

The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers

Minutes of the 124th Annual Meeting held by video conferencing (Zoom) on Saturday 4th September 2021 at 10.30 am.

Present

Fellows: John Baldwin, Alan Frost.

Ex-officio: Mary Bone, Alan Glover, Simon Linford, Dickon Love, David Mattingley, Allen Nunley, Alan Regin, Fergus Stracey.

Ancient Society of College Youths: Richard Allton, Tom Hinks*, Colin Newman, Andrew Wilby.

Australian & New Zealand Assn: David Bleby#, Peter Harrison, David Smith.

Bath & Wells Dio. Assn: Michael Hansford, Matthew Higby, Charles Pipe-Wolferstan.

Bedfordshire Assn: Patrick Albon, Linda Garton, Richard Horne.

Beverley & District Society: Rosina Baxter*, James Blackburn.

Cambridge Univ. Guild: David Richards, Richard Smith*.

Carlisle Dio. Guild: Christine de Cordova, Duncan Walker.

Chester Dio. Guild: David Jones, Carole Hallam, Tom Nestor, Peter Wilkinson#.

Clerical Guild: Revd Jon Rose.

Coventry Dio. Guild: Annie Hall, John Newbold.

Derby Dio. Assn: Glen Fiddy, Andrew Hall, Susan Hall.

Devon Association: Joanne Tucker.

Devonshire Guild: Lynette Costello, Lynne Hughes, James Kirkcaldy*, Alena Wardle*.

Durham & Newcastle Dio. Assn: Howard Smith, Barbara Wheeler.

Durham University Society: Phil Hughes.

East Derbys & West Notts Association: Edward Sterland.

Ely Dio. Assn: Philip Bailey, Sue Marsden, Daniel Stevens.

Essex Assn: Fred Bone, Paul Bray, Vicki Chapman, Martin Jones.

Four Shires Guild: Christopher Povey.

Gloucester & Bristol Dio. Assn: Simon Edwards*, Derek Harbottle, Richard While.

Guildford Dio. Guild: John Couperthwaite, Jackie Roberts.

Hereford Diocesan Guild: Anthony Ellis#, Colin Ward.

Hertford County Assn: Stuart Brant, Tony Crowther, Geoff Horritt, Margaret Horritt.

Irish Assn: Don McLean, Michael Pomeroy.

Kent County Assn: Phillip Barnes, Caroline Stockmann, Jennifer Thomas*.

Ladies Guild: Rosemary Hemmings, Alison Williams, Jan Wyatt.

Lancashire Assn: Sam Brook, Beth Ingham.

Leicester Dio. Guild: Carol Franklin, Arthur Rees.

Lichfield & Walsall Archd. Society: Stephen Askew, Stuart Hutchieson, David Towell.

Lincoln Dio. Guild: Philip Green, Christopher Sharp, Christopher Turner.

Liverpool Universities Society: Martyn Bristow.

Llandaff & Monmouth Dio. Assn: Matthew Turner, John Vesey.

Middlesex County Assn & London Dio.

Guild: Sonia Field, Robert Lewis, Adrian Udal, Clyde Whittaker.

National Police Guild: John Cousins.

North American Guild: Bruce Butler, Eileen Butler, Beverly Faber, Christian Haller.

North Staffordshire Assn: Jan Hine, Tim Hine.

North Wales Assn: Antony Diserens, Beverley Furniss.

Norwich Dio. Assn: Katie Wright.

Oxford Dio. Guild: John Harrison, Lucy Hopkins Till, Graham John, Tim Pett.

Oxford Society: Dorothy Hall.

Oxford University Society: Craig Robertson.

Peterborough Dio. Guild: Simon Dixon, Nick Elks, Jane Sibson, David Westerman.

Guild of St Agatha: Anne Bray.

St David's Dio. Guild: Chris Hughes.

St Martin's Guild: Richard Andrew, James Ramsbottom.

Salisbury Dio. Guild: Tom Garrett, Anthony Lovell-Wood, Julian Newman, Vicki Rowse.

Scottish Assn: Ruth Marshall, Tina Stoecklin.

Shropshire Assn: Paul Lewis, E Ann Williams.

Society of Royal Cumberland Youths: Ian Roulstone, Derek Sibson, Jane Wilkinson.

South African Guild: James Champion.

Southwell and Nottingham Dio. Guild: Jim Crabtree, Anne Sladen.

Suffolk Guild: Chris Birkby, Cath Colman*, Neal Dodge.

Surrey Assn: Kate Flavell, Paul Flavell, Jason Hughes.

Sussex County Assn: Alison Everett, Sue Gadd, David Kirkcaldy, Rob Lane, Stephanie Pendlebury.

Swansea & Brecon Diocesan Guild: David Katz.

Truro Dio. Guild: Robert Perry, Ian Self, Hayley Young*.

Univ. Bristol Society: Imogen Brooke, Patrick Wheeler.

Veronese Assn: David Roskelly.

Winchester & Portsmouth Dio. Guild: Michael Church, Michael Hopkins Till, Shân Nash, Allan Yalden.

Worcestershire & Districts Assn: Alison Hodge, James Mort.

Yorkshire Assn: Elva Ainsworth#, Barrie Dove, Elaine Scott, Peter Scott.

[* — new member; # — returning member]

The Barrow and District Society, Dorset County Association, East Grinstead and District Guild, Leeds University Society and the University of London Society were not represented.

The Chair was taken by the President, Simon Linford, who welcomed all members to the meeting. He particularly welcomed Michael Church to his 50th consecutive meeting. The President advised members wishing to speak on

the procedure and reminded them to give their name and that of the society they represented. He informed members that the proceedings were being live streamed to the Internet and were also being recorded to assist with the Minutes. The President explained how the electronic voting system would operate during the meeting*. He informed members that Robert Cooles, President of the Surrey Association and a long-serving former Council member, had suffered a stroke and conveyed the Council's good wishes to Bob and his family.

[* The electronic voting system records registered votes; it does not record those abstaining by non-participation in a vote.]

1. Opening Prayer

Revd Dr John C Baldwin, Fellow, led members in prayer.

2. Applications to affiliate

No applications had been received.

3. Welcome to new members

The President gave a warm welcome to new and returning members (indicated by * and # respectively in the list of those present).

4. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from David Kelly (Fellow), Ian Oram (Ex-officio, Steward of the Fred E Dukes International Bell Fund), Tim Jackson (Ex-officio, Steward of the Dove database), Chris Ridley (Ex-officio, Historical & Archive workgroup leader), Mark Regan (Ex-officio, Senior Stakeholder Liaison workgroup leader), Tim Jones (Devon Assn), Helen Bridgman (Essex Assn), Mark Davies (Gloucester & Bristol Diocesan Assn), Doug Davis (Kent County Assn), John Loveless (Society of Royal Cumberland Youths), Stephen Pettman (Suffolk Guild), Noel Gibbin (Surrey Assn) and Chris Tennant and Kathryn Cocks (Worcestershire & Districts Assn). Apologies were subsequently received from Cate Gardner (Lancashire Assn).

5. In Memoriam

The Secretary, Mary Bone, read the names of the following member and former members who had died since the last meeting: Ivor Nichols (Chester DG 1980–1983); David Kingman (Peterborough DG 2002–2006); Colin Tester (Kent CA 1969–1972); George Deas (Durham & Newcastle DA 1981–1984); Ronald Ducker (Beverley & District Society 1967–1972); Jennifer (Jay) Bunyan (Bath & Wells DA 2005–2021); Philip Morgan (Hereford DG 1964–1965); Alan Ellis (North American Guild 1999–2008, Honorary Member 2008–2010, Additional Member 2010–2011, North American Guild 2014–2019); William Dowse (National Police Guild 2011–2014 and 2014–2018); Alan Barber (Ely DA 1971–1978); A Terence (Terry) Collins (Winchester & Portsmouth DG 1987–1993); and Michael Sprackling (London CA 1987–1993). Members kept a period of

silence in memory of this member and these former members.

(The minutes, reports and accounts were published with the Central Council Meeting Papers on 6th August 2021. The relevant page numbers are shown against each item.)

6. Minutes of the 2020 Annual Meeting (pp7–12)

The Minutes were approved on the proposal of Allan Yalden and seconded by Alison Williams. The Minutes were approved nem con (124 in favour; 6 recorded abstentions).

The President reminded members to declare any relevant conflicts of interest and to treat each other with courtesy during debate as all members were volunteers. He reminded members of the Council's Rules which required payment of affiliation fees and notification of membership numbers to be made six weeks before the meeting. He regretted that in a few cases this had not been done and sought permission of the meeting to allow those members affected to participate fully. Fred Bone stated that the Rules were clear and that societies and members should comply with them, while Tina Stoecklin urged members to allow full participation this year and to enforce the Rules thereafter. Members voted to allow affected members to participate fully (124 in favour; 11 against; 6 recorded abstentions).

7. Matters arising from the Minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda

No member wished to raise any matter. The President noted that he would report on the series of consultations with members and others held in late 2020 at item 12.

8. Annual Trustees' Report for 2020 (pp13–15)

The President introduced the formal annual report of the Council to the Charity Commission for 2020 and noted that it had been approved by the Trustees on 15 May 2021. He invited the Secretary to comment on and update the report. The Secretary reported on changes to the membership figures in paragraph 7: there were 4 Fellows, 14 Ex-officio members, 181 representative members and 17 vacancies. The Australian and New Zealand Association was now only entitled to three members. The Secretary noted in particular the names of two members who had stood down prior to the meeting: Ken Davenport (Oxford DG 1996–2021) and Christopher O'Mahony (ANZAB 2008–2021; Vice-President 2014–2017 and President 2017–2019). She concluded by encouraging societies to elect members to fill the vacancies: the Executive wished to be held to account and wanted members who would participate and contribute to the Council's strategic direction and work. The President proposed that the members receive and adopt the Annual Trustees' Report; this was seconded by Neal Dodge and approved unanimously.

9. Accounts for 2020 (pp16–17)

The Treasurer, Fergus Stracey, presented the Accounts. He thanked his predecessor, Andrew Smith, for a smooth transition and noted that the Independent Examiner had issued an unqualified report. The Accounts had been approved by the Trustees on 15 May 2021. He thanked the Independent Examiner, Caroline Stockmann for her work; he additionally thanked Ian Self (Library) and Beryl Norris (Publications) for their contributions. The Treasurer reported that the Council had total assets of £457,812 at 31 December 2020. The General Fund made a surplus of £4,054 as the usual major expenditure on the annual meeting was not incurred. Publications made a loss of £2,163 as sales were badly affected by the suspension of ringing during the pandemic and the Library also incurred a deficit for the year of £1,749. The Bell Restoration and Fred E Dukes funds paid out previously committed grants. The Treasurer noted that the Council currently benefited as a charity from Microsoft not charging for approximately the first £2,700 of hosting costs for the website etc. Robert Perry thanked the Council for the grant to Kenwyn, Truro, which was much appreciated.

The 2020 Accounts were received and adopted unanimously. The President thanked the Treasurer for all his work during his first year in office.

10. Annual Report of the Executive and Workgroups for 2020 to May 2021 (pp18–38)

The President introduced this item. He suggested that questions could be taken either at this item or at items 11 or 12. The sections would be considered in the order as printed.

On the **Executive** report, John Harrison commented on the fact that the Council was now seen as the first body to be consulted on ringing matters; he congratulated the Executive on this achievement and hoped that other bodies would follow the Church of England's lead on this. The President drew attention to the inclusion of quarter peal analysis in the **Performance Analysis**; quarter peals were a key indicator of the health of ringing, particularly at the grass roots. Tina Stoecklin concurred with this view. As a member of the "women in ringing" research group, Tina requested that gender analysis be included in future reports. Phillip Barnes responded by welcoming this suggestion. He urged all those submitting performances to check that names were submitted correctly so that individual ringers could be correctly identified. On **Publications**, Simon Dixon remarked that no new titles had been produced for the second year in succession; were there any plans for new titles? The President noted that the pandemic lockdown had prevented meetings of the Publications team. A number of short single topic booklets had been suggested and the team was also looking to refresh some older titles. The President mentioned the recent e-book *Calling It Round* by Bryn Marie Reinstadler (<https://callingitround.cccbr.org.uk/>); this was a new venture for Council publications and broadened the delivery of information to ringers. The

Council recognised that there was still a market for printed publications.

The President proposed adoption of the report of the Executive and workgroups for 2020. This was seconded by Nick Elks and approved nem con (135 in favour; 3 recorded abstentions).

11. Executive and Workgroup updates for May–August 2021

The President noted that the Executive update would be taken at item 12. He considered that these updates formed an important part of the meeting and welcomed questions and comments.

Public Relations: Vicki Chapman, workgroup leader, drew attention to the Terms of Reference of this new group, which had replaced the former Communications & Marketing workgroup. Since April the workgroup had produced guidance for ringing to mark the death of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh and was updating guidance for Operation London Bridge. The 200th anniversary of Ellacombe chimes and US Independence Day had been celebrated and both these had also featured on Radio 4's Bells on Sunday programme. A series of photo competitions had been launched to provide suitable images for an image library. Ringing was encouraged for the NHS, Social Care & Frontline Workers' Day in early July and there were plans for this to become an annual event. Phillip Orme, workgroup member for Bells on Sunday, was preparing advice on producing high-quality recordings for the programme. Vicki referred to forthcoming media opportunities: Bells on Sunday, Heritage Open Days, ringing for the environment to mark the COP 26 conference in November, the Save the Parish campaign and Her Majesty the Queen's platinum jubilee in 2022. The group would be launching an online PR forum and working on plans for a Bell Sunday in churches, to mark the contributions of ringers to the life of the church and community, and for a PR Matters Day 2.0 seminar. Vicki concluded by inviting those with particular skills or from areas of the country not yet represented on the workgroup to contact her at pro@cccbr.org.uk

Senior Stakeholder Liaison: in the absence of Mark Regan, workgroup leader, the report was given by the President. He reported that work with the House of Bishops Covid recovery team was now winding down. Useful contacts had been made, especially with Revd Mark Betson, National Rural Officer in the Church of England. The President and Mark Regan would be speaking at the national DAC conference later in September. Following agreement with the Church Buildings Council, Dove would now become the national database of bells and bellframes. The President highlighted the role of this workgroup in liaising with other workgroups and opening doors for them. Of particular concern was the Pastoral Measures Review (GS2222), which could lead to accelerated church closures, and the Save the Parish campaign. The President recommended that ringers should establish good contacts with their incumbents and PCCs and that associations should

compile registers of bells at risk. It was important that the question of removing and re-homing good rings of bells was discussed at an early stage in the church closure process. Robert Perry urged the Council to be cautious in its support for the Save the Parish campaign as this was a political campaign during the period of elections to the next General Synod. In response to Allen Nunley the President confirmed that this was a Church of England issue.

Stewardship & Management: the workgroup leader, Alison Hodge, thanked all members of the group and their additional specialist advisers for the amount of work they did answering large numbers of enquiries from parishes and ringers. She announced that the third Westley award for tower maintenance had been awarded to Oliver Watson, aged 17, and thanked the Westley Group for their continued sponsorship. The workgroup had identified a new conservation-accredited structural engineering company able to work on bell installations. Work continued on measuring tower movement with plans to acquire the necessary equipment and conduct practical tests. The *Manual of Belfry Maintenance* was being revised and updated as an online publication. All guidance notes and advice on the website were in the process of being revised and updated. These included *Bell Restoration Projects* and a new title *Running a Tower*. The workgroup also planned to produce videos and presentation materials on “what goes on upstairs” intended for both ringers and non-ringers. Alison concluded by mentioning areas where the group would welcome additional members with relevant expertise. Philip Green, supported by Kate Flavell and others, commented that there was still a demand for printed publications. While agreeing with this, Alison Hodge stated that online publications would become increasingly important. Peter Harrison commended online publications as particularly valuable for overseas ringers; he mentioned the ANZAB experience of recording bell maintenance sessions so that these could then be shared more widely.

Technical & Taxonomy: Graham John, workgroup leader, summarised the work of the group during the past year: it had continued to build method and composition collections; was preparing version 2 of the Framework for Method Ringing; had completed the transfer of Dove to its new platform and enhanced its scope; was forming a new team to investigate how digital services created by ringers can be protected for the future; and provided IT services for the Council itself. On the Framework for Method Ringing, Graham reported that the consultation on v2 was now complete and replies to consultation comments were being published on the Framework website at framework.cccbr.org.uk. A proposal to require a quarter peal rather than an extent for new methods on lower stages had proved unpopular and would not be taken forward. After all the changes had been incorporated the Framework would be submitted to the Executive and would come into effect 3 months after their approval and notification to members. Graham highlighted the launch of the new ringing forums —

subject-specific groups which would build communities of interest amongst ringers whilst avoiding the down side of social media and simple email lists. He thanked all members of the group for their work during the year. An organigram showing the main areas of work under the main headings of methods, compositions, Dove and ICT was displayed and Graham invited those interested in becoming involved to contact him. Tim Pett, Dove Steward, thanked John Baldwin for establishing and maintaining the Dove database, which had benefited so many ringers, for so many years. Jane Wilkinson, past President, endorsed Tim’s remarks. The Council formally recorded its thanks to John Baldwin.

Volunteer & Leadership: the workgroup leader, Tim Hine, began his presentation by referring to the group’s Terms of Reference, particularly the first point “to mobilise bell ringers to create and develop for themselves the teams, knowledge, resources and skills to enable ringing to flourish”. Tim drew attention to members’ work as recovery champions, producing material for the online toolkit and for the recovery convention held online earlier in the year. A number of articles had been written for *The Ringing World*. The group was working on activities to promote leadership, planning a residential ringing course in NW England for 2022, and developing recruitment and retention workshops in partnership with ART. Much of its work would be collaborative. Tim stated that a secretary was sought for the workgroup and the involvement of younger ringers would be welcome: people skills were more valuable than advanced theoretical ringing knowledge. Simon Edwards asked how younger ringers could be involved. Tim Hine replied that young ringers could help with attracting other young people to ringing and identifying the good ringers of the future.

Young Ringers — Schools & Youth Groups: Colin Newman, workgroup leader, reported on progress since last year. A Bluebells Challenge scheme had been developed for Guides as well as a suitable scheme for measuring progress at various levels for Duke of Edinburgh awards. Unfortunately the group’s work for Scouts had not coincided with that organisation’s badge review cycle. Useful contacts had been made with the Boys and Girls Brigades and with the Young Farmers amongst other groups. Bell-related lesson plans as part of the curriculum had been developed and trialled in Worcester, delivered by non-ringing teachers. Non-curriculum lessons and presentations had also been prepared for delivery to both schools and youth groups. Advice and information on engaging with local youth groups was being written and would be made available on the Council’s website. The group’s next steps would be to launch the Bluebells Challenge; remain engaged with the Scout movement; finalise, publish and publicise advice and materials; and formalise a wider school engagement strategy. They would also ensure that all materials were reviewed regularly and remained current.

Young Ringers — Universities & Colleges: the workgroup leader, Ian Roulstone, reported that very little university ringing had

taken place during the pandemic although a number of practices and tours had now resumed. Discussions had been held with ART on the suggestion of holding regional Freshers’ Festivals, perhaps commencing in 2022. Jacqui Brown had kindly updated the UniversityRinging.org website. Ian had also promoted the new registered small societies scheme, approved in 2020, to university societies. He clarified that Southampton University Guild had not yet formally applied to register. Other university societies had reported that they felt no need to register as they maintained good relations with their local territorial associations. The workgroup would have a stand at the RWNVC at Worcester on 11 September and intended to work with the new Young Change Ringers Association to avoid losing ringers between school and college. Ian stressed that recovery could only be measured in the university sector when data became available. He commended mutual support between university societies and territorial associations. Ian suggested that students would be more likely to support various forms of e-ringing once in-person lectures had resumed. He asked Council members to engage with local student ringing societies in their areas and to encourage use of UniversityRinging.org to put new students in touch with the relevant society. Ian concluded by highlighting work on ringing theory as an enrichment project at the new sixth form maths schools which were now being established.

Historical & Archive: in the absence of Chris Ridley, workgroup leader, the report was given by John Harrison. John noted that this was a diverse group; he referred to the group’s Terms of Reference and outlined the work of each of the sub-groups: belfry artefacts; biographies; a digital platform for historic archive resources; the Library collection and Friends of the Library; and the promotion of research and dissemination of information. The workgroup was under-resourced and John particularly mentioned the need for a new Steward for the Carter Ringing Machine collection and for volunteers to work on biographies and recordings, including oral histories.

The President thanked all the workgroup leaders and members for their work as volunteers for ringing and the Central Council. He confirmed, in response to Simon Dixon, that the workgroup presentations would be made available on the website.

12. Forward Plan for 2022

The President introduced this item, mandated by the new Rules adopted in 2018 (rule 6.1 b) (3)). He highlighted work on Covid-19 and on ringing chamber ventilation and CO₂ monitoring, and on ringing recovery champions and co-ordination with ART for a recruitment campaign in 2022. He noted that the Churches Conservation Trust had produced an excellent ringing recruitment video and had planned to launch this in early 2020; they now intended to launch their campaign in 2022. The President stated that the Strategic Priorities would be reviewed and updated as necessary. Much progress had been

made during the pandemic with most work carried out within workgroups. A National Heritage Lottery Fund bid for bells in schools had been prepared with the Handbell Ringers of Great Britain and the CCT; this project would be a long-term programme to engage young people with ringing and heritage. Work continued on Mobile Belfry 2.0; the bells for this had now been cast and test hung. A specific website for this project was being prepared. The Loughborough Bellfoundry Trust had kindly donated the bells and there would be other opportunities for sponsorship and donations towards the outstanding costs. The President mentioned the successful roll out of the Cast of 1000 project in RingingRoom and hoped that this would transition to tower bell ringing in 2022. He noted the launch of the new ringing forums. He referred to Strategic Priority 5 — that method ringing is not the only measure of success — and stated that a new national Call Change competition was planned. An initial competition had been held on RingingRoom during the lockdown. The President updated members on plans for a ringing centre as part of the CCT's development of the Old Black Lion site in Northampton. He reported that an updated organigram showing the Council's structure, including the workgroups, support group and Stewards, was available on the website. A leader and members were still sought for the events team which would work with the Deputy President on the arrangements for the 2022 annual meeting. The President noted that a small team was engaged in improvements to the website. He acknowledged that there had been insufficient update reports on workgroup activity during the year; this would be addressed during the coming months. As mentioned at item 7, the President reported on the consultations held in 2020 on direct membership, branding and reducing the size of the Council. The consultation results had been updated on the website. He noted that there was no single clear way forward on direct membership and branding. However these formed part of the mandated governance review which had to be held every 3 years and would therefore be examined again in due course. The President added that reducing the size of the Council had been supported in a recent consultation. Any options also had to address the basis of the affiliation fee. He stated that work on this would proceed with a view to bringing definite proposals to the 2022 meeting. The President reported that young ringers consulted in 2020 had decided to organise their own young ringers association and this would be launched at the RWNVC in Worcester on 11 September. The President concluded by noting the need for new blood in 2022: a new Secretary would be needed, there would be elections for two trustee positions, and a new leader was required for the Volunteer & Leadership workgroup.

Kate Flavell commented on the idea of reducing the size of the Council. Although much would depend on the replacement scheme, Kate stated that perceptions were important: the Central Council was a large body but the Executive and workgroup reports had highlighted the need for help which was not forthcoming from the current members. A smaller active Council would be preferable. Linda Garton thanked the

President and Executive for their work, noting how much work was being done and how many projects were under way. Allen Nunley pointed out that not all workgroup members were Council members: these were two distinct groups and there were many opportunities for non-Council members to become involved. John Baldwin thanked the current Secretary for her work.

13. Financial update 2021 and outline General Fund budget for 2022

The Treasurer introduced this item, mandated under the new Rules, and referred members to p39 of the meeting papers. He reported that a loan of up to £3,000 had been made available to the Young Change Ringers Association; the YCRA would also use the Council's no 2 bank account, thereby enabling them to establish a bank track record before setting up their own account in due course. The YCRA accounts would be included with the Council's accounts as a separate item. He noted that no small societies had yet been registered and that expenditure on safeguarding had been kept to a minimum thanks to additional work by Clyde Whittaker. The Treasurer stated that the outline budget for 2022 did not include the costs of the annual meeting itself; all ancillary events would be costed to break even. The President added that applications to register by small societies had been affected by the lack of ringing during the pandemic. He informed the meeting that the application from Derby City Centre ringers had been deferred pending further discussion and that the provisions approved in 2020 were not intended for single tower societies. Paul Flavell asked about the Council's reserves policy; the Treasurer referred him to section 5.1 of the Trustees' Report on p14. Steph Pendlebury queried the loan to the YCRA: should this have been a grant? The Treasurer and President confirmed that the YCRA had requested a loan and that their business plan included a repayment schedule.

14. Election of Trustees

Treasurer: Fergus Stracey, who had been proposed by Alena Wardle and seconded by Hayley Young, was the only nominee. The President declared him elected.

Ordinary Trustees: two nominations had been received for the two positions. Phillip Barnes had been proposed by Colin Newman and seconded by Doug Davis; Clyde Whittaker had been proposed by Phillip Barnes and seconded by Nick Elks. The President declared them elected.

15. Election of Independent Examiners

Caroline Stockmann had been proposed by Fred Bone and seconded by Doug Davis. There being no other nominations, the President declared her elected.

16. Governance Review

The President invited Phillip Barnes to speak to this item. Phillip reminded members

that a governance review had been one of the recommendations arising from the 2016–17 CRAG review and that this had been included in the Standing Orders adopted in 2018 (SO G1). The review should address the major questions: is the Council fulfilling its objects; is its expenditure aligned accordingly; is its structure and membership still appropriate? Part of the review would consider the Council's documentation: its Rules, Standing Orders and annual reports. It would also consider if the charitable purposes were still appropriate and if the strategic priorities were consistent with these. An independent external reviewer with experience of both ringing and the charitable sector was being sought. The report and any recommendations would be placed before Council members next year.

17. Motions

(A) Michael Church (Winchester & Portsmouth Diocesan Guild) proposed:

That the Council's Rules and Standing Orders be amended as indicated below to allow for the possibility that only one Independent Examiner will be elected.

That Rule 6.1 b) (2) be amended to read:

the statement of accounts of the Council for the year ended 31 December previous, together with the report of the Independent Examiner or Examiners thereon;

That Rule 6.1 c) be amended to read:

to elect up to two Independent Examiners;

That Standing Order F4.1 be amended to read:

Up to two Independent Examiners shall at each Annual Council Meeting be elected from amongst the Council's Representative Members for a term of one year.

That Standing Order F4.3 be amended to read:

An Independent Examiner acting alone after consultation with the Trustees or the Independent Examiners acting together shall have power to employ the services of a professional accountant at the expense of the Council in pursuit of their duties.

Michael noted that he had served as one of the Council's then auditors during the first twenty years of his membership. He drew attention to the supporting statement and to the fact that no additional nominations for Independent Examiner had been received in 2020 or this year. The motion included the necessary changes to allow for only one Independent Examiner to be in accordance with the Rules. Derek Harbottle (Gloucester & Bristol Diocesan Association) seconded.

John Harrison (Oxford Diocesan Guild) supported the motion but considered that the

wording should be clarified; “up to two” could include zero and should be replaced by “at least one” or “one or two”. John then formally proposed that the motion be amended as follows:

That Rule 6.1 c) be amended to read:

One or two Independent Examiners;

and that Standing Order F4.1 be amended to read:

One or two Independent Examiners shall at each Annual Council Meeting be elected from amongst the Council’s Representative Members for a term of one year.

Alison Williams (Ladies Guild) seconded the amendments. Michael Church and Derek Harbottle considered that the original wording was clear and unambiguous and declined to accept the amendment. The President put the amendment to the vote. It was approved by majority (95 in favour; 30 against; 5 registered abstentions). Jane Wilkinson suggested that in future only the changes proposed by an amendment be displayed rather than the whole text. The President then put the amended motion to the vote. It was approved by majority (94% in favour; 4% against, 1% recorded abstention [the numbers were not announced]).

(B) John Harrison (Oxford Diocesan Guild) proposed:

That the Executive be encouraged to publish and maintain a list of its decisions that are currently in force.

John explained the background to this proposal. Not all Executive decisions resulted in changes to the Standing Orders or in formal Policies and currently members had to read through all notes of Executive meetings to find the information. In the interests of transparency it was important that a definitive list of Executive decisions was available to members; such a list could be updated easily to show which decisions were in force or had been replaced. The motion was seconded by Ruth Marshall (Scottish Association).

The motion was passed nem con (128 in favour, 7 recorded abstentions).

18. Future meetings

The Deputy President, David Kirkcaldy, outlined initial plans for the 2022 meeting to be held in Nottingham on 3–4 September. An online poll was held to establish preferences for a social event after the Council and Ringing World annual meetings. Members were also invited to express their views on ringing events which would be attractive to non-Council members during the Saturday meeting. Overseas members urged the Council to make arrangements for participation via video conferencing as well.

Attendance

The table is appended below.

19. Any Other Business

(a) The Secretary thanked Fred Bone for again typesetting the annual meeting papers.

(b) The Secretary urged members to notify any changes in their contact details promptly and to check that their association contact was receiving Council emails.

(c) The Secretary noted that the nomination deadline in 2022 would be six weeks before the meeting. Nominations would be required for Secretary, two Ordinary Trustees and one or two Independent Examiners. She reminded members that she would not be standing for re-election and urged representative members to consider suitable candidates to ensure a range of ringing experience was reflected on the Executive.

(d) The Secretary reminded members of the procedure now in force since the adoption of the new Rules in 2018: an annual membership return was required and this plus the formal notification of a society’s membership numbers and payment of the affiliation fee must be received six weeks before the meeting — members would not be able to speak or vote at the meeting if these had not been received by the deadline.

(e) The President endorsed the Secretary’s thanks to Fred Bone for his work on the annual meeting papers.

(f) The President reminded members that the Annual General Meeting of The Ringing World Ltd would be held at 3pm.

Votes of Thanks

The President thanked Colin Newman for all his assistance with the organisation and running of this meeting held by Zoom video conferencing and thanked the Secretary for all her work.

There being no further business, the President declared the meeting closed at 1.46 pm.

Summary of Attendance

	<i>Societies</i>	<i>Members</i>	
		<i>Present</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Fully represented	31	72	–
Partly represented	30	77	27
Not represented	5	–	5
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	66	149	32
Fellows		2	2
Ex-officio Members		8	6
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
		159	40