

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON SUNDAY 7 MAY 2017 AT DEPTFORD X, LONDON SE8.

1. The Chairman welcomed those present, who represented 9 member societies; had it not been for a last-minute commitment there would have been ten.

2. The minutes of the 2016 AGM held in Aarhus were agreed; no matters arising.

3. Chairman's Report

Eva Robards summarised the events of the past year. The presentation of the International Award to Sandi Toksvig before an audience of around 3000 at the Royal Festival Hall had considerably raised CoScan's profile. Although our search for sponsors had not yet borne fruit, the mission to expand contacts and influence continued with production of marketing material, development of our website and more use of social media now including Twitter. The Viking Society for Northern Research was a new society member, and Eva had now met representatives of all societies except one. She emphasised the importance of having a designated CoScan contact-person in each society, and said that all societies should have a presence on the web – this could be done through the CoScan site (please contact our webmaster Louise Sorensen). She had been busy with the Lucia festival in York Minster which had raised £500 for the CoScan travel fund in 2016. Among tasks for the future were the need to focus on defining the advantages brought by CoScan membership, and perhaps improving communication between chairmen of member societies through a new Facebook page. She paid tribute to the work of committee members, thanked Wendy and Chris Howell in particular for organising the Greenwich weekend of which this AGM formed part, and spoke of the recent sad death of Rita Pike.

4. Treasurer's Report

Manja Ronne circulated details for 2016. Under income, subscriptions were almost identical to 2015. Advertisements in the magazine brought in £300. The Aarhus Conference generated only a small surplus because of adverse exchange rate movement. Items of expenditure included marketing, and website maintenance, but the latter had now been brought in-house with Louise Sorensen taking over as webmaster; Manja urged all members and societies to check their details on the website and inform Louise of any changes. The HSBC account had been closed in early 2017 as a result of bank action and the balance was held at present in our business reserve account with NatWest. Total assets at end-2016 were £12724.75. The accounts were approved (proposed Mark Elliott, seconded Misce Mason).

5. Membership Report

Manja reported that in 2016 there were 27 individual and 24 joint members (75 members in total), and 27 societies, very similar figures to 2015. Few younger people joined societies although they were willing to take part in information groups and language classes, and it was hard to attract individuals to join CoScan even with the inducement of individual copies of the magazine and of information messages (societies were often bad at circulating information among their members). She was planning to reformat the membership form, asking societies to identify their preferred contact person, and encouraging additional donations from individuals. Suggestions included an approach to the Dong oil exploration company, now working in the Humber; and following Peter Wright's example of making a present to friends or relatives of a CoScan membership.

6. Magazine

Eva outlined the probable content of the issue now under preparation (2017/1), and

said that publication might be a little late this time. The magazine would remain in its current size and style, and as from the last issue was now in full colour.

7. Trust Fund

Tony Bray distributed copies of Brita Green's report. £1500 had been received in donations, and the Fund sub-committee were most grateful. This was also the figure for the total value of awards made to eleven applicants, leaving about £1000 in the kitty. More donations were of course required, and there was a downloadable form for the purpose on the website; donations should be sent to the Trust Fund treasurer and not, please, to the CoScan treasurer Manja Ronne (who also emphasised this). Ideas for organisations which could be asked for support would also be welcome. It was agreed at a subsequent committee meeting that CoScan would like last year make a donation of £150 to the Fund (the committee was confident that this decision represented the feeling of the AGM as a whole).

8. Website

Tony presented slides illustrating the website (www.coscan.org.uk) to the meeting. Louise Sorensen (webmaster) and he would welcome suggestions for new items and activities to include. The site had recently been hacked into and security had since been improved.

9. International Award

Tony presented slides of the presentation to Sandi Toksvig on 12 March during the Southbank Centre's year-long exploration of Nordic arts and culture *Nordic Matters*. We had taken the opportunity of Southbank's offer of a number of complimentary tickets to invite representatives of the five London embassies to the occasion, and held a small reception for them beforehand. The audience responded to our presentation by giving Sandi a standing ovation. For next year, it had been suggested that we should consider a Finnish candidate, as Finland was currently celebrating the centenary of its independence, and various names were suggested; the meeting agreed that the committee should take this forward. The Chairman expressed warm thanks to Tony Bray on behalf of CoScan for his highly successful work on the award.

10. Forthcoming meetings

Eva said that the suggestion of Turku in Finland for 2018 made at the last AGM posed travel problems, and a return to Helsinki might be better. The 2003 Conference there would be 15 years in the past, and the time spent in Helsinki then had been reduced by the day-trip to Tallinn. The coincidence with a possible International Award presentation was another argument for. A capital city meant the possibility of help from the British Embassy. The alternative of a trip on the *hurtigrute* along the Norwegian coast might prove too expensive. It was agreed to pursue the Finland option, with Orkney and Glasgow among the options for an AGM in 2019.

11. Elections

No response had been received from the two Oslo-based members of the committee, and the President gave his opinion that their re-election yet again would not be right; the committee had the power to co-opt members if this situation changed. Alexander Malmaeus of the Anglo-Swedish Society had responded positively to an enquiry about his interest in joining the committee. The following were therefore elected:

Chairman

Dr Eva Robards

Treasurer

Manja Ronne

Secretary

Lise Hodgson

Executive Committee

**Tony Bray, Wendy Howell, Alexander
Malmaeus, Kari Moss Wright, Norman Pike.**