

# Minutes of the Annual General Meeting Greater Manchester Skeptics Society Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015 The Church Inn, Hulme

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## Attendees

## Committee

Geoff Whelan	(GW)	Chairman
Vicky Stiles	(VS)	Vice Chairman/ Social Secretary
Rick Owen	(RO)	Treasurer
Andy Taylor	(AT)	Web manager
Caroline Meek	(CM)	Outreach officer

## Members

Andy Bowers  
Adam Brown  
Kat Gray  
Peter Hewitt  
Other members of GMSS

## Apologies

Malcolm Chambers (MC) Secretary  
Paul Fitzgerald (PF) Committee member

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## 1. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Last meeting's minutes not available so matters were discussed under the subsequent headings.

## 2. BANK ACCOUNT

RO had gone most of the way towards setting up the society's bank account and required signatures by GW and VS to complete the process. These were completed after the meeting.

### 3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

GW reported (and listed most of) 31 events that GMSS has hosted and ran since the last AGM, including notable successes "The Unbelievers" at the Manchester Conference Centre and "The Future of Food" at the Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI) as part of the Manchester Science Festival (MSF).

"The Unbelievers" made approximately £970 for GMSS. The fees for the presenters have yet to be claimed despite numerous attempts by GW to send the money or to donate it to QED or The Good Thinking Society on their behalf. (GW to continue to chase up)

There may be some money from MOSI due to GMSS by an option to donate on the MSF website during booking. (\*\* to investigate)

### 4. AMMENDMENT TO CONSTITUTION

GW proposed that all references to Meetup in the constitution be replaced with "website", following events in August (details of which can be found here <http://www.gmss.uk/posts/meetup-2/>), Meetup's total lack of support and co-operation following the events and the vulnerability exposed by dealings with Meetup.

The amendment to the constitution was approved by all attending and thus passed.

This led to discussions regarding staying with Meetup in general, which will be covered here in item....

### 5. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

All attending current officers were re-elected unopposed. In order to maintain the highest level of bureaucracy and authority expected of a group entirely unburdened by photography skills, the nominators and seconders are listed below.

POSITION	HOLDER	NOMINATE D	SECONDED
<b>Chairman</b>	Geoff Whelan	RO	VS
<b>Vice Chairman/Social Secretary</b>	Vicky Stiles	GW	CM
<b>Treasurer</b>	Rick Owen	GW	CM

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<b>Outreach officer</b>	Caroline Meek	GW	VS
<b>Web manager</b>	Andy Taylor	GW	VS

All other positions will remain unfilled until further notice. If necessary an EGM will be called.

## 6. WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

### MEETUP

The main issue discussed was whether we should continue with the Meetup site. The costs are about £120 a year and the benefits apparently little. Shutting down the group has the risk of leaving the members' list open to a hostile buy-out. (\*\* to check that closing the group shuts it down completely.)

The advantages are that it is useful for attracting new people to the group, informing members and new members of events and storage and contact of members. In the absence of a Meetup account, these would need to happen via the website (AT to investigate)

If the decision is made to stay with Meetup then it needs to be used more effectively. It was also suggested that we piggyback onto the Greater Manchester Humanist Meetup group.

A final decision will be made by the society following a review at the January 28<sup>th</sup> Social (one month before renewal).

### WEBSITE

The website costs are £10 per year for the domain name and £50 for hosting. Blogs are encouraged.

### PASSWORDS

AT has the passwords to the domain name registration, Twitter, Facebook and Meetup accounts. He suggested that 3 people have access to each of these passwords. VS, GW and RO to have additional access.

Alternative ways of publicizing events (listings magazines etc) to be investigated (by CM, apparently)

Podcasts were discussed and whilst considered a good idea, require a great deal of time and effort. It was suggested that the Pod Delusion

contributors list could be mined for useful content/contributors however this would still require much work including editing and contacting. (Kat Gray and Andy Bowers volunteered to undertake some of this work)

## 7. UPCOMING EVENTS

### SKEPTICS IN THE PUB TALKS

- Deborah Hyde on 10<sup>th</sup> December
- Rob Teszka on 14<sup>th</sup> January
- February's speaker TBC
- Peter Etchells is being chased up regarding his talk on video game violence (by GW, I presume)
- Mike Heap on 10<sup>th</sup> March

### SOCIALS

Alternative venues are being sought. The criteria are as follows

- Serves ale
- Serves food
- Quiet
- Free
- Available Thursday evenings
- Accessible
- In the city centre
- But preferably outside the Controlled Parking Zones so that parking remains free (although it is after 8pm, this restriction would be more relevant to speaker SITP events)

Input is welcome from anyone who has the time and inclination to do this, but it probably comes jointly under the remits of social secretary (VS) and outreach officer (CM)

## 8. SUGGESTED SPEAKERS

- Dean Burnett (comedian)
- Margaret McCartney
- Richard Firth-Godbehere
- Jodrell bank scientists/engineers

(No one as yet nominated to chase these up)

## **9. SUGGESTED EVENTS**

- Pub crawl
- MSF application for next year (jointly with Dead Cat Comedy Club)
- Manchester City of Science (GW waiting for response)

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

VS requested that emails be used for communication between committee members and volunteers rather than Facebook

## **11. NEXT MEETING**

Review of Meetup membership on January 28<sup>th</sup>. Location TBC but most likely The Church Inn