**RECORD SOCIETY OF LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE**

Regd. Charity No 500434

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Record Society held in Liverpool Central Library, Meeting Rooms 1 & 2, on Wednesday 27 March 2024 at 1.45pm.**

The AGM and the *Colin Phillips Memorial Lecture* which followed the AGM were livestreamed via Zoom for those people who wanted to attend online.

**1.   Welcome and introductory remarks**

**Present**: Sixteen members of the Record Society attended the Annual General Meeting, including the following members of Council: Dr I.J. Atherton, Dr P.H.W. Booth, Dr Dorothy J. Clayton, Dr P.Z. Cotgreave, Dr A.G. Crosby, Mrs Diana E.S. Dunn, Prof. M.R.V. Heale, Mr A. Miller, Mr J.R.H. Pepler, Dr Fiona Pogson.

In addition to the above, 19 non-members attended the AGM and the *Colin Phillips Memorial Lecture*, delivered this year by Prof. Martin Heale.

**Apologies**: Dr D. Brazendale, Dr S.J. Roberts, Emeritus Prof. D. Szechi. Prof. T.J. Thornton.

Prof. Martin Heale, President of the Record Society, welcomed everyone to the AGM and to the public lecture which would follow it. He thanked Mrs Diana Dunn (Membership Secretary) for informing the membership about the meeting and organizing Zoom links for those not attending in person. He also thanked Dr Stephen Roberts (Publicity Officer) for advertising the public lecture widely.

Prof. Heale explained that only members of the Society could vote at the AGM.

**2.**  The minutes of the Annual General Meeting, held on 5 April 2023, were approved unanimously as a correct record, and there were no matters arising.

**3.** The Report of Council for 2023 was formally presented to the membership. Prof. Heale thanked Dr Clayton for preparing an informative report and gave a brief resume of its contents. The Society has continued to connect with members and friends via its annual *Newsletter* and via its Facebook page. However, the Society needs to do much more to stem declining membership and to attract new members. As with similar organizations (Chetham Society, Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, and Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society), the RSLC’s basic business model is fast becoming unsustainable. Expenditure has exceeded income by *c*.£20,000 over the past five years. During 2023, Dr Peter Cotgreave, the Society’s Webmaster, prepared a paper on the future of the website. It is clear that we need to update it for technical and practical reasons. A small working party is presently considering various options and we hope to find a way forward re the website during 2024. We have also started to engage and co-operate with other local history societies in a more organized way. One useful meeting has taken place online and a larger meeting of representatives of the four local history societies is taking place tomorrow (28 March).

Prof. Heale took a question from the floor: Dr Paul Booth asked how long RSLC membership rates could stay at the current level in view of these huge challenges re. declining membership and financial sustainability. Prof Heale agreed that the subscription to the RSLC had remained at the present level for 11 years, and that the Council would consider this at its meeting later in the day.

Although we did not publish a volume in 2023, due to a delay with our latest edition (the volume editor found additional relevant material), we are expecting a fruitful 2024 with two editions due for publication. The first, *Prisoners of the Fifteen*, ed. Jonathan Oates, is an edition of the lists of Jacobite prisoners taken at the battle of Preston in 1715, and then held, tried and disposed of from various gaols in Lancashire and Cheshire. The second, *Cheshire Motor Vehicle Registration Records, 1908–11*, ed. Craig Horner, is the second and final part of early registration records, charting car ownership in early twentieth-century Cheshire.

The 2023 Report was officially received and approved unanimously. [Proposed by Dr Fiona Pogson; seconded by Dr Paul Booth].

**4.** Mr Pepler(Treasurer) summarised the Accounts for 2023. The total net assets of the Society on 31st December 2023 were £62,573.7. The comparable figure for 2022 was £57,812.98. However, this is not a realistic picture of our financial situation or expenditure, since we had no printing costs in 2023. The capital value of our M&G Charifund investment fell in 2023 to £34,625.22 as against £35,458.40 in 2022, but the income from Charifund in 2023 was £2,063,05, an increase of *c*.£60 on 2022.

The Accounts were officially received and approved unanimously. [Proposed by Dr Peter Cotgreave; seconded by Dr Alan Crosby].

**5.** Under Rule 9, Council nominated Mr Ted Lush as examiner of the 2024 accounts. Members present at the meeting unanimously elected Mr Lush as examiner. [Proposed by Mr Jonathan Pepler; seconded by Dr Fiona Pogson].

**6.**  The President informed the meeting that following the retirement of Dr Fiona Pogson as General Editor of the Society at the 2023 AGM, Council had discussed the role at some length. It was agreed that although the ideal would be to have a single General Editor, this is too big a role for one person. Prof. Heale said that following the publication of vols 159 and 160 which Dr Pogson was seeing through the press, there would be an editorial team, co-ordinated and led by Dr Alan Crosby, the Society’s new General Editor. Each member of the editorial team will work on one volume alongside the volume editor. The Society is fortunate that among the editorial team are the two previous General Editors – Dr Pogson and Prof. Heale. In addition to vols 159 and 160, the Society has 4 volumes which are expected to be published by 2027.

Dr Crosby spoke from the floor and asked that the Council record its thanks to Dr Pogson for all her meticulous work as General Editor.

The meeting unanimously elected the officers of the Society to serve until the conclusion of the next AGM. [Proposed by Dr Ian Atherton; seconded by Dr Fiona Pogson]:

      President, Prof. M.R.V. Heale

      Secretary, Dr D.J. Clayton

      Treasurer, Mr J.R.H. Pepler

      General Editor, Dr A.G. Crosby

Membership Secretary, Mrs D.E.S. Dunn

      Publicity Officer, Dr S.J. Roberts

      Webmaster, Dr P.Z. Cotgreave.

These people had been unanimously nominated to serve as officers, under Rule 2, by the Council of the Society.

**7.**  Emeritus Professor Daniel Szechi has stepped down as a member of Council after 17 years of dedicated service to the Society. The President paid tribute to his contributions which include reviewing text proposals and delivering one of our earliest public lectures in 2015. His subject was ‘Preston 1715, and the Failure of English Jacobitism’. It is perhaps a happy coincidence that the next volume to be published by the Society is *Prisoners of the Fifteen*, edited by Jonathan Oates. Unfortunately, Prof. Szechi was unable to attend the 2024 AGM, but we are very pleased that he intends to continue his membership of the Society. .

The President told the meeting that no new nominations of ordinary members of the Council had been received to go forward to the membership at this AGM. Prof. Heale urged anyone who is a member of the RSLC to consider putting themselves forward as an ordinary member of the Council. Nominations can be received at any time of the year for ratification by the membership at the following AGM.

      Note (1) Rule 2 provides for a three-year rotation of ordinary members: Dr L. Balderstone, Dr P.H.W. Booth, Mr. A. Miller, Dr F. Pogson and Professor T.J. Thornton are serving three-year terms until the end of the 2026 AGM; and Dr I.J. Atherton is serving a three-year term until the end of the 2025 AGM.

Note (2) there can be no more than 15 ordinary members of Council.

8. There was no other business of the Council. The President thanked all the officers and Council members of the Society for their hard work and commitment over the past year.  The 2024 AGM closed at 2.05pm.

The AGM was followed by:

***COLIN PHILLIPS MEMORIAL LECTURE 2024***

**Professor Martin Heale**

**‘Robin Hood in the Medieval and Early Modern North-West’**

As our President was delivering the Colin Phillips Memorial Lecture this year, Dr Fiona Pogson hosted this part of the proceedings. She spoke about the history of the lecture series and paid tribute to Colin Phillips who had been a Council member of the RSLC for 25 years and its President for 5 years. He initiated the Society’s annual public lecture, and following his death in 2019, the Council renamed the lectures in honour of our esteemed colleague and friend. We were very pleased that Colin’s widow, Jan Phillips, attended the lecture via Zoom.

The lecture itself was very lively and the number of questions posed by the audience is a firm indication of how well it was received.