

# **Minutes of UKHCA AGM, 19th April 2023 via video conferencing.**

## **In Attendance:**

Chair – Clare Forshaw

Treasurer – Alex Wilson

Directors – Stephen Wheatly, David Greenberg

Attendees – Stuart Marshall, Tom Parker, Leah Philpott, Rob Shephard, Andy Shanks, Paul Manning

## **1. Declaration of interests**

**Clare Forshaw**

The Chair reminded everyone regarding competition rules and that any business undertaken on behalf of UKHCA would not include any commercial interests to be progressed. No conflicts of interest were recorded.

## **2. Welcome and Introduction**

**Clare Forshaw**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and thanked members for taking the time out of their busy schedules to vote and support the UKHCA. Nomination or election of the Chair of the meeting  
The Chair of Directors referred to “Article 12.1 of the Articles of Association; ‘The Chair of Directors ... shall preside as Chairman at every general meeting ...’, therefore as the Chair of the Directors was present, she, Clare Forshaw, chaired the meeting. Confirmation of due notice and voting arrangements Article 11.1 of the Articles of Association requires that the notice of the meeting be with members 14 days before the date of the meeting. The notices were sent out on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023, which satisfied the terms of the Byelaws.” Article 12.3 defines a quorum for the UKHCA. Either two members who are present or by proxy or one tenth of the total membership at the time, whichever is greater. As we had more than 9 present then we can confirm that quorum was reached, and the meeting proceeded.

## **3. Apologies/proxy votes & Approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting**

**Clare Forshaw**

Apologies were noted for Karen McDonnell. Approval for the minutes were proposed by Clare Forshaw and seconded by David Greenberg. Minutes approved.

## **4. Annual Report**

**David Greenberg**

This year has been another busy year. Our annual report from 2022 outlines the achievements and activities. The particular focus of our activities has been with the Special Interest Groups, delivering our first Conference and developing strong relationships for collaborative work.

A number of our SIGs have had to be rationalised due to limited resources and access to expertise. Currently we have active engagement on the following groups and sub-topics within; At Work (Includes by design and music & entertainment) & Health Surveillance and Health Checks. Activity on the ‘At Leisure’ topic is being progressed by attendance and support given to the World Health Organisation ‘Make Listening Safe’ Campaign.

These SIGs rely on membership support, representation, and expertise to promote and drive change, sharing ideas, experience and producing solutions. We continuously look for new membership and involvement with these. We are holding a meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> May to further develop work within SIGs and priorities so please attend.

Stuart Marshall provided a short update on the at work group activity, Rob Shepherd updated on actions from the Music & entertainment group and Clare Forshaw feedback on SOM work in support of health surveillance & health checks.

The UKHCA successfully delivered their first conference on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November at the Pendulum Hotel in Manchester. With 83 delegates in total, 14 exhibitors and 15 excellent speakers the day went off with a great buzz and optimism for the future.

All attendees who responded to our survey rated the conference very good (62.5%) or good (33.5%) and 80% found the programme content 'excellent'.

We recognise we have a lot to learn as the afternoon sessions ran over which was unfortunate. Many said they would take the learning from the conference back to their organisation and we received great support for another event this year.

We continue to engage others where there is potential to collaborate;

- We have delivered a noise and hearing factsheet in collaboration with RoSPA
- Attended as partners with RVT Group on their Action on Site Health events
- Provided information /factsheet for Unite the union
- Exploring the potential to develop a video with Scottish Power
- Supported the annual Soundprint Find Your Quiet Place Challenge
- Partnered with the Sound of the year awards and sponsored the 'Most Unpleasant Sound' Category.
- Supported the WHO World Hearing Forum Safe Listening Campaign

We continue to see our membership numbers grow as well as the newsletter sign up.

No comments or questions were raised on the annual report.

## **5. Strategic plan for 2022-2023**

**David Greenberg**

Our strategic plan for 2023-2024 was included in the meeting documents and outlines some key opportunities for the coming year. These focus around 5 elements of continuing to support and encourage delivery through our SIGs, improving our profile via marketing, events and collaboration, growing the membership and creating opportunity on our leadership & governance.

We will look to continue to lead and support others in campaigns and in providing useful information on key or contentious issues via our SIGs and led by the expertise in our membership. Priorities emerging such as for independent training material, guidance and creating pressure for change in noise health surveillance, improving access to hearing checks generally and driving data collection to improve knowledge and action around relevant data sources.

We would like to develop the idea to set up our own data collection platform – to encourage self-report of indications of NIHL, tinnitus where workers are exposed to damaging levels of noise. To include in which sectors, extent of harm and age. This would need some robust criteria and some level of assurance of competency but something we feel could be achieved and add value to a landscape severely lacking in recent data and information!

Clare Forshaw introduced the proposal to run another conference this year in November – to include speakers and scientific posters. This was proposed by Clare and seconded by all attendees

Clare introduced the new collaborative opportunities for 2023 including;

- work with SOM and HSE to develop clearer guidance on health surveillance for noise
- collaboration and support to Ticket Swap as partners on their Sonic Safety Campaign
- collaboration with RNID on hearing checks for all
- continued support to Sound of the Year and Find Your Quiet Place

No further comments were raised.

Alex Wilson introduced our ambition for the membership; to continue to grow and crucially maintain commitment from our current members. We need to more clearly demonstrate the benefits of membership which includes for 2023;

- An opportunity to appear on a new Members directory to be compiled, launched and hosted on the UKHCA website
- Access to at least one annual face to face members meeting
- Reduced conference fees
- Access to participate and influence work within the SIGs
- Access to a quarterly newsletter

We plan to simplify our membership renewals so that all memberships will start on 1<sup>st</sup> April for 23/24 and end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. Anyone joining on or after 1<sup>st</sup> October will be offered half price till the end of the year. The system will also be set up for membership to automatically renew every year unless members ask not to be reinstated at renewal.

The Board proposed that;

- we limit access to the newsletter as a members benefit only
- we develop an online Members directory to support those searching for support in hearing conservation and open this up for all members to appear on

Although there was clear support for the members directory all of those in attendance felt that access to the newsletter should be kept as open as possible to spread the word and engage as many as possible. It was felt this may also increase interest in membership. There was an offer from Ear gym to provide discount to members so we may be able to seek other offers for co member organisations.

**THEREFORE DECISION IS NOT TO LIMIT ACCESS TO NEWSLETTER AS A MEMBERS ONLY BENEFIT. But the association can look at other member only benefits.**

Alex continued that the Association is currently led by 4 Directors who have been in post since the Association was formed. One Director stepped down in 2022. According to our Articles; the number of Directors shall not be subject to any maximum but shall not be less than three. We therefore have a positions available for others to join the Board of the UKHCA and would like to canvas interest from members for this position.

We will advertise and request interest for to be appointed onto the Board of Directors for 2023 please express interest.

There were no further questions on the strategic plan.

**6. Financial report and to approve the 2021-2022 accounts**

**Alex Wilson**

The financial state of the UKHCA is a stable one. We have used funds to gain support for delivering our SIGs, coordinating the newsletters and managing the administrative side of our activities. In order to move forwards we hope by securing current membership activities and attracting new members hopefully via the conference and other means we can continue to grow our presence and activities with the support of Fitwise. The overview of the accounts were circulated prior to the meeting. Are there any questions on the accounts? If further details are required then please contact any of the Trustees.

Accounts approved.

**7. Appointment of Auditors for year 2023-2024**

**Alex Wilson**

The Board of Trustees proposed Edwin Smith as the UKHCA auditors for 2023-2024. There were no comments or objections to this. Appointment of auditors was approved.

**8. Received questions from the members**

**Clare Forshaw**

None raised. Clare thanked attendees.

**9. Date of Next Meeting**

**Clare Forshaw**

This will be held in April 2024.

No further business was raised, and the meeting was called to a close, with thanks for members ongoing support.

**Close**