

VINE AGM minutes

Held by telephone conference at 09.30 on Thursday 26th May 2016

Present

Chris Hogarth
Peter Philipson
Pat Vincent
John Bacon
Sophie Lake
Bill Grayson

Apologies

Adam Cormack
Kevan Gibbons
Tim Kemp

- Thanks to those who have contributed over the last year, particularly attendance at the conservation task. BG offered to hold another similar session.
- Chairs report adopted unanimously
- Finance: audited accounts received and adopted, with thanks to Mr Parry. Great to see some funds available due to income from the autumn conservation task. Closing balance of £922.20, having paid for web hosting.
- Appointment of auditor. Mr Parry is willing to continue, and was unanimously appointed for FY 2017-18
- No nominations to VINE executive have been received (PP to make contact with potential RSPB rep again)
- No members joined, so survey results were deferred until the VINE Executive Committee meeting
- No other AGM business was notified to the secretary.

Ended at 9.38

VINE Executive Committee meeting

Following immediately after the AGM.

- John Bacon, Sophie Lake, Pat Vincent unanimously re-elected as Chair, Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

- Finance: Commitments are £96.00 per annum webhosting, around £100 biennially for maintaining the domain name.
- Discussion about use of VINE funds revolved around interest in (i) a philanthropic approach in supporting campaigns in line with what we are aiming to achieve or retaining funds for VINE use, or (ii) a middle position, retaining a fixed amount of £500 but feeling able to use remainder in response to appeals for funding.
- CH suggested investigating ethical micro-finance investment (e.g. Lended Care, Abundance Project). Research would be needed on ethical options and how easy it is to take money out without causing problems for the project.
- The decision was taken to canvas the rest of steering group as not all were present - SL to do

VINE stance on issues

- Having taken note of VINE members responses on this, discussion resulted in agreement that VINE should continue to respond to consultations, particularly where a response embraces conservation "common sense" and is not controversial within membership or the Committee; but that VINE should avoid taking a stance on party political/national referendum issues, where the focus should be on providing information and space for discussion.

VINE in the future & questionnaire results

- Send to membership, with suggested actions **SL to action**
 - Send out once-a-month topic for discussion. Ask forum for ideas-member who suggested topic might like to develop it?
 - Regarding Q about continue to work with organisations whose aims are aligned, "not sure" responses could be uncertainty about which organisations VINE might align with - taking care to be fully aware of what those organisations stand for.
 - Other social media presence - ask PV about possible benefits of using facebook, as he has set one up for Greenmantle. Facebook at work restriction has been lifted on NE staff, things may change fast in Defra family. Facebook might help with discussions being dominated by few individuals.
 - Remind people about VINE forum rules every 3-4 months with existing text. We don't want to stifle emotional expression, but personalised attacks are not acceptable **SL to action**
 - Questionnaire comment about VINE being 'too top down/discussions too dominated by few individuals' - we'd be delighted for VINE to be more bottom up and encourage VINE members to feel free to participate; need to look for ways to do this.
 - To put out a message for those Members who responded to the survey that they would be interested to join in regional events as they could not be identified from the survey. **SL to action**
- Agenda item for next meeting - how to encourage new blood**