

The Royal Engineers Association

(Registered under the Charities Act 1992 and a charity registered in Scotland)

Patron: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN



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Chief Executive REA
Corps Treasurer

19 October 2021

THE MINUTES OF 53rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ROYAL ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION HELD ONLINE ON FRIDAY 08 OCTOBER 2021

Item 1 OPENING REMARKS

1.1 The Annual General Meeting was opened at 1100hrs by the President of the Association, Maj General Alastair Dickinson CBE, who welcomed all those present and thanked them for attending; he made special mention of those who had travelled long distances. He noted that there were fifty-seven attendees at the AGM: including 10 Trustees, five in person and 4 online. 27 Branch delegates online, 5 Group directors, 6 Deputy Group Directors and 10 Group Secretaries. The President hoped that in the coming year we would have more opportunity to meet face to face rather than under the pandemic restrictions. The President welcomed the non-executive directors Colin Basnett and Jeffrey Jupp and introduced the board members present in person at Chatham.

1.2 Apologies for absence had been received from:

- Brian Simm Trustee (resigned to support his wife Sue) The President gave them both our best wishes and thanks for their support.
- Eric Hargreaves Trustee (70th Birthday)
- Larry Inge

1.3 The President drew the meetings attention to the Annual Report and thanked the REA HQ team for their work in producing a document of such a high standard.

The CEO explained that the Annual report was available online and that all RE Units and Branches would receive hard copies by mail in the coming week.

1.4 In order to ensure correctness of the records, the President asked that all microphones were turned other than that of the speaker to ensure that all attendees could hear and prevent interference.

1.5 The President outlined the boards aims for the Association to become an Association of Aspiration seeking to expand beyond our primary functions of providing benevolence and camaraderie. In addition to this primary function, we will enable young soldiers to access sport, adventure training, and other opportunities, this will help us down range to deliver help as we involve more members of the Sapper Family.

Item 2 - To confirm the Minutes of the 52nd AGM held online on Friday 07th October 2020

2.1 The President emphasised that this Item was dealing only with the accuracy of the Minutes. The document had widely circulated, and HQ REA had not received any comments or proposed amendments. As we were online, we will not do votes however if an individual has a point, they may identify themselves and raise the point. There were no comments from the floor.

Proposal: That the Minutes of the 52nd AGM be accepted
Proposer: Glenn Scarborough, deputy group director
Seconder: Colin Basnett, Trustee

Carried

Item 3 - Matters Arising from the Minutes of the 52nd Annual General Meeting.

3.1 No Matters arising

Item 4 – To Receive the Council's 53rd Annual Report and Financial to the AGM

4.1 The President invited the Honorary Treasurer Chris Davies to present the financial report, he emphasised that the Association was in good financial health and able to meet all current and future commitments. Our reserve situation was extremely healthy and in line with the requirements of the Charity commission, it had been the intention to reduce our reserves and we had committed to additional expenditure on welfare and benevolence over the past couple of years. However, our investments and income have remained strong, and our overall reserves have been maintained despite the additional expenditure. This is an excellent position to maintain as it ensures that we have the long-term capability to deal with future requirements. The Honorary treasurer asked that any technical financial questions be directed to the Corps treasurer who maintains and prepares our accounts to the highest standards.

4.2 Going through the report drew the meeting's attention to the FOO and budget. He highlighted the Welfare grants which have been running for four years and that so far this year over £80,000 has been given to Units and Branches. He noted that the grant is now called the Unit and Branch Support Grant.

The Honorary treasure advised the meeting that he was coming to the end of his tenure and thanked the REA HQ Team and Corps Treasurer for their support to him in his role. He then welcomed Col (retd) Mark Ruddy who would take over as Honorary Treasurer.

The President invited questions on the accounts, there were no questions from the floor.

ITEM 5 – To note the appointment of Kreston Reeves LLP (Formerly Reeves LLP) as the Auditors of the Association

5.1 The President advised those assembled that the responsibility for appointing auditors to the Corps charities rests with the Chief Royal's Committee. At the last Chief Royal's Committee meeting, Kreston Reeves LLP were approved as auditors of the Corps' charities. REA Council has approved the appointment.

Ian Sidebottom explained that Kreston Reeves have been auditors for three years and this would again be reviewed in 2024.

Item 6 - Appointment of Honorary Treasurer 2021/22

6.1 The President asked that we look back over the past few years of Col Chris Davies tenure as Honorary treasurer and thanked him for his excellent work in this role and noted the significant amount of work, and his commitment and passion in the role. He has attended around one hundred meetings over the past over the past seven years. The President introduced Mark Ruddy a retired Sapper Colonel as the new Honorary treasurer and invited the AGM to approve the appointment

Proposal: That Col (retd) Mark Ruddy is appointed as REA Honorary Treasurer for 2022.

Proposer: Ted Lowbridge

Secunder: Ogre Hamilton

Carried

Item 7.0 The President invited the Chair Brig Andy Craig to present the Benevolence Report.

7.1 The Chairman explained that in 2022 benevolence information was very well presented in the annual report. The Chair thanked the REA HQ benevolence team for their work particularly in maintaining a full service to those in need during the pandemic. He pointed out that participation during online Benevolence Committee meetings has been excellent with sound advice and questions from observers and committee members. He explained that despite the pandemic there was only a marginal decline in benevolence provided due to caseworkers not being able to visit clients. 582 individuals were supported with £476,000.

7.2 RBLI had been supported with £220,000 as part of our four-year agreement to provide a total of £880,000 towards the development of Sapper House.

7.3 The chair also drew the meetings attention to the new benevolence handbook and asked that branches and units should look at this excellent new document prepared by the REA HQ benevolence team and available online on the website and in hardcopy.

The chairperson concluded his presentation on benevolence and was thanked by the president.

Item 8.0 REA Strategy

The President invited the CEO to outline the boards five-year strategy, this has been based on survey data, analysis, and feedback. The President explained that the last strategy had been presented in 2016 and that this had now in effect been delivered with the transition from a council to a board, greater financial control of our own resources covering areas such

as sport and adventure training.

The President explained that the new strategy was intended to reach out to the wider sapper family, using IT and other media to improve connections for example having family members as Associate members of the association to enable older members who are less IT savvy to stay connected and widening the reach and knowledge of the Association.

8.1 The CEO then identified the key points of the strategy and explained that the presentation would be available on the website or by contacting REA HQ.

8.2 Starting from a position of strength in that we are delivering effective benevolence and welfare support to those whom we can reach at this moment. For the future to become an Association of Aspiration we now need to seek to enhance the wellbeing and lived experience of all our stakeholders, veterans, serving and families, to achieve this we need to extend our reach enhancing our offer with support for employment, facilities, opportunities for sport, adventure training, events.

8.3 The key to this is effective communication and links to our stakeholders through engagement, support, benevolence, sustainability, collaborative working.

8.4 Goals:

Early engagement with the serving Sapper

Re-energising the branch structure.

Developing the REA HQ Team

Digital Transformation

Collaboration

8.5 Continuous evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategy via surveys and feedback through the various committees.

8.6 Rollout will include SCRM modifications, new website, and App development

This is a work in progress, and I do not expect each item to go smoothly.

The president thanked the board and the REA HQ team for their work on the strategy.

8.7 There is an update of the REA rule book available on the website

Item 9 Corps Update

Corps SM Marc Elliott gave a detailed update on all units in the Corps. Highlights 2500 deployed across the globe. This covered training, modern technology, sport, adventure training, Sapper games, Op Tosca, and Ex Pinestick. Op Cabrit, Op Pitting, high performance leadership, charity events.

Thanks, from 21 Engr Regt for REA support in improving the soldier space and from twenty-six for support of the SLA. All regiments have recognised the increasing welfare support provided by the REA.

The President thanked the Corps SM for his excellent and comprehensive report on the Corps

Item 10 – Date of next meeting 08 Oct 2022 AGM and annual Dinner at the VSC

Item 11 Presidents Closing remarks

11.1. The President asked for a moment that he put this aside for a moment and speak as a branch member, he explained that Commando branch had held a 50th anniversary of the formation of 59 Cdo sqn REA during this they had undertaken many fundraising events related to the number 59 and presented the Chair Andy Craig with a Cheque from the Cdo Branch and 24 Cdo Engr for £8511.00. The president also presented the REA with a copy of the painting commissioned for the anniversary.

The President thanked the board for all their work throughout the year, the delegates, and branches, all those who had attended the meeting for their participation and contribution to the success of the AGM and declared the meeting closed.

Kenneth Kirk

19th October 2021

Chief Executive REA
Mr Kenneth Kirk

Minutes Approved

Dated 08 October 2022

Brig (retd) Andrew Craig OBE
Chairperson
REA