

The Japan Society Annual General Meeting 2011

The Society's 2011 AGM took place on 15 June 2011 at the Embassy of Japan. The membership was well represented and we are grateful to all who attended and who took the time to vote by proxy. The meeting was followed by a very beneficial discussion in small groups, each looking at different aspects of the Japan Society's activity.

Minutes of the 114th Annual General Meeting of The Japan Society

*Held at the Embassy of Japan, 101-104 Piccadilly, London W1
at 6.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 15 June 2011*

Christopher Purvis, the Chairman, opened the meeting by welcoming all those present and declaring that a quorum was present and that the meeting was duly constituted. He gave a particular welcome to the Society's President, the Japanese Ambassador, Mr Keiichi Hayashi. This was his first AGM as President, since taking up his post in February. He invited Ambassador Hayashi to make a few comments.

Ambassador Hayashi

Three months had passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. Ambassador Hayashi spoke of the task facing the government and people of Japan in rebuilding the areas devastated by this catastrophe. He focused on the support of the government and people of the United Kingdom and thanked the Japan Society for its quick response in immediately establishing the Tohoku Earthquake Relief Fund. He noted that the Fund would provide real solace and support to the people who needed it, thus strengthening the bonds of friendship between our two peoples. In this context, the Ambassador reflected on the importance of interaction and relations overseas; the Society's ongoing work to promote exchanges between Japan and UK was particularly worthy of strong support.

Christopher Purvis

The Chairman also reflected on the earthquake and the tremendous and spontaneous reaction from members, which resulted in the setting up of the Tohoku Earthquake Relief Fund. The Society was most grateful for the many offers of time and practical assistance as well as financial contributions. Some 100 schools had participated in the letter writing project to send messages to Tohoku. Thanks to the efforts of a committed team of volunteers these had been translated before sending on. A sub-committee had been set up to liaise with the NPO networks in the affected regions to ensure that the Fund was disbursed most effectively to charitable and voluntary organizations in Tohoku for the long term recovery and rebuilding of lives and livelihoods.

The Chairman invited members to remain after the formal business of the AGM to share their views with office staff and trustees on different aspects of the Japan Society's work: the membership experience, events, education, the Japan Society mission, communication, the business network.

The Notice calling the meeting and the Trustees' Report and Financial Statements were taken as read. Before turning to the three items of formal business on the agenda, the Chairman invited Members to make comments and questions.

Comments and Questions from Members

Sir Hugh Cortazzi enquired about the status of the annual Proceedings. Heidi Potter, the Chief Executive, said that it was hoped to publish this before the end of the year, but the office had had to adapt to the current situation and recent unexpected workloads. Proceedings still remained an important part of the Society's output.

Wendy Arnold hoped that another Japan Societies Forum would be convened. It was acknowledged that this was a very useful event for those involved in other Japan societies and related organizations. Heidi Potter said that the Society would endeavour to organize one as soon as possible, but events this year had had an impact on the wider programme.

Agenda Items

Christopher Purvis explained that there were three ordinary resolutions to be considered. Votes (including proxy votes) would be counted during the discussion group exercise. The results were announced at the end of the evening.

The following resolutions were passed:

1. To receive and adopt the audited annual accounts for the financial year ended 31 December 2010 and the Trustees' report.
2. To reappoint Richard Place Dobson as auditors and to authorize the Board to approve their remuneration as thought fit.
3. To elect the following Ordinary Trustees of the Company:
Andrew Cahn
Sean Curtin
Lydia Gomersall
Hiroshi Hattori
Akihiro Tsuchiya

Council members who had served during the year, but who were standing down were thanked for their contributions to the Society: David Powers (as Editor, overseeing the Society's publications); Jun Kobayashi; Koji Nakamura; Paul Dimond; Andrew Fraser. Sumio Kusaka, who had served ex officio as Consul General, had returned to Japan and Hitoshi Noda was welcomed in his place.

Documents

If you wish to receive a hard copy of the annual accounts and Council Members' report, please [contact us](#).