

Annual General Meeting



Wednesday 24 May 2023

Notice of Annual General Meeting

The 110th Annual General Meeting of the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS) will be held online by Zoom and in person at Edinburgh Zoo on Wednesday 24 May 2023 at 6:30pm. RZSS President Ian Marchant will preside.

Agenda

- A. Adoption of the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 18 May 2022
- B. Matters arising
- C. Presentation of the 110th Annual Review and Impact Report
- D. Chief Executive's report
- E. Presentation and adoption of the financial statements for the year ended Saturday 31 December 2022
- F. Election of members to the board of trustees
- G. Questions from members
- H. Resolution on re-appointment of auditors for 2023
- I. Resolution on membership rates
- J. Election result
- K. Award of Honorary Fellowships
- L. Vote of thanks
- M. Presentation: Connecting Communities with Nature by Beccy Angus, Head of Discovery and Learning



2022 AGM Minutes

Minutes of the 109th Annual General Meeting of the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS), held at Edinburgh Zoo and online by Zoom on Wednesday 18 May 2022 at 6pm.

Present

Ian Marchant (President)
Mary Bownes (Chair)
Sandy Batho
Karen Blackport
Kerry Falconer
David Field (Chief Executive)
John Fitzgerald
Alan Miller
Tom Mitchell
Richard Rutnagur
Roger Wheeler

And 85 members (25 in person and 60 online).

Apologies

Apologies were received from trustees Deborah Long, Karen MacEachern, Peter Budd and Katie Lennox and RZSS member Iain Valentine.

Business

A) Adoption of the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 19 May 2021

The minutes were passed by the membership.

B) Matters arising

IM said issuing membership cards had been raised at previous AGMs and would be addressed by DF.

C) Presentation of the 109th Annual Review

MB presented the annual review as a film which showed the broad range of work undertaken by RZSS teams and many achievements.

Thanking staff, patrons and members, MB said it was clear that RZSS was having a real impact, working in partnership with others and with a clear vision for the future.

RZSS had also responded very successfully to the challenges posed by the pandemic and the increasing costs of construction and energy.



D) Chief Executive's report

DF praised and thanked RZSS staff, who he said had responded fantastically to the pandemic and the re-opening of Edinburgh Zoo and Highland Wildlife Park.

RZSS conservation work was going from strength to strength, with work to save the pine hoverfly receiving an award. Engagement was also increasing, with the RZSS Zoodle platform highlighted as one of the top ten education websites globally.

DF said RZSS had returned to the top table of zoos and conservation and was working closely with WAZA, EAZA, IUCN specialist groups and education partners.

RZSS looks forward to developing a solar field at Edinburgh Zoo, which is important for our sustainability objectives. There have been many developments to improve accessibility, with new mobility vehicles and scooters, as well as better pathways. A new changing places facility would soon be installed at Edinburgh Zoo.

DF said the giant pandas at Edinburgh Zoo were due to return to China in October or November 2023.

DF apologised to any members who had not received their cards and said a huge amount of progress had been made, with thousands of cards having been issued.

DF also paid thanks to RZSS volunteers and trustees for their support.

E) Presentation and adoption of the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2021

TM presented the accounts and said performance had been better than planned, with membership increased by a third, strong visitor numbers and a high level of donations.

Costs had been managed well and £6.9 million of borrowings, including a £5 million loan in response to covid-19, compared to a cash balance of almost £12 million.

The financial statements were approved by the membership.

F) Questions from members

IM said questions had been pre-registered regarding membership cards and the departure of the giant pandas, both of which had been addressed by DF in the chief executive update.

Q1. Peter Roberts stated that the financial results were excellent and performance had been better than portrayed by the summation of the financial statements.

IM replied that the results were stellar but highlighted the cost of living, high energy prices and the need for charities to demonstrate their impact to donors as future challenges.

Q2. Martin Higginson asked if RZSS was clearly communicating the impact of Brexit on its work.

DF replied that RZSS is part of BIAZA and Ben Supple, director of engagement and business development, is on the organisation's public affairs working group which is considering the impact and a potential public response. RZSS is also communicating with EAZA and DEFRA. However, although progress was slow, this was not the right time for a public campaign.

Q3. Ken Darroch asked about the impact of avian flu.

DF said RZSS has a strong working relationship with veterinary authorities and sound protocols. Avian flu can be managed but is a concern.

Q4. Carrie Fox asked if the war in Ukraine was affecting the ingredients in animal diets and about mitigation.



Darren McGarry said there was an impact, mainly for pellet foods for hoofstock, and RZSS was working on how to mitigate this.

Q5. Lynn Kitchen asked how RZSS would cope with crowds wanting to see the pandas before they returned to China.

DF said lots of visitors are expected and our teams will be prepared.

Q6. Dee McIntosh asked if the BBC television series focusing on RZSS was having a positive impact on legacies.

DF replied that the series was having an impact on awareness, adoptions and memberships but it was too soon to attribute legacies.

Q7. Lee Ansett asked if reciprocal membership visits would be extended to other zoos and if this benefit was being promoted fully.

Ben Supple said RZSS would like to extend the benefit further and agreed that more promotion was possible.

G) Appointment of members to the board of trustees

IM thanked trustee Lynne Bell who was stepping down with immediate effect after three years on the board.

IM paid a particular thanks to Tom Mitchell, who would be stepping down as trustee and treasurer after 15 years.

Karen MacEachern, Kerry Falconer and Katie Lennox stood unopposed for re-election and were duly re-appointed to the board.

H) Appointment of auditors

TM spoke to the resolution to:

- Re-appoint Henderson Loggie as external auditors pending a procurement exercise
- Grant the authority to the board to appoint external auditors following a tender exercise
- Fix the remuneration of the auditors

The resolution was passed by the membership.

I) Resolution on membership rates

IM said that members had previously passed an enabling resolution to increase membership rates but this had not been enacted.

Approval was sought to increase membership subscriptions as shown below.

Category	Current price	Proposed price
Adult	£70	£75
Joint adult	£110	£118
Child	£35	£40

Approval was also sought to freeze life membership and student subscriptions and for membership prices for all categories to be reduced from time to time with board approval, for example memberships paid via direct debit.



The resolution was passed by the membership.

J) Vote of thanks

IM said he was tremendously encouraged by the work RZSS does and paid thanks to everyone involved.

K) Presentation: Launch of 2030 RZSS Strategy

DF launched the RZSS 2030 strategy *Now is the Time*, which included a film presentation.

The strategy established a new vision for RZSS: a world where nature is protected, valued and loved, underlined by three key pledges that by 2030 RZSS will:

- Reverse the decline of at least 50 species
- Create stronger connections with nature for more than a million people
- Enable more than 100 communities to better protect nature

