn suggested that the mentorship scheme should also give existing full members guidance in areas of communication where they may need help.

## **Election of directors**

As the Guild is now a limited company, new rules on directors apply; the three longest-serving directors are required to step down and seek reelection.

No other applications to stand for election had been returned. The three directors to be returned were:

- Tim Hampson: proposed by Matt Curtis, seconded John Porter
- Paul Nunny: proposed by Bill Simmons, seconded by Rod Jones
- Rober Humphreys: proposed by Frances Brace, seconded by Susanna Forbes

## **Setting the subscription for 2017/18**

TH explained that a motion to increase the subscription fees could not be passed at this AGM, due to the requirement to give members 45 days' notice of motions.

Larry Nelson asked about subs and the budget for 2017/18: PN replied that there is an anticipated loss of c. 20K this year, which can be afforded from reserves.

John Porter observed that the corporate membership, at £200 pa, seems very affordable.

Guy Thornton suggested that corporate membership should perhaps be charged on a sliding scale depending on output.

Frances Brace said that if the Guild wants to charge corporate members a higher subscription, it will need to understand what they want from membership and deliver value.

Larry Nelson pointed out that many corporate members pay not just membership subs, but also for a table at the dinner, and advertising in the Yearbook, and perhaps a 'package' approach could be considered as part of the review.

## **AOB**

Roger Protz spoke about the forthcoming Michael Jackson tribute event, taking place ahead of the Guild's summer party.