

Minutes of the 42nd Annual General Meeting of the Seabird Group held at the Fife Arms Hotel, Braemar on 17th November 2007, 15:00.

Mark Tasker was in the chair with Linda Wilson taking minutes in Alan Leitch's absence. Twenty-four members were present. Apologies were received from Alan Leitch and Jim Reid.

1. Minutes of the 41st Annual General Meeting

The minutes of the 41st AGM, were read by Mark Tasker. They were proposed for acceptance by David Sowter and seconded by Sarah Wanless.

2. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

3. 42nd Annual Report of the Seabird Group

The report was read by Mark Tasker. It was proposed for acceptance by Martin Heubeck and seconded by Mike Harris.

4. Accounts and Treasurers Report

The accounts and report were presented to the meeting by John Davies. Mike Harris commented on the amount of surplus funds and John Davies responded by saying that the Committee was looking into ways of reducing its surplus by awarding more grants and by investing in the journal.

5. Election of Officers

The following officers were due to retire:- Mark Tasker, Jim Reid and Jez Blackburn. The current committee members nominated and seconded Norman Ratcliffe to replace Mark Tasker as Chair, Martin Heubeck to replace Jim Reid as editor of AS, David Sowter to replace Jez Blackburn as Ordinary Member (but also acting as Membership Secretary). Mark Tasker thanked Jim Reid for his work on AS, and Jez Blackburn for his work on the Seabird Group Forum, which he has kindly agreed to continue running.

Mark Tasker reported that the Executive Committee is reviewing the Constitution and that there may be a proposal to modernise it at the next AGM, including the possibility that two of Ordinary Member posts may be replaced by the Membership Secretary and the Publishing Editor of AS.

6. Atlantic Seabirds

Mark Tasker reported on the progress made with the journal since the last AGM. The Dutch group had been approached with our proposal that publication of the journal would be brought back in house by the Seabird Group, but that we would like to continue to work with Dutch group on this joint publication. The Dutch had put this to their membership, who decided that they would prefer to return to a Dutch language publication, and therefore would like to discontinue the joint publication of Atlantic Seabirds. They also wished that the name 'Atlantic Seabirds' should discontinue, but the Executive Committee will approach the Dutch again to check that this is definitely the case.

The Executive Committee have agreed to fund around £1000 for a design revamp and £2500 a year for an annual publication of the new journal. The design revamp will include

having colour (including a full colour cover, with some colour inside e.g. photos) and possibly include adverts. The aim is to have a new issue published by the next AGM.

There was a discussion about the pros and cons of continuing with the name 'Atlantic Seabirds' (if the Dutch were happy with this) or returning to the old name of 'Seabird'. Sheila Russell commented that AS is currently 1½ years behind and that there would be an issue of making up this gap if we continued with the name of Atlantic Seabirds. However if the journal reverted to its old name of Seabird, the next volume number would be 21, a good 're-birth' number, and this would avoid the problem of making up the gap.

7. Next conference

Mark Tasker reported that Eric Steinen had offered to host the next Seabird Group conference in Brugge. There are currently two options for dates, October 2008 or Spring 2009. The Executive Committee had a preference for October 2008, but the host will make the final decision.

8. AOB

There was a request from Mark Grantham for ideas for a new scoping project on Reducing Impact of Oil Spills (RIOS) and he summarised five areas that could be put forward to the EU for funding research (Short-term behavioural monitoring of rehabilitated seabirds, Use of ring-recovery analysis and colour-ringing as a means of estimating survival rates, Linking survival/mortality to rehabilitation protocols and identification of causes of post-release mortality, Towards a better understanding of seabird movements in Europe, Establishment of a North Atlantic Beached Bird Survey network). Mark Tasker requested that Mark Grantham put something in the newsletter on this topic.

There was a brief discussion about the location of future AGMs. Mike Harris commented that there was a very good turn out at Braemar, which was a good reason for continuing to have AGMs at the Scottish Ringers conference. John Davis suggested the possibility of having an AGM at the next Seabird Group conference and it was agreed that the Executive Committee would continue to review where AGMs were held.

Martin Heubeck commented on the high standard of recent newsletters and encouraged people to contribute to both the newsletter and the journal.

Mark Tasker was thanked for his work as Chairman.

The meeting was adjourned at 15:40.