

**Minutes of the 40th Annual General Meeting of
Esperanto-Asocio de Britio
May 21st, 2017,
The Melting Pot, Edinburgh**

1: Ian Carter welcomed the EAB members present, explaining that the formalities of the AGM would be conducted in English as is required by the Charity Commission of England and Wales, but that members should feel free to offer comments in Esperanto should they wish to once the formalities were over.

He opened the meeting with a commemoration of the members who have passed away since the previous AGM, reading out their names and asking for members to join him in a moment's respectful silence. He then drew attention to Paul Gubbins, who died in August 2016, stating that losing someone in the prime of life is difficult, especially someone so well known to so many of us and who had much he planned to contribute. In recognition, he invited those who knew Paul or his work to join him in a round of applause.

2: Apologies were received from Stephen Thompson, Derek Tatton, Edmund Grimley Evans, Damon Lord, Dominique Tellier, Angela Tellier and Geoffrey Sutton. 26 members were present. Tim Owen recorded the minutes of the meeting.

3: The minutes of the previous AGM from Liverpool, distributed in Update 77, were received and approved.

3.1: Malcolm Jones gave a lengthy summary of his relationship with Paul Gubbins and their correspondence, reading from excerpts in the months between Paul Gubbins's resignation as a trustee and his death. He had a copy of Paul Gubbins's resignation letter to the trustees, in which Paul Gubbins expressed his perception that there had been a breach of confidence among them¹. He then stated his wish that it be appended to the minutes of the current AGM.

4: The Trustees' Annual Report (TAR) for the year ending October 31st 2016, circulated with Update 77, was received. Ian Carter explained that the trustees are required to provide the Charity Commission with a report detailing the charity's activity during the year. He confirmed that the TAR was accepted by the Independent Examiner during the charity's annual examination at the end of 2016 and had therefore been sent to the Charity Commission. He invited Clare Hunter to give a presentation which she had prepared.

4.1: Malcolm Jones stated that he had taught at Somerlernejo in August following the death of Paul Gubbins, who was scheduled to lead the advanced strand. He expressed his gratitude for Paul Gubbins's professional commitment and organisation, which enabled him to do so because Paul Gubbins had left his material with the office ready for printing.

4.2: Malcolm Jones asked how the trustees could justify sponsoring the app Amikumu, described in the TAR as "the development of an application to allow Esperanto-speakers to track down other Esperanto-speakers wherever they happen to be", when the people developing it weren't British and lived outside the UK, but had declined his own request to donate to a project in Tanzania to redirect water from rivers to dry land. Clare Hunter explained that the Amikumu app would benefit learners and speakers of Esperanto in the UK, whereas an irrigation project in Tanzania would not.

4.3: Geoffrey Greatrex asked how the trustees could justify sponsoring the Polyglot Gathering in Berlin since it is held outside the UK. Clare Hunter responded that polyglots are language enthusiasts and that this is the largest meeting of them in the world, and that the organisers are prominent Esperantists

¹ This perception was not shared by 5 of the 7 trustees serving in November 2015.

who spotlight the language at the event. The people in attendance, many of whom come from the UK, include opinion-leaders in the language-learning world who are often contacted by the press for comments on languages, so giving them a good impression of Esperanto was in EAB's interest for when people in the UK visit their blogs and read interviews with them.

4.4: Malcolm Jones stated that the line in the TAR that EAB's paying of an account at meetup.com had "facilitated the organisation of regular get-togethers in the Birmingham and Skipton areas" should not have been written without consulting him. He expressed his view that this entry gives the impression that a group in Skipton is a new thing whereas there had been one for over 20 years and that because of the meetup account "the organisation of meetings has, if anything, become more complex".

4.5: Malcolm Jones enquired about the state of the library and the sudden departure of Paul Dennett in December 2015.

4.6: Malcolm Jones stated that the entry in the TAR about meetup.com should be located under the heading Publicity rather than Education, adding that the organiser of the Birmingham group even declares that it isn't educational. Tim Owen countered that the wording used on the Birmingham group's events was that it was "nothing official", and that he had been before and could confirm that the new people who had not opportunities to speak Esperanto with anybody before and who were learning about events abroad, online dictionaries and so on certainly found it to be educational, but that the point was moot because this was located under the heading Publicity in the TAR anyway.

4.7: Malcolm Jones spoke again about his relationship with Paul Gubbins and eventually stated that Ian Carter "lied" to him when, during the course of lengthy correspondence in preceding months between Malcolm Jones and the trustees, Ian Carter provided relevant excerpts from a series of minutes but stated that no minutes had been taken at a meeting in November 2015. Malcolm Jones stated that he had a set of minutes provided to him by Paul Gubbins, who had drawn them up himself. All four people present who were trustees from that period voiced in unison that they hadn't seen any minutes from that meeting.

4.8: Malcolm Jones read out a statement from former employee Angela Tellier. Clare Hunter responded that there were many inaccuracies in the statement. Malcolm Jones commented that Update 72 reported that "Angela Tellier is working assiduously" on setting up the Buchanan event, yet the trustees six months later made a decision to delete the post of co-ordinator for research and development. Clare Hunter replied that it's important to remember that there was an employee behind that post and that she didn't believe it appropriate to discuss the employee's business publicly without her agreement. Malcolm Jones responded that Angela Tellier had provided her statement to him in order that he read it out and that she wished the issue to be discussed in the AGM. Clare Hunter relayed what was already written in the trustees' annual report about appraisal of staffing and that the trustees perceived that investment in research and development was not providing value.

Tim Owen commented that he was the author of that report in Update and that this sentence was a verbatim quote from Angela Tellier's line manager when he was reporting in that meeting, and that the trustees collectively were under the impression that the work on Buchanan was done as part of her role for EAB, since it had been presented as though it were. Bill Walker commented that shortly after he had put online a short summary of the 2016 AGM, he had received an email from Angela Tellier in which she indicated that Buchanan was nothing to do with EAB and wished him to remove reference to her EAB role from the AGM report. He offered to retrieve the email; Tim Owen had it to hand and read from it: "[The original report] gives the impression that I organised the event as part of my EAB work, which in fact was not the case at all. Quite the opposite, in fact - I organised it for the University of Liverpool, and entirely in my own time."

Tim Owen explained that as part of their responsibilities for oversight of the charity and having become aware of her email to Bill Walker, the trustees at their next meeting sought to demarcate Angela

Tellier's personal work from her work for EAB and ascertain what value the role brought to the charity. He reported that this question was not a new one and had been initially raised internally by Paul Gubbins in 2013. He displayed an email in which Paul Gubbins wrote to his fellow trustees rhetorically asking them "what we are getting out of this contract apart from grief and an apparent unwillingness to share information" and sharing his viewpoint that the charity is "supporting a Ph.D. programme from which we appear to be excluded and which is more for personal prestige than association benefit". Tim Owen explained that during a meeting the trustees repeatedly asked Angela Tellier to explain what work she was doing for EAB and were consistently informed that every project was her own and "nothing" was for EAB. The trustees were therefore unable to conclude that the paid role was bringing value to the charity and made a provisional decision to delete it, which was relayed to Angela Tellier in writing, along with an invitation to speak to any trustee of her choosing to see whether she could make any suggestions (ie indicate that some of her work is for EAB) which might lead to the trustees' modifying that decision.

Malcolm Jones stated that Angela Tellier had been "criticised" by the chair at the previous AGM (at which neither he nor she were present). Tim Owen responded that this certainly had not happened; nobody who had been present at the last AGM could confirm that anything critical had been said. He elaborated that he had responded from the chair to somebody's statement that the Buchanan Masterclass was "free" to EAB by stating that this wasn't necessarily the case, since the person organising the event received a salary from EAB. He quoted the opening from the email sent to him by Bill Walker three days after the AGM as an indicator of what had been stated: "During the AGM, you mentioned that the cost of EAB's support for the Buchanan event depends on whether we include a portion of Angela's salary". At Angela Tellier's request, later mentions of Buchanan in Update and La Brita Esperantisto indicated that she organised the event in a private capacity.

4.8: Peter Bolwell asked why the charity banked with Barclays, given that it supported fracking. Clare Hunter explained that she would dearly love to close this legacy account but that it wasn't possible to do so because it received a monthly standing order of £5 from somebody who we were unable to trace and that Barclays will neither cancel the standing order nor allow us to close the account whilst one is still active. She explained that a transfer from this account to EAB's active one takes place once a sizable sum builds up but that this account is otherwise unused.

5: Ian Carter explained that the trustees are legally required to produce accounts every year and that, as with the TAR, these had been scrutinised and passed by the Independent Examiner and so had been filed with the Charity Commission. The SOFA and Balance Sheet of the accounts had been distributed with Update 77. He invited Clare Hunter to present the financial report.

5.1: Geoffrey Greatrex commented that the charity only distributes the SOFA and Balance Sheet and that he would like to see the entire accounts distributed. Clare Hunter replied that the cost of printing and posting a 20-page document makes this undesirable, especially given that nobody has ever before asked her for the full accounts and she doubts whether there would be any significant interest in them. She added that the full accounts are public documents available from the Charity Commission's website for anybody who did want them, and that the charity does provide the most relevant parts (the TAR, the SOFA and the Balance Sheet) with Update.

6: Ian Carter explained that the next agenda item was whether to reappoint the Independent Examiner and asked Clare Hunter for her opinion. Clare Hunter indicated that she was very happy with Dains LLP and would recommend staying with the firm. The meeting agreed to retain Dains LLP as the charity's Independent Examiner.

7: Clare Hunter explained that a standing agenda item is to set the subscription rates. She stated that since there had been no discussion since the previous AGM, the trustees would propose that they remain as they are. She invited suggestions from members which the trustees could discuss after the AGM. The meeting voted to keep subscription rates for members as they are.

8: Clare Hunter explained that following suggestions made in past years about officialising the status of the library, the trustees have investigated changing the charity's object. She presented the trustees' proposal for a new object. The meeting decided that it would be better to make the proposal in Update and invite comments, with a view to revisiting the idea at the 2018 AGM.

8.1: Bill Walker expressed his thanks to the trustees for listening to comments over the years and trying to formulate a policy to reflect them.

9: Clare Hunter explained that the trustees had received a resolution to amend the charity's governing document, which they had distributed with Update 77 along with a letter explaining why they were recommending voting against the resolution. She invited Geoffrey Greatrex, the resolution's author, to summarise it.

10: Clare Hunter explained that the trustees would now be elected and the resolution voted for by secret ballot. Viv O'Dunne and Bill Walker acted as vote counters.

11: Ian Carter read out the voting results.

11.1: The results for the proposal to amend the constitution were:

<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
14	46	4

The resolution was therefore rejected.

11.2: The results for the election of the trustees were:

<i>Name</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
Ian Carter	60	11	5
Geoffrey Greatrex	41	13	22
Edmund Grimley Evans	70	1	5
Clare Hunter	69	5	2
Damon Lord	66	1	9
Kathryn Newbould	69	2	5
Sally Phillips	46	13	17
Ed Robertson	67	3	6
Geoffrey Sutton	44	26	6

All nine candidates were duly elected as trustees and Ian Carter elected president.

11.3: The charity's Honorary President, John Wells, expressed his thanks to Clare Hunter for her exceptional work during the year and to the trustees in general, which was met by a round of applause from most people present.

Signed _____ (Print name: _____)

Date: _____