**African Oyster Trust**

**Minutes of the 18th Annual General Meeting**

**Sunday 1st October 2023 15:00 hrs**

**On Zoom**

The Chair, Kira Dalton, welcomed all to the meeting.

**Attendees:** Kira Dalton, Steve Emery, Josh-Dale Harris, Maggie Maybury, Alan Dick, Isabelle van Gruting, Jan Pritchard, Sue Brown.

**Apologies:** Karen Stirling, Eva Sabin, Andrew Bailey, Marc Sanderson, Pippa Zintillis.

**Minutes of the 2022 AGM**

These were posted on the African Oyster Website and were approved by all attendees at the AGM (proposed by Kira Dalton, seconded by Maggie Maybury).

**Treasurer’s Presentation of Accounts Y/E 31st December 2022**

Steve Emery’s Presentation of the 2022 Accounts and Summary was attached to the email sent by Josh Dale-Harris to all attendees on 30th September 2023.

Steve highlighted several points contained in the report saying it was a year of transition. He pointed out the money transferred in 2021 to the Gambia was for both that year and 2022. This was done in order to take advantage of the exceptionally favourable FX rate.

As agreed at last year’s AGM £48,000 was paid to Gambia School Support (GSS), it was a contribution towards funding for the four nursery AOT schools which are now under the GSS umbrella.

Going forward AOT would now reduce its reserve and hold £5,000

The Accounts were approved (proposed by Kira Dalton, seconded by Maggie Maybury).

**Reappointment of Independent Examiner**

Brockhurst Davies Ltd. Chartered Accountants, continue to do an excellent job and have been reappointed. This was approved (proposed by Kira Dalton, seconded by Maggie Maybury).

**Report from the Chair, Kira Dalton**

Kira’s Annual Report was also attached to the email sent by Josh Dale-Harris to all attendees on 30th September 2023. She reiterated that the Gambia was still in a financial mess. The economy was not in good shape due mainly to the political situation, the fallout from the Covid epidemic and the influx of Chinese, Russians and Jihadists.

However, there was good news, namely legacies from two AOT supporters. Howell Jones bequeathed £1,000 and Mel Bixley bequeathed £10,000. This windfall will amply cover the costs of purchasing a much needed new ambulance.

The Chair’s Report was approved (proposed by Josh Dale-Harris, seconded by Alan Dick).

**Re-election of Committee Members**

The Committee members, asked if they wished to continue as members unanimously affirmed they did. The motion that they should do so was passed (proposed by Alan Dick, seconded by Jan Pritchard).

**AOB**

1. Josh Dale-Harris gave an update on the AOT/GSS connection. There are currently 11 nursery schools being supported, 4 of which were the AOT schools which transferred to GSS last year. All schools have been improved and levelled up and have a combined total of 1,500 pupils. He spoke of the ongoing teacher training and development initiatives that have been put in place, also the 2019 curriculum and the need to get away from teaching by rote (parrot fashion) and the implementation of teacher / pupil interactions. Further information can be found on gambiaschoolsupport.org

GSS are keen to encourage all the nursery schools to strive to be independent. This will serve to protect their long term future.

Josh praised the Gambia Management Team and gave particular thanks to Kemo Bah for all his input. He also thanked AOT for all the support it has given to GSS. He will be visiting the Gambia on 14th November 2023

1. Isabelle van Gruting said she planned to go to the Gambia this winter and visit / support the AOT health centres.
2. Jan Pritchard thanked AOT for all the work they do in the Gambia.

The meeting closed at 15:40