



**Minutes of the 42nd Annual General Meeting
on Monday 16 May 2011. 18:45-19:10
at Tewin Bury Farm Hotel, B1000 Hertford Road,
Nr. Welwyn, AL6 0JB**

Present:		
Geoff Boardman	Rosemary Burt	Arnold Donn
Sally Ferguson	Tim Fowkes	Angela Freeman
Diana Godden	Sharon Gunn	Nigel Hughes
Maureen Lamburn	Liz Perry	Clive Randall
David Roberts	Graham Savage	John Skeeles
Peter Tucker	Beverley Turner	Paul Webster
In attendance:		
Pippa Bourne	Kim Shield	
Apologies received from:		
Katherine Bowyer	Heather Bygrave	R.J. Cladd
Phil Cranleigh-Swash	Susan Deakin-Wray	Jon Easter
Michael Finch	Andrew Güntert	Michael Hardman
Tom Hopkins	Andrew Mead	Peter Mitchell
Alan Samuels	Neil Simpson	Mark Stevens
John Townend	Clair Tyler-Waddington	Jane Whitrow

Minutes

Item

1 The President welcomed members to the Annual General Meeting and asked if the meeting should proceed even though it was not quorate. It was agreed as was that the Notice of the Meeting could be taken as read.

2 Apologies

Those received have been recorded above.

3 Minutes of the 41st AGM held on 17 May 2010

The Minutes of the 41st AGM were approved subject to the change of recording Liz Perry's apologies. Proposed by Peter Tucker and seconded by Nigel Hughes.

Beverley Turner outgoing President's report:

Coming to the end of my term as president, I would like to say a few words about the past year.

I came into this role full of optimism and ideas. Some of the things I wanted to do we have achieved; others are still in the pipeline.

My first impression was that the various committees were not working together as a cohesive group so to address this I organised a strategy day which was held in February. This was very successful and we came away with lots of good ideas and priorities which we must not let slip. These priorities are

- To provide local news and updates to the membership
- To increase training places for ACA students in BBH member firms
- To practice good financial management
- To attract a broader, more diverse range of members to committees
- To actively support students
- To provide external PR locally so people know to choose chartered accountants
- To become an active society for all members
- To continue to provide a high quality course programme of CPD.

Whilst we will address these priorities, the overwhelming problem facing our society at the moment is how to market events more successfully. In the last year we have either cancelled or postponed the following due to lack of attendees

- The Quiz Night in November
- Back to the Workplace in April
- The Chocolate evening planned for next Monday

And events that were poorly attended include

- The schools business game (BASE)
- Business Confidence Monitor event
- John Lewis fashion evening
- The annual dinner

Our current method of marketing is not working and this must be addressed immediately. It is no use postponing events and hoping that attendance will be better later if we do not seek an alternative approach. Einstein said that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. We cannot continue like this – the reputation of BBH will suffer and by implication so will that of the ICAEW. Cancelling events also costs money. We are custodians of our reserves and we must ensure that we manage our finances carefully.

Our other priority is to attract new members to the committees. I appreciate that we all have other commitments that take up our time. But if we had more people to share the workload and pool ideas I know that the society would benefit. Maybe one way of attracting members would be if Katherine did more outreach visits. I am sure that if we had a closer relationship with the bigger accountancy practices we would be able to persuade some of them to join us. For the annual dinner only three accountancy firms took tables – Kingston Smith, Candales & Lamburn & Turner. Ernst & Young, KPMG, Deloitte, Mercer & Hole, Hillier Hopkins to name but a few were nowhere to be seen. Why?

I have also realised that, as President, you are only in this role for a short time and you do rely very heavily on the support of your executive team. We had a personnel change in the team during the year. Deirdre Hyde took retirement at the end of September and Kim Shield joined us in October. Kim has done an exceptional job in difficult circumstances and I would like to present these flowers to Kim as a thank you from me for her hard work and perseverance. Kim, it will get better.

I would also like to thank the chairs of the various committees – Arnold Donn, St Albans Discussion Group, John Skeeles General Practitioners Group, Peter Tucker Conference Committee, Heather Bygrave LPD and Maureen Lamburn PC&S. I would like to give them these gifts as a token of my thanks.

As I hand over to Liz, I know she will do a fantastic job as President and I know that we will support her 100%. More so she needs a Deputy and Vice President and therefore if anyone is willing to step forward I am sure we will bite your arm off!

Beds, Bucks & Herts is a great district society. It is going through a rough patch at the moment but it can only get better with the support of its members. We cannot continue to rely on the old faithfuls – they have given so much already. We now need new blood to move forward. So if you do know anyone who is willing to get involved please tell them what a wonderful lot we are and bring them along to future events.

Thank you

4 Approval of the Society's Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2010

Beverley Turner stated the Audited Accounts of the Society have been placed on the BBH website and asks if Members have any queries in relation to these Accounts.

Query the reference to bad debts – who was this?
Vantis of St. Albans

The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Liz Perry and seconded by Tim Fowkes. All BBH members present voted for the adoption of the accounts for 2010

5 Appointment of auditors

Discussion took place as to why we have the accounts audited although it was noted the fee charged was reasonable. The accounts are audited because it states they should be in our Constitution. A show of hands to the proposal of this continuing was 50/50. Management Committee to discuss asking members whether this should continue or whether the constitution should be changed.

It was agreed that, as the current auditors Gowers have signified their willingness to continue as auditors to the Society for this year, the Treasurer would check how many years they have been instructed and also obtain quotes from alternative firms for next year.

Proposal to continue with Gowers by Maureen Lamburn and seconded by Peter Tucker. This was agreed. Gowers will be the auditors for the Society's accounts for 2011.

6 Election of members nominated for the Management Committee

The names of the nominees have been received to serve on the Committee from:

Maureen Lamburn
Clive Randall

In accordance with the Rules of the Society, the number of persons willing to stand for appointment has not been exceeded, and the stated persons are therefore deemed to be elected.

7 Council Elections

Nigel Hughes retiring
 Peter Tucker standing
 Maureen Lamburn standing
 Meeten Nathwani standing

8 District Society Officers for

The President announced the officers for the year ahead:

President:	Liz Perry
Deputy President:	Vacant
Vice President:	Vacant
Acting Secretary:	Katherine Bowyer and Kim Shield
Treasurer	Tim Fowkes

The Treasurer will be confirmed at the first Management Committee Meeting as per the Society's rules.

Liz Perry, incoming President's welcome speech:

Firstly, I would like to thank Beverley for all her hard work during her year as President in what has proved to be a very challenging year. It is only more recently that I have come to appreciate just how much time she and Maureen, as Past President, have devoted to the Society in an attempt to keep the activities running.

So what are my objectives as President? Firstly, I wish to continue all the activities that the Society currently delivers to its members. This includes running a varied course programme, our LPD programme and to continue the support of the Retired Members Forum and Discussion Groups. We should not underestimate the value each of these initiatives provide when reaching out to our members.

Secondly, in support of the strategy of the ICAEW, we also have the Practice Members Forum, and the ICAEW is rolling out a Practice Advisory Centre, which will reach us around September, and will be an invaluable service to those of you in Practice. For myself, as a member in Business, I would like to get a Business Members Forum off the ground. I plan to meet with Business Members in focus groups to find out how the Society can support them. In the meantime, Beverley held a Business Confidence Monitoring event, and we should continue to host these every 6 months. I also hope to arrange some evening events, to include a presentation on something topical, as well as providing a chance to network. Ideally I would like these to rotate around the District, to reach out to as many members as possible, but we shall see. It is rather fortuitous that Clive Parritt, as incoming ICAEW President, also wishes to reach out to Members in Business, although arguably we are all in business, so no one will be excluded from attending any events.

I also want to leverage off much of what Beverley achieved, so that includes building stronger links with local business communities, such as the Law Society, local Chambers of Commerce and local MPs, as well as school and university students. While I share Beverley's disappointment, we mustn't give up on the BASE game, that would be the easy thing to do.

Finally, I am committed to delivering the strategic outcomes we discussed at our strategy session. But I will warn you now, this will mean change of the Society and some of you may not like it. The resounding theme was around communication with our members, and it is imperative we improve here. I believe setting up a Business Members Forum will reach out to a segment who currently don't engage with us. But they too belong to our

Society. We must get better at communicating what we do to the larger business community.

Unsurprisingly I have ideas for some radical changes for PC&S, who in my view spend too much time on the Social and not on the P & C. That said, we should continue to run social events, they add some fun and can attract new volunteers into the Society – this was the route I followed, so it must be worth something. And, in any case, we have to attract new blood into running the Society, with no Deputy or Vice, either the Society will end up without a leader, and following no particular direction for 2 years or, worse still, you might have to put up with me in charge of the foreseeable future.

Seriously though, the Society has a real problem and we must recruit new members onto our committees. At the moment too much is asked of too few. So if I may, I'd like to challenge you all to recruit at least one new member onto a sub- committee over the next 12 months.

Thank you.

Liz Perry announced the close of the AGM.

Beverley Turner
President and Chair, 2010/11