

**THE 171st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE WEST AND NORTH YORKSHIRE
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY**

**Thursday, 22 September 2022
@ The Park Plaza Hotel, Leeds**

Present:	Gurminder Sanghera	AHR
	Craig Thomson	Airedale Chemical Company Ltd
	Suzanne Watson	Approach PR
	Simon Jackson	Business Enterprise Fund
	Nick Garthwaite	Christeyns UK Limited
	Mike Briffett	Clarion Housing Group
	Tom Walton	DW Scientific
	David Morgan	Evie Life
	Sarah Czarnecki	Grays Court Hotel
	Mark Green	John Speak Trust / German Consul
	Simon Baldwin	Leeds Beckett University
	Natalie Allen	Leeds Beckett University
	Steve Lowe	Local IQ / Newsquest
	Aqila Choudhry	Love in Care
	Victoria Wainwright	Naylor Wintersgill
	Sir Edgar Andrews	North Star Engineers
	Elaine Kay	NSPCC
	Nasreen Karim	Platinum Partnership Solicitors
	Amanda Beresford	Schofield Sweeney
	Marc Davies	Tetrattech
	Martin Stow	University of Leeds
	Laurence Beardmore	York Emporium
In attendance:	James Mason	Chamber Chief Executive
	Julie Snook	Chamber Financial Controller
	Mark Casci	Chamber – Head of Policy
	Mike Cartwright	Chamber – Policy Executive
	Debra Patchett	Chamber – PA to CEO

Amanda Beresford (Chair) welcomed those present to the 171st Annual General Meeting and introduced herself and Chamber representatives; James Mason (CEO), Craig Thomson (Honorary Treasurer / Finance & Audit Committee Chair), Julie Snook (Financial Controller / Company Secretary) and Debra Patchett (PA to CEO).

1. Approval of minutes of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on 9 September 2021

The minutes were proposed by Vicky Wainwright and seconded by Suzanne Watson as a true and accurate record.

2. To adopt the financial statements of the West & North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Craig Thomson, Honorary Treasurer, reported that the auditors, Azets, had carried out a full audit and in their opinion, the financial statements gave a true and fair view of the state of the company and the group's affairs at 31st March 2022.

Craig reported that in the year to 31st March 2022 the Chamber Group returned a post-tax profit of £282,422. This balance included a £70,000 loss for the Chamber and £352,000 retained profit for the Business Enterprise Fund and its subsidiaries.

Pre-tax results for the Chamber reduced from a profit of £142,000 in 2020/21 to a loss of £77,000 in 2021/22. The major difference in the financial performance resulted from the support provided in the previous year via the Government Job Retention Scheme (£172,000) and a grant from Bradford Council (£25,000). In addition, the fair value adjustment of investments reduced from £76,000 gain in 2020/21 to £32,000 in 2021/22.

The subsidiary company, trading as the Business Enterprise Fund provided loans to individuals for business use. Between them, the Business Enterprise Fund and its subsidiaries lent over £8m to businesses using capital from the Northern Powerhouse funds and from their own funds thereby creating jobs and protecting existing employment. In addition, BEF was a key partner in delivery of the British Business Banks Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme and the Recovery Loan Scheme.

An indication of the range of activities of the Chamber, including the Enterprise Fund and its subsidiaries, was outlined in the annual report - copies of which were tabled. In addition, copies of the annual accounts and of the BEF 'Growth & Impact' Report are also made available.

Thanks were extended to the members of the Finance & Audit Committee for their input and support over the last 12 months.

There were no questions raised on the West & North Yorkshire Chamber Accounts.

The financial statements of the West & North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce were proposed by Laurence Beardmore and seconded by Marc Davies. All voted in favour.

3. To adopt the financial statements for the John Speak Foreign Languages Scholarships Trust Fund for the year ended 31 March 2022

The AGM attendees were informed that the John Speak Foundation Foreign Language Scholarships Trust was a registered charity, operating under the trusteeship of the West & North Yorkshire Chamber. The objectives of the charity were to assist students to improve their language skills and to further export trade by providing bursaries for overseas language study to those who would work in international trade.

The funding used for these grants was generated mainly from capital investments and during the year, 14 bursaries totalling £14.6k were awarded to students. As a result of the pandemic, recipients of bursaries in the previous year had been given an extended period to utilise the grants awarded.

There were no questions raised on the John Speak Trust Accounts

The Chair proposed that the audited accounts for the John Speak Trust for the year ended 31st March 2022 be received and asked for a member to second that resolution. Vicky Wainwright seconded and the resolution was put to the meeting and all voted in favour.

Azets had carried out a full audit and, in their opinion; the financial statements gave a true and fair view of the state of the company and the group's affairs at 31st March 2022.

The Chair thanked Craig, Julie, members of the Finance & Audit Committee and members of the John Speak Trust Committee for their contributions and support over the last twelve months.

4. To adopt the Annual Report of the West & North Yorkshire Chamber for the year ended 31 March 2022.

The Annual Report had been tabled and shared on the Chamber website which covered the activities and achievements of the West & North Yorkshire Chamber and how it had supported local businesses.

The Chair gave a brief summary of items covered in the Annual Report and thanked the Chamber for its continued hard work.

The acceptance of the Annual Report for the year ended 31st March 2022 was put to the meeting, which was proposed by Laurence Beardmore and seconded by Mike Briffett. The Chair put the resolution to the meeting and all voted in favour.

The Chair summarised, over the past twelve months that the regions businesses continued to feel the after effects of Covid, Sandy Needham had retired as Chief Executive after twenty five years of service at the Chamber, James Mason had been appointed as Sandy's successor, new Prime Minister Liz Truss had been appointed and very recently Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II had passed away. Inflation, cost of living, exporting and energy costs continued to rise. The Chair assured members the Chamber would continue to provide support and be the voice for business throughout these challenging times.

On a positive note, the Chamber had held several successful live events including three annual dinners and recently succeeded in developing and the future delivery of two Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs). Member retentions remained at 90%, an excellent result following such a difficult and challenging year.

Chamber Patrons and sponsors were recognised and thanked for their continued support.

5. To appoint the following Directors nominated by the three area representative groups

The Chair proposed the appointment of individuals (listed below) who had been nominated by local Chamber leadership groups as non-executive directors of the West & North Yorkshire Chamber

- Laurence Beardmore, York Emporium
- Amanda Beresford, Schofield Sweeney – Chair
- Chris Black, Sound Leisure
- Mike Briffett, Clarion Housing Group
- Mark Cowgill, Exa Networks
- Andrew Digwood, SJ P Law
- Nasreen Karim, Platinum Partnership/Chamber BAME Business Committee Chair
- Dan Murray, Leeds List
- James Mason, Chief Executive, West & North Yorkshire Chamber
- Craig Thomson, Airedale Chemical
- Lee Underwood, Autohorn
- Victoria Wainwright, Naylor Wintersgill
- Suzanne Watson, Approach PR

The Chair proposed that all nominees be accepted en bloc, which was proposed by Marc Davies and seconded by Nick Garthwaite.

The Chair put the resolution to the meeting and all voted in favour.

6. To accept members of the 3 area representative groups

- a) the Bradford Chamber Leadership Group
- b) the Leeds Chamber Leadership Group
- c) the York & North Yorkshire Chamber Leadership Group

Members of each group (listed on appendix 1) would be elected for a period of three years, serving no more than three consecutive terms (nine years). Each group would hold an Annual Election Meeting and an Annual Meeting to appoint Directors to the Board of the West & North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce, a President and Vice-President.

The Chair stated that all listed on appendix 1 be nominated en bloc.

Suzanne Watson proposed the resolution, which was seconded by Steve Lowe. The resolution was put to the meeting and all voted in favour.

The three Leadership Groups continued to expand and produce valued work, covering all three regions. Members of these groups were thanked for their time and contributions.

The Chair stated that their input allowed the Chamber to influence locally, regionally and nationally.

7. To adopt the auditors and authorise the directors to fix their remuneration

The Chair thanked Ed Cliff, Alan Sidebottom and their colleagues at Azets for undertaking the audit. Approval was sought for the directors to fix the remuneration of the auditors at the appropriate time.

The resolution was proposed by Vicky Wainwright, which was seconded by Mike Briffett. All voted in favour and the resolution was carried.

The Chair thanked members for their attendance at the Annual General Meeting and declared the meeting closed.