

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE SCOUT  
ASSOCIATION HELD ON SATURDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2021 VIA ZOOM<sup>1</sup>**

**Present at Gilwell Park, London (as the agreed 'place of meeting')<sup>2</sup>**

Present:

Ann Limb	Chair of the Board of Trustees
Mike Ashley	Treasurer and Trustee
Matt Hyde	Chief Executive and Trustee
Tim Kidd	UK Chief Commissioner and Trustee
Ollie Wood	UK Youth Commissioner and Trustee

In attendance:

Adam Curtis	Governance Officer
Margaret Giles	Company Secretary
Carl Hankinson	UK Chief Commissioner Designate
Chloe Kembery	Director of Communications and Marketing
Ross Maloney	Deputy Chief Executive/Chief Operating Officer
Jennie Price	Chair Designate
Laura Rooke	Quality and Compliance Manger
Kris Murali	Director of Finance and Resources
Lisa McDonald	Governance Manager

Meeting attendees: 138 (including those attending in person and on Zoom)

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Tim Kidd, UK Chief Commissioner welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised Council members that there were a few legal and technical areas to address before the Review of the Year. As explained in the pre-meeting email, the AGM was by necessity being held digitally this year. Those who attended the AGM last year will remember that we asked Council members to vote to adopt the regulations that were put in place to govern a digital meeting such as this. The Council are empowered to adopt such regulations by Bye Law 17. Therefore, there is no requirement to vote again this year but he reminded Council that details of those regulations were shared prior to this meeting as part of the electronic mailing.

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with Bye-Law 7 of the Bye-Laws of the Charity, notice was given that an annual general meeting of the members (the "Council") of the Charity will be held at the following address: Gilwell Park, Chingford, London E4 7QW on Saturday 4 September 2021 for the purposes set out below. In accordance with the government's social distancing guidelines as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, Council members are requested to attend the meeting virtually by registering for virtual attendance prior to the meeting.

<sup>2</sup> Regulations for virtual attendance and voting at Council Meetings: TSA shall endeavour to ensure that every Council meeting has a primary physical location at which at least two Council members shall physically attend the meeting; however, in exceptional circumstances TSA may decide to facilitate a Council meeting using only electronic attendance.

Unfortunately The Scouts' Joint Presidents, the Duke of Kent and Duchess of Cambridge, could not be present. The Board of Trustees therefore proposed that the Chair of the Board, Ann Limb, should chair the AGM. Members were asked to indicate their support of the proposal by voting.

**Voting result:**

**98% approved the proposal**

**2% abstained**

Council members noted that there would be a Q and A session at 11:15am which should allow time for a break for everyone after the AGM. Some pre-submitted questions had been received, the UK Chief Commissioner asked for any further questions to be put into the chat function either during the break or during the session.

Tim Kidd introduced the Association's Chair, Dr Ann Limb.

Dr Limb thanked Tim and gave a very warm welcome to Council members. She explained that for a second year, we're holding our AGM in our 'digital marquee', but hoped everyone felt as welcome as they would if they were at Gilwell Park.

Dr Limb explained that a year on, and in the second year of the pandemic, we find ourselves in a much more positive place. After one of the most challenging years we've ever experienced, we're resurging strongly. Young people are coming back to us in their droves. Our #GoodForYou campaign has resulted in new adults joining our ranks. We're back to doing what we do best, supporting young people face to face and in the outdoors. That means it's more enjoyable and rewarding for young people and for our volunteers.

As a movement, we're in a much stronger position. After taking bold and decisive action last year our finances are stabilised, with solid foundations laid for future years. Most importantly, we've been able to support those groups in financial difficulty, making grants directly to all those groups who asked for one.

Dr Limb explained that of course, this is not to say we don't have challenges. The pandemic has had a huge impact on our movement, and the repercussions will be felt for many years to come. We took a huge hit in the first half of this year. Many young people simply couldn't join. Our membership was down by a quarter, barely any uniform was being sold and over 14,000 of our volunteers stepped back. We've managed to recover much of the ground we lost says everything about the determination and tenacity of our volunteers.

Council members noted a quote Dr Limb gave as follows "being challenged in life is inevitable; being defeated is optional." We're not defeated and Scouting is back on its feet. The pandemic has showed the great character of the movement.

The belief in the power of Scouts to change lives for the better has meant we've come back stronger and more quickly than we'd dared dream.

For that she gave her sincere thanks. Dr Limb noted that this was her last year as Chair, and it had been a truly inspiring one in many ways, but Council members will hear much more from the team how we faced the challenges we've met, but for now, invited everyone to remind themselves why Scouts is #GoodForYou. A video was played which focused on the #GoodForYou project.

### **3. Review of the Year**

The Chief Executive, Mr Hyde thanked Dr Limb and noted that the video was a brilliant reminder of why we do what we do. He noted that Council members had just seen the premiere of our #GoodForYou Film which will be released to the movement later this month.

Mr Hyde noted that we've heard from our volunteers, but let's not forget the devastating effect the pandemic has had on young people. In Young Minds' survey earlier this year, two thirds of young people said that it had a negative impact on their mental health. We also know that families and communities already struggling have fallen further behind. That vital sense of connection and belonging we give is still a lifeline for so many.

Mr Hyde continued by saying that no matter how hard the day's been, when he gets back from a Troop night with his Scouts, he always feels better for it and encouraged everyone to keep sharing this message that Scouts is #GoodForYou.

Mr Hyde explained that so much has happened this year. Since lockdown lifted, it felt like the world had been moving at a million miles an hour. Quite simply the volunteers have been amazing. Whether they had delivered Zoom meetings week after week, dropped off activity packs on doorsteps, or supported the vaccination programme, he thanked everyone. He thanked volunteers for the way they acted together to help others and communities get through this.

Council members noted that we're now getting double the normal number of joining and volunteering enquiries. Uniforms have been flying off the shelves in Lancashire and going out to all corners of the country.

And looking back, we've had so many genuinely uplifting moments, not least the appointment of HRH Duchess of Cambridge as our Joint President and first female president. Mr Hyde reminded Council members that in the midst of the pandemic she still made time to visit Scouts at 12<sup>th</sup> Northolt, bringing the world's media with her. Like his Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, she's an exceptional supporter of our work, and of early years in particular.

Mr Hyde highlighted that The Scouts had been shortlisted for five sector awards including Charity of the Year, which is further recognition of the outstanding work of our people. But we're all too aware that the pandemic put our finances under huge stress. By tightly managing costs and successfully being awarded £2.1m from the Government's Youth Covid Support Fund, we ended the year in a better position than originally feared. We realised the sale of Baden Powell House at an exceptionally good price that will safeguard the future of the movement. The Board agreed that this represented good value and that it was worth

reminding people that only 2% of the building's usage was by Scouts. While it's the end of one chapter, it's the start of another. The sale helps insulate us from future crises, and will allow us to invest in advancing the Skills for Life strategy and supporting frontline volunteers at this critical time in our movement's recovery.

Throughout, we will continue to manage our finances with extreme care. Our membership income is significantly down, and we will not have the government's furlough scheme to balance our costs. We must, therefore, continue to be prudent and prioritise our reach and helping those who can benefit most from what we do. Mr Hyde added that the Scouts has such a key role to play when it comes to levelling up society. It's only by giving opportunities to young people in struggling families that we can change the future.

The UK Chief Commissioner thanked Mr Hyde and added that young people just need a chance to shine and we see it happen every day, that's the real privilege of doing what we do.

The UK Chief Commissioner shared Mr Hyde's optimism for the movement and added his heartfelt thanks to the volunteers for their extraordinary commitment. He added that the way volunteers have worked together to help other people is inspiring and they have truly lived their Promise. He questioned how we could top our hike to the moon? By racing round the world he added and the £650,000 which was raised in solidarity for the groups impacted by the pandemic was truly phenomenal. The 500+ groups which were supported will remain open for generations to come.

The UK Chief Commissioner explained that now we're driving forward at such speed, it's easy to forget the successes of the year from the 230 million minutes of Zoom meetings we delivered, to the record breaking Great indoors Weekender in April last year.

The Chief Executive explained that this summer we've seen so many Scouts back outside again. If there's anything that's going to bring the feel good factor back, it's camping under the stars. Whilst we rediscover these simple pleasures, none of us will forget the sacrifices made, the friends and loved ones we've lost and the incredible efforts of our volunteers and staff who were there for our young people. Many volunteers were recognised in our awards this year, and deservedly so. He explained that he was proud to celebrate their achievements at our Thank Two campaign in February and the national Thank You Day back in July.

Mr Hyde noted that we were proud to be recognised in the CIPR Awards 2021, receiving the Mark of Excellence for Best Covid Response. We were up against both the NHS and the Government. It was in recognition of our collective efforts throughout the year from the Great Indoors, to Hike to the Moon, Race Round the World and our incredible partnership with Zoom, which kept Scouts going for so long. He gave his thanks to them and to Council members.

Mr Hyde explained that we had so much to be proud of this year. Not least the astonishing work that has gone into the development of Squirrels. In the week ahead, we will launch our

new programme for 4-5 year olds. He explained that we were now going to look at our progress across each of our four strategic goals, starting with Growth.

## **Growth**

The UK Chief Commissioner noted that we're all too aware of the challenges we've faced this year. After increasing our membership by almost 200,000 over the last 14 years, we saw a sharp fall, particularly in the number of young people. In total, we were down by some 117,000 youth members, or 24% on last year, including a 35% drop in Beavers and 22% drop in Cubs.

He explained that these numbers are serious, but understandable in the context of a year spent in lockdown. While some new members were invested online, many groups were simply not in a position to welcome new ones. We know that record numbers are being invested, and no doubt, if we took a snapshot today, the picture would look very different.

In terms of volunteers we're down by 10% - better than expected, but still cause for concern, with 14,000 fewer volunteers, including 8,000 at section level. Again, we know that our #GoodForYou campaign is attracting new adults to the movement. We're already up by 900 volunteers (taking into account those who've left) since May. But we know that this is putting pressure on teams locally to get these new volunteers up and running. Let's also take heart in the fact that we now have more District Youth and Deputy Youth Commissioners, which are positive signs for the future. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, we've also seen an increase in the number of youth sections across the board.

## **Inclusivity**

The UK Commissioner for People added that inclusion remains at the heart of our mission. The pandemic has brought inequalities into sharp relief. And, as we've said before, while we may all be weathering the same storm, we are not in the same boat.

That's why, we focussed our support on those most areas most impacted by COVID-19, helping bring skills for life to those who could benefit the most, including members and families in underprivileged communities.

Mr Cheema paid tribute to everyone who took part in our Race Round the World, and thanked the DCMS and Pears Foundation who contributed to our Recovery Fund. It meant that over 500 groups in communities hardest hit could stay open into the future, continuing to support young people. You've also heard about our early years pilots in our 30% most deprived areas, soon to be Squirrel Dreys, which are also serving these communities.

On a different note, we're proud to have restarted work developing Scouts in Muslim communities working closely with the Muslim Scout Fellowship (MSF). They've been shining lights through the pandemic supporting groups and securing new funding.

By necessity, we have had to move our inclusion support online, but have seen excellent take up for our events and training. We've supported members on race equity, autism,

mental health, dyslexia and dyspraxia, providing expert advice, programme ideas and a range of perspectives from lived experience.

We were also proud to support Black History Month, LGBT History Month and Pride. Work continues of course to embed inclusion in everything we do. We've undertaken the Race Equity Review and are now discussing how we act on its recommendations. We continue our commitment to be an actively anti-racist movement and will keep providing programme support and resources to support our volunteers with this. We will never pretend that this is easy work, and we are working with partners to get this right.

## **Youth Shaped**

The UK Youth Commissioner, Ollie Wood, explained that like so much of our planned work, our Youth Shaped projects have slowed this year, so we could focus on recovery. However he reminded Council member that after we consulted with over 1000 young people in 2019, we agreed that YouShape would move from being a campaign to a core part of the programme. Our ambition is for young people to shape their programme throughout the year, and not just at one particular moment.

The new You Shaped Award is close to launch, reflecting this new approach, and will contain the three key elements; 'Plan', 'Lead' and 'Represent'. The activities are geared towards giving young people and volunteers the skills they need to shape their experience.

As well as shaping the programme, we've also increased the amount of support we provide to our young people in leadership positions, such as our 564 inspiring local Youth Commissioners. Despite the challenges, young people have proven themselves as keen as ever to shape their experience in Scouting. We've seen that in the way they led some of our most successful social action projects this year and by how our young leaders have stepped up to deliver Scouting online. We need to commit to keep providing these opportunities, because listening to young people it means better, more relevant projects, leading to greater engagement and impact.

## **Community Impact**

The UK Chief Commissioner noted that our young people have led the way brilliantly. He explained that the past year has shown the difference Scouts and volunteers have made in their local communities, whether by supporting the vaccine programme or taking part in our Million Hands campaign – which continues to improve lives in local communities.

The Deputy UK Chief Commissioner, Graeme Hamilton added that he couldn't be prouder of the way Scouts rose to the challenge of supporting communities during the pandemic. He gave an example of Scouts contributing more than 11,000 acts of kindness with Care for Care Homes. Meanwhile 4,000 Scouts became Wellbeing Champions at a time when this issue really was at the forefront of our minds. Our #ThreeForThree campaign received an astonishing 11 million impressions, and spread far beyond the movement, showing the reach and influence we have as Scouts.

The team has worked brilliantly together to continue to provide opportunities for social action during the pandemic. Despite the setbacks, we launched over new 135 activities and 60% of the movement did their social action through A Million Hands. As a measure of this success, sales of Community Impact Staged Activity Badge went up by a quarter – phenomenal given the backdrop and proof if it was ever needed how a crisis brings out the best in us.

Now we're returning en masse to face to face Scouts, we'll be creating more digital and face to face opportunities to engage with A Million Hands. We're particularly excited by #PromiseToThePlanet which is our response to the climate crisis. It's worldwide too, as we're working in partnership with the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) and WWF. We're encouraging every Scout to make their promise to protect our planet in the run up to the COP26 in November. At the event itself, in Glasgow, Bear will lead a delegation of Scouts to make our voices heard in this issue to world leaders. He urged Council members to take part, he added that it really is inspiring stuff, with some simple, practical actions.

Council members noted that social action will be a key element of the Squirrel programme, with the Local Heroes badge recognising young people's contribution. By beginning social action at such a young age, our aspiration is to make social action and helping others a habit for life. Thanks was given to the 10 young people on the Community Impact Group who've delivered such brilliant results this year.

A video was shared of two of our young people Sarijane and Arthur who represented Scouts on Thank You Day on 4 July at No.10 Downing Street.

The UK Chief Commissioner explained that it is customary to talk to Council members about safety. Keeping people safe remains the most important part of what we do. Our Safety Policy and Yellow Card Code of Practice are still the bedrock of our approach and it's all of our responsibility to follow this guidance.

He noted that he was very proud of the work of the Safety Committee who give us such valuable oversight in this areas, and thanked Jane Simpson, the Chair of the Safety Committee, who steps down at this AGM and welcomed Sharon Lee who takes over, bringing excellent experience from her career working on large scale engineering projects.

Improvements this year include a review of the mandatory training in safeguarding and safety. We've moved this training entirely online to ensure consistency and changed our validation so it requires a 100% pass rate. We've also established a formal learning review panel and moved to mandatory recording of completed risk assessments.

Thanks was given to the safeguarding team who have continued to deliver outstanding service, against the very difficult backdrop of the pandemic.

The Chief Executive noted that we know young people are under more pressure than ever before. Again, in the Young Minds survey, 87% said the pandemic made them feel lonelier and more isolated. That makes what we do, connecting people and communities, so especially important right now.

Focus was given to some of the headline figures in our Scouts Experience survey. Compared with young people not involved in the movement, Scouts are 18% more likely to be better problem solvers, 12% higher for leadership and 6% more likely to be team players, 5% more likely to give time to their communities, and 10% more likely to get on with people of different faiths and cultures.

Mr Hyde noted that Council members were next going to receive an update on progress across our three pillars of work.

### **Programme**

The UK Youth Commissioner added that now with or without the pandemic, our programme remains key to delivering great Scouting. That's why we're so pleased that so many volunteers are using the online activity finder, with over 40,000 resources accessed each month. Our staff and volunteer teams have been in overdrive, delivering and adapting programmes to respond to changing restrictions and the needs of young people.

We were incredibly proud of the contribution we made with The Great Indoors last year, supporting over half a million families with over 200 activities to do at home.

In addition, over 120,000 young people from 44 countries took part in The Great Indoors Weekender, making it an even bigger camp than the one at Hyland Park to celebrate our centenary back in 2007.

Perhaps most importantly, thanks to our partnership with Zoom, we kept Scouts going online when we couldn't meet face to face with over 230 million minutes of Zoom meetings. That's an awful lot of muting and hand-raising, but what a lot of joy it brought to those dreary days of lockdown. He noted that he had personally loved delivering activities online for his Scouts over the last year.

We were also proud to deliver resources and events as part of Black History Month, as well as supporting Remembrance Day with resources for groups, even when we weren't able to mark the day in the usual way. And you've already heard about the astonishing contribution made by Scouts in RaceRoundTheWorld, which raised over £650,000 after costs to support our groups.

The team was also there to support the safe return to face to face meetings, and he particularly thanked Graeme Hamilton and Jamie Scudamore for their outstanding work supporting us with this. By the start of summer, over 85% of groups had returned to face to face Scouting.



No less impressive has been the contribution made by our partners: from Nominet helping young people spot fake news and HSBC supporting money skills, through to Network Rail working with us on safety and mental wellbeing. Partnerships like Dungeons and Dragons have proved a runaway success, all helping us to deliver better programmes locally. We'll now be taking careful stock of the lessons learnt this year, especially about hybrid programme delivery – combining the best of digital and face to face. We'll also start our review of our offer for 14-24 year olds, which we know needs refreshing.

## **People**

The Deputy UK Commissioner, Kester Sharpe, noted that now we're renewing our commitment to helping more, well-trained, better supported adult volunteers. Key to that, as ever, is making volunteering as easy and rewarding as possible. To help, all our compliance learning is now online, with the exception of First Response, and all our tools can be used digitally, saving people time.

We've seen a massive surge of interest in volunteering across our communities this year – and we need to harness that in Scouts to bring new people into the movement.

A major step forward has been the funding from the Pears Foundation for a joint project with Girlguiding to transform the volunteer joining experience. This is about supporting people better during those all-important early stages of the volunteer journey. We want to make this more accessible and less intimidating, which means improving our website and making language friendlier and more accessible.

We're also looking at how we can improve the experience by simplifying the steps you have to take, and making volunteering easier by making it task focussed. This work continues and it's constantly evolving, and we're now seeing improvement on the ground.

We're now testing a new five-step approach to section leader training. We're also looking at new systems to support digital learning and managing membership, so more good things ahead.

Speaking of which, we're going to hear now from CJ Ledger, UK Commissioner for Perception.

## **Perception**

The UK Commissioner for Perception, CJ Ledger, advised the Council that we continue to promote the positive perception of Scouts. It's about increasing trust, visibility and demonstrating our relevance in society. In turn this makes it easier for us to make the ask locally, to recruit more volunteers and attract youth members.

The UK Commissioner for Perception said that she's delighted with the progress we're making with our high profile campaigns, and the recognition they're receiving with awards and shortlistings.

In particular, The Great Indoors proved that Scouts continues to play a vital role in supporting our nation's families and young people. The 2,000 pieces of positive media coverage generated made sure that our skills for life message was seen and heard far and wide. Believe it or not, but every UK adult had the chance to see at least 10 pieces of coverage each. Our Race Round the World proved another great hook with the media, and this support helped us raise the phenomenal amount we did.

Let's not forget the key role our Chief Scout and Scout Ambassadors played in these campaigns. Eight of the ambassadors acted as team captains for Race Round the World, while also dropping into Zoom meetings, delivered videos and Facebook lives seen by over 250,000 people. Their interviews, articles and support for both our ThankTwo campaign and Thank You Day added a little bit of magic when it was really needed. They've been outstanding.

Just as successful was the announcement of HRH the Duchess of Cambridge as our Joint President – and first female president. This made headlines round the world, including ten front pages of national papers in this country alone. We cannot underestimate the positive impact of her support – particularly around volunteering, wellbeing and early years. When the Duchess speaks, the world listens.

Our films Made Me and Partnership with the DofE also won industry accolades and continue to underline the high quality of our communications.

Perhaps the two biggest pieces of work this year have been early years and #GoodForYou. The team has done a brilliant job, working closely with volunteer and staff colleagues developing the name, brand and uniform for Squirrels, and we can't wait for you to see these. She expressed her thanks to the 1,300 adults and young people who helped us test the brand to make sure it would help us achieve everything we want it to.

We're equally proud of the #GoodForYou campaign, which is helping us rebuild our volunteer team. By focussing on the benefits of volunteering to adults too, we're showing how supporting Scouts is win-win – it's good for your wellbeing, your CV, your family and community too.

Since our launch at the end of May, we've seen record numbers of enquiries and we're committed to supporting this next year too.

The new Squirrels uniform and brand was shared with members of the Council, ahead of its launch on the 9 December.

It was explained that the early year's pilots have run for two years and over 200 Dreys have opened this month, well over 40% of which will be opening in deprived areas.

Mr Hyde explained that it was exciting to see it all come to life, and gave gratitude to friends in Northern Ireland who pioneered this early years work over many years. We warmly welcome those groups in Northern Ireland to the UK Scouts family. He noted that it is a truly historic moment for our movement.

The UK Chief Commissioner advised that this is one of those projects where everyone was at the top of their game: our programme, communications and digital teams were all superb. Squirrels also caught the imagination of our funders, who believed in us and our vision to extend Scouts to early years children. Thanks was given to them.

It was noted that Squirrels isn't just about growth. It's about making a difference when and where it matters most. That's why we've prioritised delivery in our unrepresented areas and those communities most affected by the pandemic. Places where families are falling behind. It's about giving these children the opportunities and experiences they need to get the best possible start in life. This is the start of a new journey for us all. We know it will change lives and bring new volunteers too. It's the future of our movement.

A Squirrels video was share with the Council.

Mr Hyde gave thanks to the team, especially Andrew Bollington who's always believed in this work, as well as staff members Liam Burns and Alan Hands. It's been an incredible journey. He explained that it had been tough at times, but hugely inspiring. Council members noted that we're ready to open another 500 Dreys next year, and in ten years we hope to have 130,000 4-5 year olds in the movement. We're not just going to be a bigger movement, we're going to be helping young people to develop skills at an age and in communities where the difference will be genuinely life-changing. This is a core part of making Scouts even more inclusive, delivering skills for life when and where it matters most.

#### **4. Apologies**

Dr Limb thanked all attendees and extended an especially warm welcome to one of our Vice Presidents in attendance, Wayne Bulpitt.

Dr Limb reminded Council members that they still needed to participate in the meeting by voting at various points. When an item requiring a vote is presented, members will see a voting icon on their screen. It was noted that a very small number of participants who are election candidates and staff rather than Council members were in attendance. They are aware they cannot vote.

Voting data will be available and will be verified and then shared in the minutes of the meeting which will be available in due course.

Dr Limb noted that apologies had been received from 9 Council members.

#### **5. Minutes of the AGM held on 5 September 2020**

Dr Limb advised Council members that they had received by email the Minutes of last year's AGM that was held digitally on 5 September 2020. Council members were invited to vote to approve the Minutes.

#### **Voting result:**

**97% approved**

**3% abstained**

Dr Limb confirmed that the minutes had been approved.

## **6. Annual Report and Accounts**

Dr Limb reported that in accordance with the Bye Laws, the Annual Report and Accounts had been formally approved and adopted by the Trustees before presentation to the Council. The Report was not required to be formally adopted by the Council. However, the Report must be presented to the Council and members continued to be entitled to ask questions on its content.

Mr Ashley explained that he wanted to talk about the three main components of any organisation's finances – the balance sheet position, and specifically reserves, income and expenditure.

In respect of the first of those our balance sheet and reported reserves position was completely transformed when it was recognised that B-P House has been used for some years for investment purposes, rather than to deliver our charitable objectives. As such and as required by accounting standards we restated the accounts to include B-P House at valuation rather than historical cost.

Mr Ashley explained that nearly £35 million was added to our overall reserves as at 31st March 2020 and even more significantly this took the balance on our general fund from just £6 million to over £42 million before deducting the pension reserve. This valuation reflected a reasonable albeit conservative view of value at that time, which was right at the start of the pandemic when life was very uncertain. Nearly a year ago the Trustees decided it would be appropriate to offer B-P House for sale so as to secure the cash resources necessary not just to carry us through the pandemic, but as importantly to allow us to develop a solid base for future growth. The market for such properties proved to be better than we might have hoped for and we agreed heads of terms earlier this year to sell B-P House for £46 million – the value at which it is included in the balance sheet at 31st March this year – adding a further £11 million to our general fund.

Mr Ashley noted that at that date our total reserves stood at £85 million, with £52 million in general funds (net of the pension reserve), £25 million in designated funds (largely representing the net book value of our tangible fixed assets including heritage assets), £5 million in restricted and endowment funds and £2 million in our trading subsidiaries – mainly Scouts Insurance Guernsey Limited (or SIGL). SIGL, which is TSA's own captive and not to be confused with Unity, is in the process of being liquidated following which these reserves will also effectively transfer to the general fund.

From a reported reserves perspective therefore our position is extremely healthy and following the completion of the sale of B-P House in mid-August that is also now reflected in our cash position.

At the same time the need for a significantly higher level of reserves has been demonstrated by the pandemic. Whilst there have been moves over the last few years to diversify income streams (particularly to reduce the dependency on membership subscriptions) the pandemic demonstrated that nearly all the income we receive is, at its heart, inevitably dependent on the fortunes of the wider movement.

The Trustees have therefore agreed a revised reserves policy and determined that the appropriate target as of now is one year's worth of expenditure or about £20 million. This is a considerable increase on the previous policy of 3-6 months and it is not meant to imply that we would expect to suddenly have no income in any one year. Rather it recognises that in the event of curtailment of Scouting for a prolonged period for whatever reason, ancillary income will be badly affected, membership numbers are likely to decline and take time to rebuild and at the same time essential services will need to be maintained. It also recognises that we no longer have any undervalued surplus assets which, reported or not, would effectively serve to provide a level of "comfort" in the past.

As noted in the Annual Report whilst the current level of free reserves are well in excess of this target there are a number of factors that will significantly reduce them over the next few years – including the ongoing impact of the pandemic on membership numbers and hence subscription income and other activities. We are budgeting a loss for this year, the amount of which is still subject to the uncertainty created by the pandemic, but is not currently expected to be less than £5 million.

### **Income split**

- Turning to income (which for simplicity omits the income from the World Jamboree in the 2019/20 year), this clearly shows the impacts of the pandemic. We were somewhat fortunate in its timing in that:
- the impact on membership subscriptions is being felt this year not last, a situation we were therefore able to anticipate and partly compensate for. This has resulted in a decline from £12.2 million to £11.2 million for the current year, excluding the amount ring-fenced for supporting local groups. This represents a 24% reduction in membership partially offset by the 19% increase in the subscription level (after the discount for early payment); and
- the most significant impact on our charitable and trading activities was hopefully last year (a decline from £21 million to less than £6 million) and although we have terminated the conference activities, Scout Stores is now recovering as activities have restarted. Scout Adventures was closed throughout the year to 31st March 2021, and although now also reopening we have lost most of the normal summer trade because of the continuing restrictions and uncertainty.

Mr Ashley explained that were also thankful for the level of government support that was received last year – both through furlough and the specific grant to offset costs incurred during lockdown which we were successful in obtaining from the Youth Fund at the end of March – together these amounted to nearly £4 million. In thinking about our reserves policy

we are very conscious that it would be very unwise to rely on this level of support in future crises.

Mr Ashley gave thanks to all those who contributed to our fundraising last year – in particular our thanks to the Pears Foundation who contributed over £0.5 million match funded by DCMS and all those who participated in Race Round the World which combined helped raise about £1.9 million to aid groups in financial difficulties. Our voluntary income even excluding the Youth Fund and furlough therefore rose from around £2.6m to over £4m.

### **Expenditure split**

Excluding the impact of the World Jamboree in 2019/20, this declined by £11.4 million from nearly £38m to about £26.5 million.

The largest single element of this decline was he added not unsurprisingly in the trading areas where expenditure declined by £4.5 million, partly as a result of reduced staff numbers (offset by redundancy costs), but more significantly the costs of goods sold by Scouts Stores. There were also reductions in expenditure incurred on Scout Adventures which as noted remained closed throughout last year.

Selective redundancies were made in other headquarters staff and although we are now hiring again these are new positions not simply rehiring into old posts. We also maintained tight control generally over support costs which declined by about £1 million.

### **Direct costs of charitable activities split**

Mr Ashley noted that the impact on the direct costs of our charitable activities across our four pillars - Youth Programme and Activities, Development of Scouting, Adult Support and Training and Support and Services to the Movement – is shown on this slide. Excluding the World Jamboree expenditure in 2019/20 the overall direct costs declined from about £19.4 million to £12.6 million.

Mr Ashley explained that the main impact of this decline was reflected in the numbers for the Youth Programme, Development of Scouting and Adult Support and Training which were all impacted by the reduction in activity. Services to members were largely maintained at pre-existing levels and expenditure only declined by about £300,000 to £6.9 million of which the key component was a reduction in the costs of meeting claims.

Our fundraising enabled us to double our grant funding to the movement to £1.6 million.

In concluding Mr Ashley explained that he would like to look to the future and there are 4 comments he made as follows:

- Given the decisive actions we took last year, we start with a strong position both in terms of reserves and cash and we intend to maintain that level of resilience –

investing the reserves in a diversified portfolio designed to maintain its value over the long term as well as generate income to assist in our development programmes.

- We will hold the core membership subscription at its current level of £35 (£34.50 after the 0.50 discount) for next year and use the reserves to absorb the anticipated operating loss whilst membership numbers recover and activities return to more normal levels. Given the success of our fundraising last year we also don't see any need to repeat the request for additional funds to be contributed as part of the membership subscription to assist groups in financial need.
- We will look to invest funds in our commercial operations where we can see a good return as well as provide benefit to the movement more generally, particularly since we will no longer have income from conference facilities and other uses of B-P House. We will also invest in Scout Adventure Centres to bring them up to and maintain them at an appropriate standard for the future.
- We will be reviewing the ongoing operating model of TSA and the services it provides to the movement to ensure that they deliver value for money. We recognise that this may entail rethinking how some services are delivered (through increased use of digital technology for example) as well as exactly what those services are.

Mr Ashley commended to Council the 2020/21 Annual Report and Accounts.

No questions were raised.

## **7. Elected Members of the Council**

On the proposal of David Branagh seconded by Rhiannon Wells, both Members of the Board of Trustees, the Council voted in favour of the election of the following Elected Members of the Council for a period of three years 2021-2024.

### **Voting result:**

**98% yes**

**2% abstained**

2021	President, Northern Ireland Scout Council	Currently Philip Scott
2021	Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church	Currently Reverend Mark Strange
2021	President of the Methodist Conference	Currently The Revd Richard Teal
2021	Vice President and Former Chief Scout	Peter Duncan
2021	Representative of the Territorial Commander, Salvation Army	Currently Major David Squirrell
2021	President and Chairman of the Buddhist Society	Currently Dr Desmond Biddulph

2021	Director General of the Islamic Cultural Centre	Currently Dr Ahmad Al-Dubayan
2021	Member. The Scout Association Trust Corporation	Mr Peter Gilks
2021	Member. The Scout Association Trust Corporation	Mr Anthony Lyall

## **8. Appointed Members of the Board**

### **Appointed Members (Chair)**

Dr Limb addressed the Council about the Board of Trustees, explaining that at the beginning of the year a search process had been initiated to find a new Chair of the Board and a robust recruitment process was followed to find a suitable candidate. Dr Limb was pleased to present Jennie Price as the proposed candidate.

*Jennie Price left the meeting while the vote was taken.*

Ollie Wood (Trustee) proposed the appointment of Jennie Price as Chair of the Board for a three year term, and Jane Simpson (Trustee) seconded the proposal. The Council voted in favour of the proposal.

#### **Voting result:**

**99% yes**

**1% no**

*Jennie Price returned to the meeting.*

Dr Limb congratulated Jennie Price on her appointment for the period 2021-2024.

### **Appointed Members of the Board**

Dr Limb explained that Sharon Lee and Busola Sodeinde are recommended as Appointed Trustees and advised that after another robust recruitment process to find suitable candidates she was pleased to present them. Dr Limb advised that Busola had been a co-opted member of the Board for the last year and a half and her contribution had been extremely valuable.

*Sharon and Busola left the meeting while the vote is taken.*

Lexie Sims (Trustee) proposed the appointment of Sharon and Busola as Appointed Members of the Board for a three year term, and Graham Haddock (Trustee) seconded the proposal. The Council voted in favour of the proposal.



**Voting result:**  
**98% yes**  
**2% abstained**

*Sharon and Busola returned to the meeting.*

Dr Limb congratulated Sharon and Busola on their appointment for the period 2021-2024.

## **9. Elected Members of the Board of Trustees**

Dr Limb informed the Council that this year the call for candidates for the electoral colleagues of England South and Wales resulted as follows:

One vacancy and two candidates for England South

One vacancy and two candidates for Wales

Details of all candidates were sent to Council members at the end of July and voting was held online. Dr Limb read the names of only the successful candidates but noted that details of the votes cast were available should Council members be interested. The successful candidates were:

**England South Electoral College - Nigel Ball**  
**Wales Electoral College - Jake Myatt.**

All new Trustees are elected for the period 2021-24, subject to them remaining a Member or Associate Member of the Association.

## **10. Elected Youth Member of the Board of Trustees**

Dr Limb advised Council that there was one vacancy and two candidates for the role.

Gareth Jones was duly re-elected as the Member (18-24) for the period 2021-24, subject to him remaining a Member or Associate Member of the Association.

## **11. Appointment of Vice-President and Elected Member**

Dr Limb noted that Tim Kidd had now completed his term as UK Chief Commissioner, and in recognition of his outstanding service, the Board proposes that he is appointed as a Vice President and elected as a member of Council. His biography was sent to Council in advance of the meeting as a reminder of his achievements.

The proposer was Dr Ann Limb (Chair) and the seconder was Liz Walker (Trustee).

Members were asked to approve the appointment of Tim Kidd as Vice President and elected Member of The Scout Association by using the on screen prompt to vote now. The Council voted in favour of the proposal.

**Voting result:**

**97% yes**

**1% no**

Dr Limb congratulated Tim on his appointment.

**12. Update on consultation with Council re the Trustee election process**

Dr Limb reminded Council members of the consultation which had taken place regarding the introduction of a screening stage into our trustee election process ensuring that we continue to have the right skills on the board. She thanked those who had participated in the survey. 139 responses had been received. Of those, 86% were in favour of some form of screening process, although there was no clear majority in favour of either of the options put forward. There were also a number of questions raised and useful feedback provided. In view of this, the results will go to the Nominations and Governance Committee and the Board for further consideration of the next steps. Council members will remain updated on this matter.

**13. Any other Business**

There being no other business the Chair moved to thank yous and investitures. The Association's newly appointed Chair and Appointed Trustee are required to become Members of the Association. Dr Limb invited both Jennie and Sharon to make the promise.

Dr Limb thanked Members of the Board of their commitment over the last 12 months, with special thanks to those Trustees completing their term of service Kieron Moir, Vice Chair of the Board, Jane Simpson, Lexie Sims and Nicola Gamlen.

A special thank you was given to Ann and Tim.

Dr Limb thanked the Council for their attendance and formally closed the meeting. Council members were reminded to re-join for the Question and Answer session at 11:15.

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**Lisa McDonald**  
**Governance Manager**

**Signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting**

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**Chair, The Scout Association**

**January 2022**