

**BRITISH INSTITUTE OF VERBATIM REPORTERS**

**136<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

held at

Strand Palace Hotel, 372 Strand, London WC2R 0JJ

on

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2018

## **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

LEAH WILLERSDORF  
GEORGINA FORD  
MIRIAM WEISINGER  
ALAN BELL  
NICOLE HARRISON  
ANN LLOYD  
ORLA PEARSON  
IAN ROBERTS  
MARY SORENE

NATALIE BRACKEN  
VICTORIA DAVIES  
FRANCES DOBSON  
NICOLA DUTTON  
SHELLEY DUTTON  
MIRELLA FOX – Skype  
SHERYLL HOLLEY  
SUSAN HUMPHRIES – Skype  
MARY KRELLE  
REBEKAH LAMPLOUGH  
RACHEL LLOYD  
ELAINE McCARTHY – Skype  
SUMANTH NAYAK – Skype  
DEIRDRE O'MALLEY  
JACOB SMITH  
KATH SYKES – Skype  
RICHARD WARD  
JULIE WHITAKER

NEIL HOLLEY – Technical Support (thank you!)

[NAME] – denotes the member was attending via Skype and had typed a comment in the chat.

## **At 2.00 pm - Presentation of Betty Willett Award**

The AGM commenced at 2.16 pm

## **Welcome and introductions**

THE PRESIDENT: Before I begin properly, I just want to note that Mary Krelle is kindly taking the note again for us again this year so let's do what we ask of others when we are working: state your name, speak up, speak clearly, do not speak over anybody if they are speaking, and please do not interrupt others. I will now ask Mary to read the Notice.

(THE SECRETARY DULY READ THE NOTICE OF MEETING)

### **Apologies for absence**

THE PRESIDENT: The next item on the Agenda is apologies for absence.

THE SECRETARY: The list I have here is: Susan McIntyre; Andrew Howell; Pauline Miller; Sandra Glennly; Ian Dawson; Rita Fox; Michael Laidlaw; Alison Stockwell; Andrew Roberts; Robyn Nott; Hilary Maclean; Helen Davies; Christine Lawton; Cindy Wu; Franny Barrett; Melanie Ball; Jenny Chandler; Katy Ryder; Patricia Atherton; Gail Mallaghan; Orla Pearson; Jean Lukins; Ashleigh Roberts; Heather Casali; Louise Pepper, if she does not Skype in; Sandra Evans; Caroline Booth.

Does any member have any others?

NICOLE HARRISON: Amanda Bavin and Karen Young.

THE PRESIDENT: Audrey Shirley.

### **Minutes of last meeting**

THE PRESIDENT: We move on to the Minutes of the last meeting, which have already been circulated to members by the website. We have copies if anybody wants them.

THE SECRETARY: They have been on the website since November, but I did bring a few copies. We want to know if they are approved.

THE PRESIDENT: Are there any objections to anything that is in the Minutes or anything to add or comments or corrections? (No response) (Minutes approved)

### **President's Address**

THE PRESIDENT: Welcome to London and the Strand Palace Hotel for this, BIVR's 136th Annual General Meeting, which sees the end to the last 12 months' slogan, "The Future's Bright! The Future is BIVR!" - not sure if you are happy or sad about that. As always, thank you to those in the room and appearing on Skype who have taken time out of your precious weekend to attend the AGM. I hope those who also attended the workshops this morning enjoyed themselves and really found value in them, not to mention the massages and headshots.

BIVR Council always works hard to serve its members and the last 12 months have been no exception. With the increase in subs last year, the

opportunities for the promotion of BIVR were extensive. Where we incurred the most cost was exhibiting at Legalex back in April of this year. One part of the expense for that was the brilliant, tall posters we had made for our stall which, I am delighted to say, are re-useable at subsequent events. Just on that note, I would like to thank Carryl Sorene once again for her hard work on doing those banners. They really took a lot of work. Legalex was perhaps not the best exhibition for us though.

Having said that, it certainly raised awareness that stenographers, both pen and machine, still exist even after the digitalisation of our courts. Not only that, we had a few deaf people stop by our stall, and one even called us "heroes" because she is able to follow meetings and conferences thanks to our STTR/captioning members.

Also at Legalex there were what might be termed "hidden expenses", in that you do not just pay for the hiring of the space but you hire the tables, the chairs, the television, the power sockets, even a bin (we just used a plastic bag!). As an aside, we have learned now how to price for the BIVR Awareness event. Electricity - who knew you had to pay for that? Not only that, but there were added courier costs to get the majority of our merchandise to/from the ExCel Centre.

We had a fantastic position right by the entry/exit, even though we were one of the last to book for the event, and that meant a lot of footfall for us. We demonstrated realtime/captioning onto the TV, which we also had to hire, and that made people stop, look and wonder what we were doing. We also had the feed going out onto iPads on one of the tables. We managed to get a large number of business cards as well as hand out BIVR fliers. Those business cards will become our contacts for our next event.

With social media being what it is in this day and age, we also engaged the services of an expert in the field and he ran our Twitter campaign. Again, even if you do not have social media accounts, all you have to do is google BIVR (for example BIVR\_TWEETS) and you will see our tweets and our posts because it is a public account. The slideshow I have put together for this morning had lots of screenshots from the actual Twitter campaign which we can play again later on.

While we are on the topic of being social, the Summer and Winter Drinks seem to be the two most well attended by members in London, so we are thinking to do away with the autumn and springtime ones and just keep the winter and summer.

Moving on. BIVR's website is in dire need of an overhaul. We have used a little bit of money on a slight rejigging of the current website. Mary

and I undertook an afternoon of training with our IT consultant so, for now, she and I shall be running the website. Rest assured, however, there will be a complete redesign and new functionality for the website to make it more contemporary.

We are aware, as are many of you, that not everybody uses social media, as of course is your right. Everybody does, however, use the internet; after all, you get notified of your jobs by email and you send your transcripts in by email. As mentioned in a newsletter, other than utilising the old BIVR Forum, at the moment there is no other way to engage all members at the same time other than via constant emails from Mary. The private BIVR members-only Facebook group often has job opportunities posted in it, though the way Facebook works is that you will receive a notification that there is a post in the group and so when you log in to Facebook you are alerted to check the group, so perhaps we need to look at something akin to that run alongside the website. We do not know how or if it is even possible, nor do we know the cost, but we do need to find a way to get everybody all at once so that nobody feels excluded. To have Mary email everybody all the time is not an effective, or modern, way of doing it. Again, if you have any suggestions, let us know. If no suggestions are forthcoming, Council will just have to do what we can with our own ideas.

The Working Groups: As also mentioned in a newsletter, the STTR Working Group has been made defunct due to a NRCPD registration pathway having been set up earlier this year. Just quickly, speaking of STTRs, we can congratulate the six members who have all recently become NRCPD-registered: Nicola Dutton, who is here today; Katy Ryder; Alison Stockwell; Patricia Atherton; Heather Casali; and Samantha Boyd.

The Verbatim Reporting Working Group (encompassing the Audio Transcribing Working Group) is still working to get exam syllabi and exam criteria set. This is a mammoth task and one that cannot be rushed but rest assured we are working on it.

With training, development and recruitment of students part of the Institute's remit, we are delighted to say that we have forged a strong relationship with the University of Westminster School of Law, and we are in the process of securing a relationship with the Supreme Court and Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. More details on this will be in the next *BIVR Bugle*.

Two features in the *BIVR Bugle*, "What's the Difference?" and "The Member of the Moment", have proved popular, so if you would like to ask a question or perhaps write the question/answer for this section or put your career on paper, again let us know.

While we are on the topic of careers, as mentioned in the summer *BIVR Bugle* we are looking to do what for the moment is dubbed "The Pen Writers' Project". The Institute as an organisation needs your stories and it needs your knowledge. If you are interested in taking part, please let us know.

I have lost count of the number of times in three years I have said, "Please let us know". Honestly, your Council is here for you. Without you, our members, there is no Institute.

Something which we have recently introduced (and literally only weeks before the AGM) is the opportunity for organisations associated with our profession to support our events by way of a sort of sponsorship scheme. This scheme involves five tiers of support with varying benefits for different prices. All but one of the tiers entitles the supporter organisation to have a linkable logo on our website under a new drop down menu "Supporting BIVR". To go with this logo, we have asked the supporter organisation to say a sentence or two on why they support BIVR. At present we have three, only one of which so far is on the website. This opportunity is also open to members if they wish. This is the comparison table which we can pass around for everybody to see. I think it will also go on the website at some point.

Stenography is a profession which is absolutely worth fighting for and championing. Even in just three years as your President, the work that we do has evolved. We are all professionals with a responsibility to be guardians of the record we take. The work which we do matters; regardless if you are doing arbitrations, depositions, regulatory health, speech to text, court work, et cetera. It all matters. None is more or less important than the other. The record you take is history. What we do matters. We know this because clients tell us. We know this because the public tells us on social media. We know this because we do it day in and day out.

This Institute must, and will, continue to motivate and inspire. We are all different in our own ways, and that is a good thing, because we need to be. Around the world BIVR is now recognised as the organisation of professional verbatim reporting in the UK. Today is BIVR's day: busy reporters coming together to pause, to reflect, to catch up with colleagues and friends, and perhaps meet and make new ones.

This is the last time I will give this speech. I am looking forward to getting a lot of my spare time back - and learning French - and working a little bit more, but BIVR needs continuity and consistency and you will get that from Council because we will provide for you, promote for you and listen to you.

Even as my presidency draws to a close, I will remain a vocal champion for this profession. I will continue to stand alongside BIVR and all that it stands for. Stenography, this unbelievably unique skill that we have, is what sometimes truly gets us out of bed in the morning. I am proud to call myself not just a stenographer but a member of this organisation. I hope today that you, too, are proud of what your unique skill is and also proud to belong to BIVR. After all, our strength is us - the Institute's members.

Finally, I want to thank Council for all their work and their continued support, but my biggest thanks must go to the lady sitting to my right. I will not say much more than that, Mary, but, thank you; you have been a real rock over these last three years. Thank you. That is it.  
(Applause)

Any questions?

SHERYLL HOLLEY: Can I just check, I know the fees went up last year; have we had many losses because of the fees increase? That is one of my questions.

VICTORIA DAVIES: I was going to ask that as well.

THE SECRETARY: Seven members took retirement, 12 members did not renew, but nine new members came in. We have one Associate remaining to take the full membership exam. I have just got these noted down. Two of the people who did not renew literally took retirement to leave the profession entirely and leave BIVR entirely. Quite a few people of those 12 who did not renew did not even bother to answer.

FRANCES DOBSON: Do you have a breakdown of who are pen writers and who are stenographers?

THE SECRETARY: Two pen writers, one student, and the rest were machine writers, CAT writers. One left the profession to go into the priesthood or something, took Holy Orders. Those are the figures. On the database at the moment, we have 125 members, and that includes our students, retired people and working members.

VICTORIA DAVIES: Are we going on Any Other Business yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Good Lord, that is at the very end.

VICTORIA DAVIES: I have got something I want to raise about fees at some point. I am not sure if now is the appropriate time.

THE SECRETARY: Whenever you like. There is the Treasurer's report to come.

VICTORIA DAVIES: I had better raise it now then. You know we decided to have two separate instalments?

THE SECRETARY: That was to allow people for the shock of, effectively, doubling the fees.

VICTORIA DAVIES: Does that finish this year? That is not happening again?

THE SECRETARY: Have we decided that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think it has been anything we have discussed. If people want it, we can still do it.

VICTORIA DAVIES: If it carries on, there needs to be a levy for having the two instalments.

THE SECRETARY: It does cost us extra because there is the printing of the cards twice.

VICTORIA DAVIES: I paid in two instalments and I agreed to it but I did not think about the doubling up of the cards and your time, Mary. If that is going to go forward you need to have an extra fiver put on it, or something like that, to cover the time and to cover the extra cards that you get.

THE SECRETARY: There is extra postage in sending it out and the extra cost in having the card printed a second time.

VICTORIA DAVIES: That needs to be factored in somewhere for paying in instalments.

THE SECRETARY: We can take that on board.

[LOUISE PEPPER]: It is Louise. I am just letting you know I have joined the call.

CHRIS ARMSTRONG: I think my question may come under Any Other Business. I am not quite sure what questions you are taking at the moment.

THE SECRETARY: It is questions really on the President's Report.

CHRIS ARMSTRONG: Just briefly, then, and you can tell me to stop. I have not mentioned it before and I have not been to the AGM for the last two years - I may have mentioned this verbally to you, Leah - on the question of pen writers and those of us even though we are qualified on the STTR [sic] but are still using paper-feed machines, I just wanted to let you know that in fact I have had a huge increase of requests for non-electronic. For example, anybody who got the news last night about the British Airways cyber attack on 400,000 passengers yesterday this last week and other things.

I have had two embassies approach me and the Metropolitan Police Force. They do not want any electronics at all.

I thought I should bring this forward to you because, as you said, all our work is equal, it is all covered. It is very important in the same way that people move from satnavs back to phones and one thing and another. We have really got to keep watching this. If you have got the speed, it does not matter whether it is my left foot that you do it with, as the film said. If you are interested in knowing any more on that, I will let you know, but you do have to do it without electronic equipment. You do the transcript on a Microsoft document at home or at their premises and, if you do it at home, a motorcyclist will come and collect what you have printed off at home. Nothing goes on the internet.

THE PRESIDENT: That could be another avenue for pen writers as well.

CHRIS ARMSTRONG: As for all of us who are prepared to do it in that way. As I say, one of the Embassies said to me, "It is no good any of us going any higher tech because the hackers will follow us; they will be there". I said to Deirdre, and this must be true or they would not have said it (or would they?), they said that back in Moscow they are now using manual typewriters. I felt it necessary to mention it to you. I do not know how many of you have heard of this.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you for raising it.

CHRIS ARMSTRONG: I have a job in Luxembourg next week that is exactly on that basis.

THE PRESIDENT: Georgina has just suggested would you be willing to write something for the newsletter so everybody is aware of it? They will get the transcript of this. If you send an email to Mary she can put that in.

ALAN BELL: Or perhaps a letter!

CHRIS ARMSTRONG: How about a pigeon carrier? If anybody's interested. If everybody is on electronics and wants to do that, but there may well

be pen writers who work in the House of Lords and are still bowling along and are happy to do it or paper-feed palantypists and stenographers. We are needed.

THE PRESIDENT: You can be the go-to person for all that.

CHRIS ARMSTRONG: I am in charge. I hope it is useful.

VICTORIA DAVIES: Just to say that you can do a machine transcript without ever going near the internet as well.

THE PRESIDENT: It is because the machine that a lot of us have is electronic.

VICTORIA DAVIES: You do not have to connect to the internet to provide a transcript or connect your steno machine to your laptop.

CHRIS ARMSTRONG: They do not want it on the internet.

THE PRESIDENT: If you can put all that in written form.

CHRIS ARMSTRONG: I do not want anybody to think I am forcing it on anybody.

THE SECRETARY: It is useful information.

FRANCES DOBSON: It is interesting that the Russian Embassy is using manual typewriters because Stenograph provides them with the Russian keyboard. They are doing it out of choice rather than we are backward. It is the type of technology that they are opposed to.

CHRIS ARMSTRONG: Could you repeat that, please?

THE PRESIDENT: Frances says that it is interesting the Russian Embassy are going that way - and correct me if I am wrong Frances - and that Stenograph are offering the Russian keyboard for the machine.

FRANCES DOBSON: So it is the technology. You could raise awareness.

[LOUISE PEPPER]: Are there any paper-feed palantypists?

THE PRESIDENT: Chris Armstrong is one of them.

VICTORIA DAVIES: Chris, are you still on a 2000 Palan?

CHRIS ARMSTRONG: No, I am on paper-feed manual. I am qualified for Palan. I prefer the paper-feed manual. That is why they let me in. There are quite a few people who changed from paper feed.

VICTORIA DAVIES: It is the one before the 2000.

CHRIS ARMSTRONG: Caroline Stewart and people with Stenograph paper feed. Maybe people could look in their cupboards. Mary has one.

[LOUISE PEPPER]: Yes, I am shocked LOL.

NICOLE HARRISON: What is she shocked about?

THE SECRETARY: She is shocked that somebody is still using a paper feed.

CHRIS ARMSTRONG: The serious thing is that hacking is not going to go away - there is absolutely no doubt about it - or it does not look as if it is. We have got to look in our cupboards, get your pencils out and sharpen them. There must be pen writers around.

FRANCES DOBSON: Any quills?

THE SECRETARY: Most of us are of a certain age, if I can put it that way ---

CHRIS ARMSTRONG: I do not know with shorthand.

THE SECRETARY: --- as members. We do not have any young members.

CHRIS ARMSTRONG: Journalists are taking up shorthand again.

THE PRESIDENT: Richard Ward teaches pen shorthand to journalists.

CHRIS ARMSTRONG: You know all about it. [To Richard] Are you meeting more and more?

RICHARD WARD: As was said, I am teaching the journalist students and there are more and more coming on board.

CHRIS ARMSTRONG: We just have to keep an eye as an Institute.

FRANCES DOBSON: I am very pleased that journalists are learning shorthand as well because I did a trial which was packed with journalists and not one did shorthand.

CHRIS ARMSTRONG: This is not as a competition. Please believe me. It is just the work of the Institute to provide what is needed. That is all.

THE PRESIDENT: Like we said everybody, it all matters, every job that everybody does matters regardless of what arena it is in.

[MIRELLA FOX]: Thank you Leah for being a wonderful President. Wishing you well for the future.

[SUSAN HUMPHRIES]: Same comment from me.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you both. That is very kind. Are there any more questions?

SHERYLL HOLLEY: I do not have a problem with fees rising but I feel the workshops are still very expensive. Bearing in mind we had such a hike in fees, surely the workshops could be reduced, because I think £100 is a lot - and that is if you get the early bird. I think it could be reduced and you would probably get a lot more people here if the fees for the workshops were reduced. I do not know how other people feel.

THE SECRETARY: If I can answer as Treasurer, the cost of here - and I had negotiated with this hotel (because it is a rather nice hotel) to get the fee down from the other one I had found - and the cost of coming here is not cheap. It is dearer here than last year and the fees are the same as last year. It was the same price.

THE PRESIDENT: The other thing is with this supportership thing we are doing, we were late off the mark doing it, but had we done it earlier - and we can hand this to you so you can all have a look at it - the fees would have been reduced because we would have had money in.

It is basically to sponsor BIVR events. It is not to sponsor BIVR every single day of the year. It is purely for events. There is a comparison table so, say, for example, at the platinum level they would get their logo on our website for nine months after the event that they have sponsored. They would get all editions of *The BIVR Bugle* up until 2019. They will get a linkable logo to their website on our website, with the words that they have to say why they are supporting BIVR. They will get social media posts from us. They will get four posts a month for nine months. This is the platinum level. They will get discount on advertising in the BIVR Awareness programme that we have. They will get discounts if they choose to be an exhibitor, but for that they have to pay £600 or more. We have had one of those.

Had this gone out a lot earlier in the year, by the time it came to organising the AGM and the workshops, the workshops would have been not £120, I am almost certain.

SHERYLL HOLLEY: If you had reduced the level of the fees more people would have come in therefore all the fees would have been covered anyway because you would have had more people attending.

THE PRESIDENT: We have to do more than the workshops and we needed that money to do other things.

THE SECRETARY: I rather fear they still would not have come in - not sufficiently.

VICTORIA DAVIES: If you are raising fees and discounting workshops, it negates raising fees. You may as well do one or the other. For all the workshops, as much as I enjoyed them this morning, I think you would have got more people if one of them was at least centred on Case or Eclipse or pen or something and they were not all of the same kind of ilk.

SHERYLL HOLLEY: I did not mean reduce it to the amount we raised the fees to but reduce it a little bit so we are still gaining from the fees going up but there is still a bit of a discount and we are seeing a bit more as members.

GEORGINA FORD: Victoria, also this year there has been Eclipse training and Stenograph training so that had already been covered earlier on in the year in the summer. There would have been duplication.

THE PRESIDENT: There was no point having any more training, for Case especially - who would have done it really?

ANN LLOYD: And the training is always a lot more expensive than our workshops, at least £200 for training.

NICOLA DUTTON: I did not attend any of those trainings during the year so it would have been another opportunity to get CPD in an industry-relevant subject.

THE PRESIDENT: Point taken.

NATALIE BRACKEN: I think quite lot of money was spent on BIVR Awareness Week and I was wondering why it was decided to do a whole week and whether it might be better to do a weekend.

THE PRESIDENT: We did a weekend. The very first one was a week but it was just one event, but last year's was purely a four-day weekend. We did not do one this year.

NATALIE BRACKEN: I missed whenever it was. It was when it was my birthday so it would have been last year. I am just thinking £10,500 is quite a lot of money.

THE PRESIDENT: We have learned a lot of things from that.

NATALIE BRACKEN: I wanted to show a bit concern about that and what we are all getting back as members. There seem to be quite a lot of job offers coming through.

THE PRESIDENT: And that is where the website overhaul will work. While the Reporter Search works, it could be much better.

NATALIE BRACKEN: I know Mary handwrites the whole thing and cuts and pastes and it is a lot of work when the job offers come in and you put them on Facebook. That is normally where I see the job offers. Would it not be good to have it like AVSTTR where the person booking fills it in and then it goes out?

THE PRESIDENT: That is what the Reporter Search is. Mary will direct people to the website and say, "Please use the Reporter Search", so people do that, but they might not get a response and therefore they think it has not worked. Then they back to Mary and then it goes on to Facebook.

NATALIE BRACKEN: Can they email all in one go?

THE SECRETARY: Only in the regions.

THE PRESIDENT: If they want someone, say, up where Victoria is, they will press that region on the map and then it will go out to all the people in that region.

NATALIE BRACKEN: Is it not better for it to go out to absolutely everybody like you were trying to say earlier so it all gets out at the same time via email?

THE SECRETARY: The problem is that AVSTTR is a unique thing for STTRs only.

THE PRESIDENT: Registered STTRs. We are covering pen and machine so it cannot go out to everybody. If they are looking for a speech-to-text reporter, a pen writer does not want to be bothered, frankly, with reading it and get all excited, "This great job is coming up; oh, they want STT and I'm pen". Alternatively, if it is a pen writer wanted, do the STTs want to get the email?

NATALIE BRACKEN: Rather than do it by area, could you not do it by ---

THE SECRETARY: Apparently, it was going to be very difficult when we had it done originally, but we are looking at it again.

THE PRESIDENT: That is going to have a massive overhaul with the new one. The new one is going to cost a bit of money, but not £10,000 of course. It needs to be a lot better than it is.

REBEKAH LAMPLOUGH: A ball-park figure, how many job requests are coming through in an average six months?

THE SECRETARY: I cannot say how many go straight through to the geographic areas because I do not get copies of them. I used to but they no longer come through because the set-up at BIVR does not always work. Sometimes it does and I can get rubbish emails through but not the important ones. Those of you who are on Facebook can see the jobs that come through.

THE PRESIDENT: There is a good few a week.

REBEKAH LAMPLOUGH: Putting it out to everyone and saying a pen writer gets all excited and then realises it is an STTR job, I can see the software time and cost you would have to delineate things to specific writers, so just have a heading that says "For machine writers only", "For pen writers only", "For mechanical writers only", if we are doing this Russian stuff.

THE SECRETARY: That would still have to be written.

REBEKAH LAMPLOUGH: You would know instantly in the header whether to bother looking at it or not.

THE SECRETARY: That was what we wanted when we had the website done, and I was told it was going to be so work-intensive and we would have so many dropdown boxes people would not be looking at it. We have got to re-evaluate it and see how we work it because I agree that the AVSTTR one where it pings off to everybody is fine, but not everybody is going to be wanting that work.

NATALIE BRACKEN: We all get them. They are in all parts of the country and if you see it is not anything you can do, you delete it.

THE SECRETARY: It is not for somebody who is not capable of doing that work.

THE PRESIDENT: It is what goes behind this website to make it function like that. The guy we had was not capable basically. No disrespect to him.

NICOLE HARRISON: That is just one part of it. That is why it will go to everybody whatever category you are in, but we are BIVR, we are too many pockets. For people who are trying to find someone, they do not want to go through the dropdowns, they just want something quick. But if you go to AVSTTR that is that one thing where they can do that whereas over here, what we are saying is there are too many caveats to be able to do that. We know what we want but when you have someone coming in and they are a bit unsure, they are not going to know what to tick.

VICTORIA DAVIES: That is three options that Rebekah has given. That should be fairly simple.

REBEKAH LAMPLOUGH: I was thinking as well more about the geographical thing. If I was a client and I knew I needed a note-taker of some description, when I go on to BIVR's website on the Job Search, do I choose the area?

THE SECRETARY: Yes.

REBEKAH LAMPLOUGH: You could eliminate that. That is one choice they do not have to deal with. As Vic says, we all travel ---

THE PRESIDENT: There is a requirement to keep costs down by using a local reporter.

VICTORIA DAVIES: Then a job might come up in Yorkshire and I would not get it but I am only 40 minutes and £20 away.

THE PRESIDENT: I see. Like I said in my speech, let us know. That is the sort of information we need for the new website because it needs to work for all reporters.

NATALIE BRACKEN: I did not realise it was done on a geographic basis. That is the first I have heard of that.

THE PRESIDENT: It is there. It is a picture of Britain.

VICTORIA DAVIES: If we were an organisation of thousands and thousands of people you could send a job request out to Scotland and you would only be concerned with the 500,000 Scottish stenographers up there, but because there are not any, or maybe there are a couple, I think we need to eliminate the geography aspect.

NATALIE BRACKEN: Yes, I would prefer that.

THE SECRETARY: It was going to be so difficult. You have got to write separate databases for every little thing.

THE PRESIDENT: We can fix it but it will not be fixed until the New Year.

GEORGINA FORD: We have to be prepared that if we go down to the level of detail that really would be ideal, it is probably going to cost a lot more than we were anticipating. Obviously, we can look at it.

THE PRESIDENT: That is where this comes in.

REBEKAH LAMPOUGH: Are we not making this too complicated? If we already have a model we can use with AVSTTR, why do we not just use that and it goes out to everybody, you say? Just copy that so long as they do not mind.

THE PRESIDENT: We would have to ask them.

VICTORIA DAVIES: We will just change the geography for the three categories that Rebekah has put.

NATALIE BRACKEN: AVSTTR is a tick box thing: how many reporters do you want, one or two? Do you want it to go on to a big screen, yes or no? Some of the emails that we are getting that Mary has copied there is a lot of text there and I am having to read all that and then I will see India or something. If it said geographical location or something like that and then it says the Isle of Wight, I will think, "No I won't do that". These are my thoughts.

It is all about equality and everybody getting it at the same time. The great thing about AVSTTR is we all get it at the same time. If you do not want some of them you just ignore them, but sometimes that comes around again because the client has not booked someone. Then I think, "I am free on that day and I don't mind travelling a bit so I'll quote for it". It is about covering the jobs.

THE SECRETARY: As Rebekah says, if that is what the membership wants, they want a tick box and an email from the client that goes directly to every member at once, that can be done, but it was because of the separate ---

THE PRESIDENT: It is only members who have opted on to the Reporter Search. You have to opt in. It is not automatically going to go to every single member. You have to opt in and your details will be on the website.

REBEKAH LAMPLOUGH: If we only have 105 in total (if we eliminate the people who are retired or still training) and who are on the Reporters Search, we are going to have a fairly small number of people who are going to see that email.

THE PRESIDENT: You can see that now under Our Reporters, they are the people who have opted in.

REBEKAH LAMPLOUGH: It is not many.

THE SECRETARY: The client could email each individual reporter but they cannot be bothered.

REBEKAH LAMPLOUGH: I would rather use a job search if I did not have a clue about this industry. You just want a bum on a seat, someone to provide a service.

THE SECRETARY: Some of them, frankly, do not have a clue what they want.

NATALIE BRACKEN: Also on the AVSTTR request there is a bit at the bottom the client can write in. If they do not like all the tick boxes and do not know what they want, they can still put all the detail there as well.

THE PRESIDENT: If it is a deposition, realtime and it is a rough draft in Sheffield.

NICOLE HARRISON: Sometimes the client might not do that and you get a court reporter there and all of a sudden ---

THE PRESIDENT: You work that out before. You would not just turn up.

NICOLE HARRISON: Hopefully but instead of wasting your time, if they say they want somebody to take a note and you show up and they say, "No, we want live".

THE PRESIDENT: We would all have to get to the point where we say, "Do you need realtime?"

FRANCES DOBSON: If you compare it with the NRCPD website, you opt in to what types of work you want to do and where you want to travel, so you are only getting the area that you want and you are advertising what you will do.

NATALIE BRACKEN: I am not quite sure though what you mean.

FRANCES DOBSON: You will only get work which suits the way you advertise with the company. If you do not want to travel to Scotland, you will not get the Scottish work and if you do not do STTR, you will not get STTR requests. How about that?

NATALIE BRACKEN: But some of us do court reporting and STTR.

NICOLE HARRISON: That is what she is saying. It is a tick box on the NRCPD: do you want to work here? Do you work nights? Will you work in the medical field? It is that tick box that you write down and say what you are willing to do and what you are not. Do you want to do comedy? Do you want to do church? I do not know if it is that in detail.

FRANCES DOBSON: I do not do sports. Forget it.

NICOLE HARRISON: Mary made the point that often the client does not know what they are looking for, so maybe it should go out to everyone. They often do not know what they want, but they want it tomorrow.

FRANCES DOBSON: They will say this is a deposition or this is a tribunal or this is whatever, court reporting.

ALAN BELL: I think the point about the NRCPD is a good one because you are putting down what you can do. At the moment with the Reporters Search, if the client is looking through the Reporter's Search they have to read our bio, however wordy we have made it, to see what we will do and what we can do. If you have not put all the things you can do, they will not necessarily know. I think a tick-box system would be good because from the client end they do not have to read all of that guff. They can just find some way of them saying what they want against what we say we can do. There must be a way we can do it.

THE SECRETARY: There are not that many bios on there but there is a table and against the member's name is "realtime" and whatever. And the clients can pick you. Are we going to have a break?

THE PRESIDENT: There will be fresh refreshments.

THE SECRETARY: Would you excuse me?

THE PRESIDENT: While you do that, Mary, I am going to read two comments.

[MIRELLA FOX]: The Case CAT training workshop was brilliant, and well worth it, so thank you for organising that.

[SUSAN HUMPHREYS]: I agree with Mirella.

(PRESENTATION TO LEAH) (Applause)

[SUSAN HUMPHRIES]: Can I request something, please? Before we vote for the President could we have a short bio, or something like that from each of the candidates, perhaps what they want to do in the future?

FRANCES DOBSON: It would have been helpful in advance.

[LOUISE PEPPER]: I missed the beginning of the meeting. Is Leah stepping down?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not standing again so, yes, I am stepping down.

NATALIE BRACKEN: If they could have five minutes to prepare something. We do not expect you to do it on the hoof.

MIRIAM WEISINGER: We are all eligible to be elected but nobody is particularly putting themselves forward, are we? Some of us definitely do not want to be President, thank you very much.

NICOLA DUTTON: Say that then, so we know who to vote for.

MIRIAM WEISINGER: That will be my bio.

REBEKAH LAMPLOUGH: Just one thing; surely we should be having the opportunity to vote for people who want to do this job because then we know they are going to be passionate and carry on what Leah has been doing for the last couple of years, which has completely changed the face of BIVR. I would like to know who wants the job.

VICTORIA DAVIES: I second Rebekah.

THE PRESIDENT: Miriam, do you want to stand?

MIRIAM WEISINGER: No.

ANN LLOYD: No.

IAN ROBERTS: I am not bothered.

GEORGINA FORD: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Ian said he is not bothered but that means yes.

IAN ROBERTS: Either way.

NICOLE HARRISON: It would be nice to but I would like Council people to want to help, which we all have.

THE PRESIDENT: That is why we are a council.

VICTORIA DAVIES: Is that a "yes" then, Nicole?

NICOLE HARRISON: It is a yes.

ALAN BELL: Orla and I are not eligible because we were co-opted.

THE PRESIDENT: There are three, if you can hear that on Skype: Ian, Georgina and Nicole. Ann and Miriam do not particularly want to stand. You have both been President before.

MIRIAM WEISINGER: I have not.

THE PRESIDENT: I think you did but you stood down.

THE SECRETARY: Miriam was President-Elect.

[LOUISE PEPPER]: Do we vote now?

THE PRESIDENT: Not now, no, when we come back.

THE SECRETARY: If they look at the Notice, we have got the Treasurer's Report next.

After a short break

### **Treasurer's Report**

THE SECRETARY: The Report & Accounts were circulated previously. I have a few copies if people need them. I need to know if you have any questions on the Report & Accounts and then if you agree that they should be adopted. First of all, any questions on them?

NATALIE BRACKEN: Do we have money in the bank?

THE SECRETARY: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, we are not skint.

NATALIE BRACKEN: When I read them, it looked like we did not so I was a bit worried, but I am no accountant and I am rubbish with figures.

THE SECRETARY: The accounts are always, as our personal ones, a year in arrears. These are the accounts for the year 2017. That is what we spent last year.

THE PRESIDENT: That is why you thought of the BAW, perfectly understandably. Does anybody online have any questions for the Treasurer? That is a resounding no.

THE SECRETARY: Are the accounts approved? (Report & Accounts approved on a show of hands)

THE PRESIDENT: Can I just say for the record, I do not know if we said it before, that Elaine McCarthy is now on Skype.

Voting for Council Members was referred to in the Notice. We welcome Alan Bell and Orla Pearson on to Council.

### **Special Resolution**

We then have a Special Resolution. Is it necessary for me to read that out again?

THE SECRETARY: I read it out in the Notice.

REBEKAH LAMPOUGH: No, in my opinion.

THE SECRETARY: We are just changing "retirement" to literally mean retired whereby people are not still working.

FRANCES DOBSON: I was a bit shocked to see this. I had a look last night at the Equality Act and some of the protected characteristics relating to age and also disability. I wondered if we might be discriminating indirectly because I do not know what the justification is.

It seems to me that their status is changing and they are qualified members, so why are you taking something away from them? What is the justification for taking something away?

THE SECRETARY: Members have chosen not to renew their membership but opted to take retired membership at a much-reduced rate, not through age but purely because they did not want to pay the new subscription. They were not actually retiring.

ANN LLOYD: It is not age-related.

THE SECRETARY: It is nothing to do with age. I do not wish to name names.

ANN LLOYD: Can I give you a scenario? It has come to our attention that we have got retired members but these members are not actually retired; they are working.

NATALIE BRACKEN: I was going to ask if it meant that.

ANN LLOYD: That is what it is to prevent. If you are retired and no longer working then you can be a Retired Member.

MIRIAM WEISINGER: And pay the reduced fee.

THE PRESIDENT: I would go so far as to say you cannot stay a member of BIVR through the back door at a much-much-reduced rate by saying you want to be a Retired Member when you are actually still out there and you are working. It is getting in by the back door at a reduced rate. It's not fair on other members.

FRANCES DOBSON: I quite agree.

THE PRESIDENT: It is not age-related at all.

ALAN BELL: Any of us could retire at any age and not work again.

FRANCES DOBSON: I cannot work at the moment because I have got problems, but it does not mean that I want to retire in a traditional sense of not being a member with the same status as other members, because I sat the exam and I am still involved. I am still reading. I am still very active.

THE SECRETARY: That is your right.

FRANCES DOBSON: It is shutting me up really.

ANN LLOYD: Not if you pay your membership fee.

NATALIE BRACKEN: Can Retired Members still vote?

THE SECRETARY: They never have been able to, but it always used to be that they were retired; literally had retired. Some stayed Retired Members for, say, 10 years paying the retired membership, were involved in getting the newsletter, interested in hearing all about stuff, and eventually decided, "Enough is enough. I don't even want to pay the Retired Member's fee. I will now go back to sitting in my garden", or whatever.

FRANCES DOBSON: But when the Constitution was first written, I think Retired Members could still vote.

THE SECRETARY: No.

FRANCES DOBSON: I am getting confused.

THE SECRETARY: We do not take new people in as a Retired Member. It only is people who were members and have genuinely retired.

NATALIE BRACKEN: Otherwise, surely you are just a lapsed member?

FRANCES DOBSON: A lapsed member would be someone different from me, than somebody who is still involved with BIVR, maybe not in ---

THE PRESIDENT: A lapsed member would be somebody who has not renewed their subscription come 31 December or whatever the dates are now. That is a lapsed member and then they are no longer a member of BIVR, so I suppose they become a non-member.

All this is basically saying is that the term "Retired Member" is for those who are literally retired from the profession. "You are no longer receiving remuneration for verbatim reporting assignments". It is, like I said, trying to get in the back door with paying the tiny amount that it is for a retired member - although for a retired member, it is probably not tiny. But do you see what I mean?

THE SECRETARY: They do not get a practising certificate. They do not get the name card but they are still a "member (retired)".

THE PRESIDENT: Because they do not need those things because they are not out there practising.

THE SECRETARY: It was really to regularise things and to make it a little clearer.

FRANCES DOBSON: What you are doing is trying to stop these people coming in by the back door.

THE SECRETARY: Staying in by the back door.

ANN LLOYD: Because it is not fair to the other members.

[SUSAN HUMPHRIES]: Can Retired Members come back to being a full member if they pay the full fee?

THE SECRETARY: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is actually written in there. No, it is not written in there but yes.

THE SECRETARY: Supposing a member has retired because they are not getting any work, so they think, "I'll retire then", then after that they start getting work. The work suddenly comes in again. They can opt then to come back in. We cannot stop them working.

FRANCES DOBSON: Let me give you another example. Carpal tunnel is very common in shorthand writers and the operation does not always work. It did not work for me. On the other hand, it might work after a period of time so then they would be working again so they might be retired for a period but then come back again. What you are saying is while they are retired they cannot vote.

THE SECRETARY: They are no longer members.

ANN LLOYD: In any organisation, if you are not a member you cannot vote.

FRANCES DOBSON: They are a retired member.

THE PRESIDENT: As Mary said, since I have been on the Council I have never known it to be different.

THE SECRETARY: The original one we are changing had it in there: not eligible to serve on Council, not voting. We are not changing that. We are just trying to clarify what "retired membership" actually means.

THE PRESIDENT: And all we are really adding is "and no longer receiving remuneration for verbatim reporting assignments", to cover that person who is genuinely retired and who is out there gardening or holidaying - and wouldn't that be wonderful - but they are not actually working as a reporter and getting money for it. That is all.

FRANCES DOBSON: What I am saying is they might be retired because of a disability.

THE SECRETARY: We are not forcing them to retire.

FRANCES DOBSON: The disability is not forced on them either.

THE SECRETARY: We aren't, so I cannot see how we are discriminating against anybody.

FRANCES DOBSON: Their disability inhibits them from taking part in voting.

THE SECRETARY: We do have members who have told me that they are not working at the moment because they are not well enough and they have still paid their annual subscription.

FRANCES DOBSON: It just does not seem quite fair to me but that is me.

JACOB SMITH: I think what you are saying is how they would not be part of the membership while they have a disability so they are not allowed to vote for things and they would not be working anyway, but they would have to wait until the next membership is up to be able to be a full member. When they are able to start working again, they cannot just say, "Next month, I will be able to start working again". They have to wait until that period comes to where they have to renew?

THE SECRETARY: We are not putting any restriction on people like that. I have had members who I know have had personal problems and I have said in previous newsletters when the renewal goes out, "If you are in financial difficulties, let me know in confidence", and they have not been charged that year's subscription. We have not asked the membership may we do, but we just take it as humanitarians that they can have that.

NATALIE BRACKEN: I do not know whether this is what you are trying to say, Frances. Is it that BIVR needs to have some kind of concession like they have for student members because they are not working yet in our profession. I do not know whether this is right, but maybe, Frances, you are saying to have a disability, because obviously Retired Members, is this right, they do not pay anything?

THE PRESIDENT: They pay, but it is a lot less.

NATALIE BRACKEN: Maybe that is what Frances wants. If you can give a medical note or something saying that you have a disability that is preventing you from working, but with that particular thing that you could still vote. I don't know. Is that the status you are taking away?

FRANCES DOBSON: It feels like it is the status that you are taking away.

THE SECRETARY: I do not agree with you at all.

MIRIAM WEISINGER: It has always been the same. Ever since I joined BIVR, whenever it was, when it was the Institute a Retired Member could not vote. We are not taking anything away.

ANN LLOYD: We are not taking anything away.

MIRIAM WEISINGER: The same as if you are a student member you could not vote. It is trying to be fair to the working members who are earning

an income, sometimes not very great, who are paying the full membership fee and those who decide, "I am going to say I'm retired and not let BIVR know that I'm still earning exactly the same as I was last year. I don't bother to vote anyway, I don't bother to go to the AGM. I just want to get the job opportunities at a reduced rate. I want to hear everything that is going on in BIVR but I don't want to pay for it".

It is trying to iron that out so that if people are earning money for a verbatim reporting assignment, they pay the full membership. And if they are retired for whatever reason, whether because - let's face it, why are people still wanting to work in their 70s and later?

FRANCES DOBSON: They still want to be involved. They are very passionate about it.

MIRIAM WEISINGER: They still want to be involved and they still want to know about it but they are not earning an income so they pay the retired fee. And that is fine but if they are being paid for doing reporting assignments then they should pay the full fee.

FRANCES DOBSON: That is a different issue. Like you, I was a member of the Institute as well. I go back to 1990 and that was before the Equality Act. I am just saying I think that needs to be looked at because if you make concessions and you change the status of somebody, I think it is a type of indirect discrimination.

NATALIE BRACKEN: I do not think BIVR are changing anything. The way I see it is that we choose whether to be retired or not.

NICOLE HARRISON: Sorry, I spoke over, but yes, I agree.

THE PRESIDENT: Even if what you were saying, Frances, were to go forward that has to go in a Special Resolution to the membership.

[SUSAN HUMPHRIES]: Retired people can still pay the full amount if they wish to vote.

FRANCES DOBSON: Yes, they can and they would retain their status by paying the full amount, but is it really fair if their status has actually changed from somebody who is fee-earning to somebody who is not fee-earning?

THE SECRETARY: But their status has not changed from somebody who is fee earning to somebody who is no longer; they are still fee earning.

FRANCES DOBSON: That is where someone is getting in via the back door.

[SUSAN HUMPHRIES]: The Council have obviously identified people who are abusing the system - and is it fair on everyone else?

VICTORIA DAVIES: If we used a word other than "retired", it might be acceptable. It is like we are trying to stop old people being members and participating. I think that is what the word "retired" was. If you thought of "non-fee-receiving" ---

REBEKAH LAMPOUGH: Or "honorary member" maybe.

VICTORIA DAVIES: --- it is so much easier. If you go down the path of some people are getting fees and some are non-active, some people are getting fees and some are not, you could just say, "Work has dried up in my area. I would like to still retain the BIVR membership but at that reduced rate". If you go down that path it could come down to, "I was off on maternity leave so please can I have a refund for that year?" et cetera. It is not actually retired people. It is people who are non-active who are voluntarily non-fee-receiving.

GEORGINA FORD: Non-practising.

THE SECRETARY: Can I point out that if you do not like this Resolution, we vote against it and we just keep the paragraph as it already is "any Fellow or Member, upon retiring from the profession, may opt to become a Retired Member".

NATALIE BRACKEN: Could you not say "on leaving the profession"?

THE PRESIDENT: This is what has gone out. We cannot change it at all. We accept it or not and, if not, it just stays as it is.

THE SECRETARY: We did not say leaving; we said retiring.

NATALIE BRACKEN: I am saying should you maybe change it.

NICOLE HARRISON: But we would have to do that next time because it is not in the Resolution this time. You either have to vote yes that what is already there stays or no that stays; yes to the things that we are trying to change.

VICTORIA DAVIES: Can we take a vote then?. Maybe that will clear things up.

NICOLE HARRISON: I think that is probably best.

THE PRESIDENT: This has gone out to people who have probably sent in proxy votes so I guess it has got to be yes or no. Frances, I am wondering if you are prepared to put something in writing as a proposal if it does not get passed. It cannot happen today because every other member has to see it. It has to go out in a document.

NICOLE HARRISON: There is a time that you have to wait for everything.

VICTORIA DAVIES: We are not going to take this vote on this now?

[SUSAN HUMPHRIES]: Retiring does not always mean old age. Pay a full amount and vote - pay retired amount and don't.

REBEKAH LAMPOUGH: I think this is more about the language of the title than the status. It is not about paying a reduced fee. Retired is an old-fashioned expression in some ways. I think you just need to tweak the language and you might have a solution.

FRANCES DOBSON: I like non-active. I think you could have a concession for non-active.

NATALIE BRACKEN: Can we vote on this and maybe it will go through and then be amended another time. It is just the wording of that one thing.

THE PRESIDENT: Are we able to put something out? We do not have to wait a whole year for the next AGM. I think we voted last year to do voting by email.

VICTORIA DAVIES: We should take a vote and if anyone has an objection they can bring forward an amendment next time to vote on.

[SUSAN HUMPHRIES]: Yes, I agree with Natalie so that BIVR are protected from the abusers. Agree Victoria.

THE PRESIDENT: We have to do this with hands because we don't have cards.

FRANCES DOBSON: Can you just read it to me again?

REBEKAH LAMPOUGH: I would like a little clarity on what we are actually voting for.

THE SECRETARY: Shall I read it again?

MIRIAM WEISINGER: You only have to read what we are changing it to though.

THE SECRETARY: Yes, let me read what we are changing it to. "Any Fellow or Member, upon retiring from the profession, may opt to become a Retired Member. Such Retired Members shall pay a reduced subscription, as laid down by the Council of the BIVR from time to time. Such Retired Members shall not be eligible to serve on the Council of the Institute or any of its Committees, nor to vote at annual or extraordinary general meetings".

FRANCES DOBSON: So there are two strands; they are retiring and they are non-active.

VICTORIA DAVIES: No, it is retiring at the minute.

FRANCES DOBSON: Yes retired, but you said non-active as well.

THE SECRETARY: Not active, no, and no longer receiving remuneration. In other words, they have genuinely retired.

NICOLE HARRISON: They are not still making money out of the profession. That is basically what it is. That is the change.

FRANCES DOBSON: And retirement.

THE SECRETARY: The question is that you vote for it or against it. So who is for it?

[MIRELLA FOX]: What about the last sentence?

THE SECRETARY: "Such Retired Members shall not be eligible to serve on the Council of the Institute or any of its Committees, nor to vote at annual or extraordinary general meetings".

THE PRESIDENT: That has not changed. All really that has been added is the words, "... and no longer receiving remuneration for verbatim reporting assignments".

[MIRELLA FOX]: I don't think Mary read the last sentence.

THE PRESIDENT: Mirella, you are looking at the original Article of Association number 4? What Mary has read is the proposed amendment.

[MIRELLA FOX]: Oh sorry.

NICOLE HARRISON: Mirella, do you understand now or do you want us to read it?

[MIRELLA FOX]: Yes, I understand now. I was looking at the old one.

(Ballot held)

RICHARD WARD: 23 for; one against.

FRANCES DOBSON: It is the wording I am opposed to.

THE PRESIDENT: If people would like us to look at the terminology of the term "Retired Member" to maybe "non-practising".

VICTORIA DAVIES: If they want to they should put an amendment forward.

REBECCA LAMPLOUGH: I think that should be addressed in some way. I am not sure how you can do this, maybe change the wording next year. Is it something you can only do on an annual basis?

THE PRESIDENT: I would have to read them because I am almost certain last year we all agreed to change it to have electronic voting. It was either last year or the year before.

GEORGINA FORD: We could look at perhaps adding a paragraph to address non-practising or non-active people as opposed to retired people.

NATALIE BRACKEN: Or say that "retired" means "non-practising/non-active".

FRANCES DOBSON: It might not be an age thing. What has happened to me could happen to a 20-year-old.

THE PRESIDENT: That vote is carried.

### **Election of President for the present year 2018/2019**

THE PRESIDENT: We move on to elect a President for present year 2018-19. Miriam, Ian and Ann are not going to stand so the two up for President are Georgina Ford and Nicole Harrison. Do you each want to take a turn, have a minute to say something about yourself?

NICOLE HARRISON: Susan Humphries, I am charging you extra for your tripod!

GEORGINA FORD: Was that your pitch?

THE PRESIDENT: Before you do, in future if we do this, we could probably have people to do a little paragraph to go out with the Notice.

NATALIE BRACKEN: Should Georgina and Nicole do theirs in the absence of the other?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

GEORGINA FORD: I have been Vice President for a couple of years and it just seems a natural move up. Leah would move down and we are still working together so that would be nice. I am quite happy if Nicole gets it because we will still be working together. We do all work as a team. That is my pitch.

NICOLE HARRISON: I just want to carry on with BIVR's mission and vision and what we have been doing for the last few years since I have been on Council and move forward with technology and the media and promote the profession more because we are dwindling and I think we need to grow. I enjoy working on Council with everybody. I still think whoever wins we will just keep going and doing what the members want to do

THE SECRETARY: I have the results here from our independent tellers. We had postal votes which were sealed and I do not know who those were for but they have been counted and it is: 1 vote for Ann, 1 vote for Miriam, 13 votes for Nicole and 11 for Georgina, so we declare Nicole the President. That means Leah will be Vice President this year. (Applause)

### **Date and location of next Annual General Meeting**

THE PRESIDENT: What is next is the date of the next Annual General Meeting?

THE SECRETARY: We may just have to agree that later.

THE PRESIDENT: Do that in the normal way otherwise it takes time and we have fun things to do.

### **Any other business**

VICTORIA DAVIES: Can I just mention social media? I think in the past three years we have really come on and it is now quite a big presence on social media and I am wondering will that be maintained with Leah?

NICOLE HARRISON: Yes!

FRANCES DOBSON: You get to do even more work this year as Vice President.

THE PRESIDENT: I quite enjoy the social media, but with Twitter if I am busy, I do not get a chance. I have got Victoria, Nicola and Orla so if

there are things I need to tweet, they will let me know. Yes, I try, thank you.

VICTORIA DAVIES: You have got a good social media and it would be shame just because you are standing down if that all went by the bye.

NICOLE HARRISON: I will be learning more, I promise. It is true and you can say it. It is on my list.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any other business from anybody else? Anybody online, do you have any other business? (No response)

With that, it only remains for me to thank Mary for taking the transcript for today and putting up with us. (Applause) And, as always, to Neil Holley for coming along and doing a superb job for us with the tech stuff. (Applause)

With that, I am going to close the meeting. The meeting is now closed.

Time: 4.20 pm

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