

THE SWISS CHURCH IN LONDON

Annual General Meeting 2022

The 2022 Annual General Meeting of the Swiss Church in London whose registered office is at the Swiss Church, 79 Endell Street, London WC2, took place on Sunday 2 July 2023 at 12:30 at the Swiss Church.

MINUTES

Chaired by: – Katrin Frey Acting Chair of the Consistoire

of **Consistoire Members attending:**

- **Yvon Tse** -Company Secretary
- **Katrin Frey** -Acting Chair, Safeguarding, Marriage Registrar
- **Cecile Mistry**- Catering
- **Philip Maillardet**- Archives

Consistoire Members from whom Apologies for absence received

- **Emma Brown**- Company Treasurer
- **Niccolò Aliano**- Human Resources
- **Jenny Breitschmid**- Volunteering

Members of The Swiss Church in London attending

- **Geoff Fisher**
- **Marriane Fisher-Hertog**
- **Colin McIntyre**
- **Yolande Birch**
- **Fernande Kunz**
- **Susanne Tse**
- **Rosemarie Breitenstein**
- **Lotti Terroni**
- **Margrit Rahman**
- **Erika Tan**
- **Margrit Lyster**

Friends of The Swiss Church in London attending

- **Robert Kaufeler** – legal advisor to the Consistoire
- **Laurent Vuillemez** – representative of the Swiss Embassy in London

Proxy Forms received from:

- Emma Brown-
- Niccolo Aliano-
- Susanne Singh
- Elsbeth Baldeo

1. WELCOME BY CHAIRMAN AND APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence has been received from:

Emma Brown, Consistoire member, Treasurer (outgoing); **Thomas Wagner**, Consistoire Observer as representative of the Embassy of Switzerland to the UK), in whose place **Laurent Vuillemez** is attending; **Niccolò Aliano**, Consistoire member who is based in Edinburgh and was unable to attend due to business commitments; **Jenny Breitschmeid**, Consistoire member unable to attend for health reasons (outgoing).

Chair Address:

2. MINUTES OF THE AGM HELD ON 19 June 2022

The chairman invited the members to adopt the Minutes of the AGM held on 19 June 2022.

Proposer: Jeff Fisher

Seconder: Margaret Lyster

In favour: 19 **Against:** None. **Abstentions:** None

3. ANNUAL REPORT

Proposal :The Consistoire asked the members to receive and approve the Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2022. The Chairman invited any questions to be raised before voting on the Report.

Katrin Frey (Chair of the Meeting and Acting Chair of the Consistoire) gave a short introduction. She said that 2022 had been a challenging year. Acting Chair of the Consistoire Barbara Wachter resigned from Consistoire in the autumn, having taken up a post at the United Nations in New York. The Consistoire thanked her for her tireless work and dedication. Treasurer Marco Mambelli also resigned from the Consistoire in October 2022,

on taking up a post in Dubai, and Emma Brown joined the Consistoire as Treasurer to replace him.

Reverend Carla Maurer was on leave and maternity leave from October 2022. Reverend Harry Ching was appointed Interim Sabbatical Minister from November 2022 to cover Carla's maternity leave.

Reverend Carla Maurer was unable to attend today's AGM. Katrin stated that Sunday Services had resumed in 2022, and initially attendance was lower than pre-Covid. However, those attending enjoyed the opportunity to worship together in person, and renew fellowship and friendships.

Treasurer's Report for the year ended 31.12.2022 – unfortunately Emma Brown was unable to attend the AGM as she was unwell. Therefore, Colin McIntyre presented the report to the AGM on her behalf.

He said that the position as at the year ended 31 December 2022 was as follows.

The headline was that the SCL declared a loss of £41,777, after declaring a net profit of approximately £16,500 in 2021. This represents a large decline in the SCL's finances and is of concern.

Looking at the figures in more detail:

The **total income** for 2022 is £199,466, a decrease of 6% compared to £208,992 in 2021.

The biggest contribution, 73% of the total figure was originated through donations (£166,644 – down 13% from 2021). Lettings of the church premises contributed 27% of this, an increase from 23% in 2021 (£95,347). Although improving, lettings remain impacted by continued lower utilization of the church's premises for commercial purposes (when compared to pre-COVID years). However, unlike in previous years, we have seen a decline in donations received.

The support we have received from both Swiss entities and private individuals (£11,579) continues to be significant, however this was notably lower than previous years (£96,606 in 2021), and now represents only 11% of all income. Contributions raised in the UK amounted to £43,073, a 13% decline compared with last year.

Donations received through church service collections increased to £1,410 the year from £558 in 2021. This represents an increase of 170% and we are enormously grateful for this support.

Total expenditure for 2022, including depreciation of the building and the organ, amounting to £31,814, came in at £241,243, an increase of 25% compared with last year's figure of £192,523.

As expected, the biggest items of expenditure were from Staff costs & Professional Fees (£87,840 which is 3% less than last year), and Maintenance carried out at the premises

owned (£64,391, approximately £40,000 more than 2021). This included significant refurbishment of the Manse kitchen and downstairs bathroom as well as internal repainting of the Church Hall.

The **overall net loss including depreciation** is circa £41,777 (compared with a gain of £16,500 in 2021). Fluctuation of the CHF-GBP exchange between the start and end of the year were significant and the accounts reflect a gain in the value of the CHF denominated financial asset of £45,000.

Members raised various questions:

Geoff Fisher- *Were grants available from Camden Council and had the SCL made use of them?*

Answer- In 2021 the SCL obtained a grant from Camden Giving which supports young people in Camden in finding their first job and gaining work experience. This enabled the church to employ Ryan Moshwe as a part-time administrator in the church office. The SCL has also obtained small grants from Camden Council to partly fund Breakfast on the Steps. Breakfast on the Steps also obtained a grant from one of the National Lottery Funds.

Margrit Lyster – *Who is responsible for fundraising in Switzerland? In the past individual Consistoire members took on this responsibility.*

Answer – More recently Reverend Carla Maurer was the main person who raised funds and attracted donations from Switzerland. She had good links with the cantonal church of Zurich who had provided generous funding in 2020 and 2021 during Covid. Katrin Frey added that she had attended the annual Vegsil (group of former members of The Swiss Church in London) meeting in 2022. In addition, the cantonal church of Zug was providing a donation of CHF 10,000 annual. Also, the Cantonal Church of Berne, Jura, Solothurn (BEJUSO) continued to have an annual collection for the Swiss Churches Abroad each year across all the parish churches in the three cantons which represented a donation of approximately CHF 8,000. The Consistoire recognised the need to strengthen the ties with Swiss churches and not to rely solely on Carla as the main Swiss fundraiser.

Question – Which posts/positions are currently vacant on the Consistoire?

*Answer-*The chair responded. There is an immediate need to strengthen the Consistoire and recruit new members to the Consistoire. Ideally, we need a new President and a Vice-President to lead the Consistoire. There is also an urgent need for a new Treasurer, and for persons specific skills in finance, fund-raising, and human resources. Also, good allrounders with enthusiasm are required.

Question- Comment- Yvon Tse reminded members that the Consistoire had a long-standing policy of maintaining at least one years' reserves in cash to meet crises and a fall in income. In 2022 and 2023 it has been necessary to draw on reserves to meet cash flow deficits between monthly income and expenses. This is not a sustainable long-term strategy. He would be monitoring the situation regularly.

Proposal :The Consistoire asked the members to receive and approve the Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2022.

Proposer: Colin McIntyre

Secunder: Jeff Fisher

In favour: 19. Against: None. Abstentions: None

4. ELECTIONS AND RESIGNATIONS OF CONSISTOIRE MEMBERS

(i.e. Company Directors and Trustees in accordance with the Swiss Church Articles of Association)

4.1 RESIGNATIONS – Barbara Wachter, Marco Mambelli, Philip Maillardet, Cecile Mistry

4.2 ELECTIONS – Emma Brown **4.3 RE-ELECTIONS** – Philip Maillardet, Cecile Mistry

Proposer: Suzanne Tse

Secunder: Jeff Fisher

In favour: 19. Against: None. Abstentions: None

5. REPORTING ACCOUNTANTS

Proposal: To re-appoint Morlai Kargbo, Moracle Chartered Certified Accountants, for the incorporated charity to hold office from the conclusion of this meeting until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting and to authorise the Consistoire to determine their remuneration.

Yvon Tse, the SCL Company Secretary told the AGM that Moracle had carried out their role in accordance with Companies Act and Charity Commission requirements for many years. Their fees had increased. The Consistoire was satisfied with their work.

Proposer: Margrit Lyster

Secunder: Rosemarie Breitenstein

In favour: 19 Against: None. Abstentions: None

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair advised the meeting that Colin McIntyre was now stepping down from his work for the Swiss Church in London. He was now living in Hoylake, near Liverpool and this made his active involvement very difficult. The Chair presented Colin with a card and gift as a token of their appreciation. Colin thanked the Consistoire and all the members and friends, for their warm friendship and support over the years.

Finally, the Chair thanked everyone for attending the AGM, and the Sunday Service which she had lead that morning. She thanked Reverend Carla Maurer for leading and inspiring the Swiss Church in London since 2013, and looked forward to her return in September, She also

thanked Consistoire members for their work, the office team , volunteers, congregation and everyone else.

The 2022 Annual General Meeting of the Swiss Church in London was declared closed at 13:30.

The Swiss Church in London · 79 Endell Street · London WC2H 9DY

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