

Minutes of the 2007 AGM of the Transport Economists Group held on 28th March 2007 at 5:00pm

Present: Robert Cochrane (Chair)
Gregory Marchant (Treasurer & Membership Secretary)
Dick Dunmore (Secretary & Webmaster)
Peter Gordon (Journal Editor)
Jillian Beardwood
Don Box
Stephen Bennett
Mary Acland-Hood
Tony Lucking
Simon Lister

Presentation to Don Box

Robert Cochrane thanked Don Box, former TEG Treasurer and Membership Secretary, for his years of service, and presented him with a copy of “The Official History of Britain and the Channel Tunnel” by Terry Gourvish.

1. Apologies for absence

Dick Dunmore announced that apologies for absence had been received from Laurie Baker, Tom Cohen, Martin Lawrence and Francesca Medda.

2. Minutes of the 2006 AGM held on 22nd March 2006

These were reviewed and no corrections or matters arising identified.

Peter Gordon proposed and Jillian Beardwood seconded acceptance of the Minutes.

ACCEPTED

3. Chair’s Report

Robert Cochrane presented his report for the period March 2006 to February 2007. There had been nine meetings with a theme of the effects of new technology. Average attendance had been 32 people, typically between 30 and 35 but with a range from 19 to 58. Around 25% had been guests, with a higher proportion at the more popular meetings.

There had been a number of difficulties with speakers and slides, which were now universally in PowerPoint form and, when permitted, distributed to members in Portable Document Format (PDF). Robert thanked Peter White, Andrew Evans, Tim Leunig and Dave Wetzel, all of whom had stepped in as speakers at short notice.

Robert announced that he was resigning as Chair and from the Committee, citing the difficulties of combining the roles with overseas work and the benefits of the Group having a change of style. He thanked the remainder of the Committee and drew attention to his desire that the Group would remain “a hub for the exchange of ideas

and developments between practitioners, researchers and stakeholders in the field of transport economics”.

The report was reviewed and no corrections or matters arising were identified.

Jillian Beardwood proposed and Don Box seconded acceptance of the Report.

ACCEPTED

4 Treasurer’s Report

Gregory Marchant presented his report and the audited accounts for financial year 2006. Membership had been stable with a churn of around 20 members per year and there were a total of 144 paying members in 2006. The Group enjoyed an excess of income over expenditure of £1,221, with many thanks due to the generosity of Arup in providing a room which had reduced meeting costs to less than £100. The honesty box had raised £25 at the 3 meetings since its introduction.

Simon Lister asked about the breakeven membership and Gregory indicated that this was around 70 members.

Robert Cochrane noted that the Treasurer’s Report related to the accounts for the calendar year 2006, which had now been signed off.

Dick Dunmore asked for feedback on the financial outcome of the 2 March 2007 seminar on high speed rail. Gregory reported that 51 had attended, including 3 speakers, the chair and a representative of the press, giving 46 paying attendees. Pricing had been set to encourage non-members to take out membership, and all but one had done so, resulting in 11 new members. The seminar had made an overall loss, but Gregory reported that this represented a reasonable means of returning to those members who had attended their share, around £8, of the surplus in the previous year mentioned above.

Peter Gordon proposed and Jillian Beardwood seconded acceptance of the Report.

ACCEPTED

5 Appointment of auditors

Gregory Marchant reported that he had invited Stephen Bennett to continue as auditor and Stephen, who was present, confirmed his acceptance.

Robert Cochrane thanked Stephen for his services to date.

The meeting voted on a motion for the re-appointment of Stephen Bennett.

ACCEPTED

5 Election of the Committee

Dick Dunmore reported that Robert Cochrane, Jillian Beardwood and Martin Lawrence wished to stand down and that Jeremy Drew has expressed a willingness to join the Committee. The Committee offering itself for election therefore consisted of:

Laurie Baker
Tom Cohen
Jeremy Drew
Dick Dunmore

Peter Gordon
Gregory Marchant
Francesca Medda

Dick Dunmore proposed and Stephen Bennett seconded the election of all the above to the Committee.

ACCEPTED

Robert Cochrane reported that the new Committee would elect Committee members to specific posts at the next Committee meeting on 2nd April 2007. Dick Dunmore reminded the meeting that the Committee had the power to co-opt members during the year if volunteers came forward.

7 Any other business

Robert Cochrane put forward a motion that “In the light of the success of the high speed rail seminar the new Committee consider holding a seminar on an annual basis”.

Jillian Beardwood said that the seminar had been well-organised and Gregory Marchant said that One Great George Street has been a good and helpful venue.

The motion was seconded by Mary Acland-Hood.

ACCEPTED

Stephen Bennett put forward a motion “To ask the Treasurer to consider the risk of Member Liability, to examine options to limit the risk of Member Liability and to report back to the Group with recommendations within 6 months”. He elaborated that when organisations like the Group got into difficulties, all members could be liable, but the risk tended to fall on the active Committee. It was best practice to consider the issue and take precautions when the Group was healthy, although “Do Nothing” might be the appropriate option.

Robert Cochrane asked if Stephen would be able to advise and assist with the process and Stephen confirmed that he would.

The motion was seconded by Robert Cochrane.

ACCEPTED

Dick Dunmore put forward a motion “To ask the Group for guidance on the treatment and distribution of unsolicited circulars on employment opportunities”. He elaborated that the time required to agree what to do with these notices was an issue. One option would be to put them on the website, but the main requirement was probably to agree a streamlined process giving the Webmaster, to whom such requests normally came, both guidance and the authority to act on his or her judgement. For example, Arup had made a specific request and it seemed only courteous to be as helpful as possible.

Jillian Beardwood noted that we also receive requests from students for circulation of research questionnaires and Gregory Marchant noted that we also receive requests from a range of sources for the circulation of papers. Mary Acland-Hood suggested that these offers could be placed on the website, but that members should be consulted on whether they objected. Don Box suggested that we could make a small charge: Dick Dunmore stated that the issue was one of time, rather than cost, and this would require more time.

Robert Cochrane suggested a revised motion “That the Committee be directed to consider options for the treatment and distribution of unsolicited circulars, taking account of members’ views expressed at the AGM and by any other means and coming to a conclusion on the appropriate policy to follow”.

The revised motion was proposed by Dick Dunmore and seconded by Gregory Marchant.

ACCEPTED

Robert Cochrane proposed a formal vote of thanks to Arup for their hospitality and generosity.

Jillian Beardwood proposed and Peter Gordon seconded a proposal that Robert should write a formal letter as Chair to thank them.

ACCEPTED

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 5:45pm.