**Shropshire Wildlife Trust**

**Minutes of Annual General Meeting**

**held on Saturday 20th October 2018**

**at Shropshire Wildlife Trust**

The Chairman, Kirsten Mould, welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced herself and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Colin Preston, Hon Treasurer, Alan Salt and PA to the CEO, Heather Bennett.

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Mervyn Evans, Paul Bell, Adrian Platt, Andy Whyle, Jon King, Stephen and Margaret Mitchell, Andrew McCall, Dan Wrench, Katie Foster, Kate Mayne.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

It was proposed by Brian Hogbin and seconded by Richard Carpenter, that the minutes of the last AGM held on 28 October 2017, at Harper Adams University be approved. Carried unanimously.

**3. Report of Council of Management 2017/18**

The Trust’s Chief Executive Officer, Colin Preston, presented the Report of the Council of Management to members, highlighting the following:

It had again been a very busy year for the Trust. Some of the numbers were:

* Over 60,000 tyres had been removed from the site of the former scrapyard at Fenns Whixall.
* The Trust worked actively with over 200 of the county’s farmers giving advice on a range of conservation and land management matters.
* 544 regular volunteers helped the Trust with a wide range of actions, without whom we would not achieve this level of activity.
* Routine work continued working with private landowners who cover over 600 sites none of which have environmental protection.

Shrewsbury’s Big Town Plan is in its final draft form and has received more comments on its core part under the heading Nurturing Nature than any other part. Pressure continues from development with 46,000 houses planned to be built in the county by 2036. The Trust is fortunate that it has a trustee who is a house developer who can assist with negotiations with house builders on our behalf.

The Trust has continued and grown its rivers work over the last year in partnership with Severn Trent Water, the Environment Agency and Shropshire Council.

Work with young people from 0 – 25 years has increased. A third of the schools in Shropshire have worked with the Trust in the last year.

11,000 people in the County are members (around 2.5% of the population) – more are needed!

The CEO thanked staff and volunteers for all their hard work over the year.

It was proposed by Malcolm Monie and seconded by Jacqui Seymour that the Report of the Council of Management 2017/18 be accepted. All in favour.

**4. Treasurer’s Report – Annual Accounts 2017/18**

The Treasurer, Alan Salt, presented the Annual Accounts to members who were advised that a detailed presentation of the accounts which comply with both Charity Commission and Companies Acts is available on the Trust’s website. A summary is contained in the pamphlet which was mailed to members with their AGM notice.

The Trust’s turnover for 2017/18 was up on the previous year from £1.786m to £2.164m.

Expenditure rose from £1.795m to £2,110m producing an overall surplus of £36k compared last year to a deficit of £9k(-). Reserves holdings have increased from £2.71m to £2.75m.

Following a question raised at last year’s AGM the finance team had looked at various options for ethical banking. None of these could offer a double signatory facility which the Trust requires. The finance team will continue to keep a watching brief on any further options as they become available.

Thanks were recorded to the Trust’s financial team and staff who had contributed over the last year.

No questions were raised and the report was approved on the proposal of Roger Owen, seconded by Rod Aspinwall. All in favour.

**5. Nominations for Election to Council**

At today’s AGM four members of Council retire by rotation:- John Brown, Veronica Cossons, Andy Whyle and Dan Wrench. Kirsten Mould and Dan Wrench have been nominated for re-election and have agreed to stand.

John Brown has had a long association with the Trust and had served the maximum of two four year terms on Council. Andy Whyle had also completed two four year terms. Both will continue to be closely associated with the Trust.

A vote of thanks was recorded to both of them for their longstanding support and commitment to Shropshire Wildlife Trust.

Proposed by Hazel Bows and Seconded by Richard Carpenter. All in favour.

Two additional Trustees have been nominated for election to Council:

James Drever and Alex Grant.

It was proposed by Edward Bevan and seconded by John Brown that the above named be elected to Council. All in favour.

**6. Appointment of Auditors**

Whittingham Riddell LLP were re-appointed as auditor for the financial year ending

31 March 2019.

Proposed by Pat Salt, Seconded by Jacqui Seymour. All in favour.

Hon Treasurer, Alan Salt and the Trust Finance team were thanked by the Chair.

**7. Any Other Business**

A proxy vote form received from Mr J White recorded votes in favour for all of the above

items.

The Chair closed the meeting at 10.20pm.

The AGM was followed by a Members’ Forum with presentations from the Trust’s branches and staff members.

Before the speakers commenced, retiring trustee, John Brown was presented with an engraved crystal plate by Chairman, Kirsten Mould to say thank you for his time on Council.

Local is where it matters

Members were welcomed back by Kirsten Mould, Chair. Branches, affiliated groups and members were thanked for all the information on challenges and positive case studies passed to SWT to inform Trustee decision making for the upcoming Development Plan following the 2017 AGM. The purpose of this morning was to celebrate the strength of acting locally; address challenges at a local level, and to start to formulate local action hand in hand with national influence.

Colin Preston CEO of SWT summarised highlights of 2018 so far, challenges and milestones.

Three branch representatives, Malcom Monie (Whitchurch branch), David Hardwick (Oswestry branch) and Hazel Bows (Ludlow branch) spoke on the very wide and various range of work and activities their branches do in their local areas including talks, walks, field studies and work parties.

Major initiatives making a difference

Jan Mckelvey, Shropshire Wildlife Trust’s conservation manager, spoke on the very complex task of the restoration of the former Furber’s scrapyard, a joint programme with Natural England, purchased two years ago, and how it has progressed and is now clear of the pollutants and debris which had accumulated over many years of dereliction.

Pete Lambert, River Projects Manager’s talk “making Shropshire’s rivers flourish for wildlife and people” gave an insight into the huge number of large and small projects the Trust is managing to improve water quality in Shropshire’s rivers and water courses.

Kirsten Mould closed the meeting by asking members to consider contacting their local MPs with the support of Diane Monether for SWT and the upcoming Branches Forum. She thanked the speakers and everyone for their contributions to the work of SWT.