



# Minutes of an Extraordinary General Meeting of the West Oxfordshire Green Party

Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 at 8 pm

ONLINE

**Present:** Malcolm Brown (MB), Rae Cather (RC), Tim Eden (TE, Treasurer), Katy Jennison (KJ), Celia Kerslake (CK, Secretary/Membership secretary), Stuart Macdonald (SM), Frances Mortimer (FM, Deputy Chair), Andrew Prosser (AP), Julia Shay (JS), Barry Wheatley (BW, Chair).

**By proxy:** Steve Mohammad.

**Apologies:** Helen Gavin (HG), Alma Tumilowicz (AT).

<u>Item</u>	<u>Action by</u>
<p>1. Welcome and apologies</p> <p>2. <b>Proposed change of branch acronym to WOxGP or WestOGP</b></p> <p>After considerable discussion it became clear that no one apart from BW had ever felt the existing acronym WOGP to be offensive or potentially so. BW therefore withdrew his proposal.</p> <p>3. <b>Motion to adopt proposed West Oxfordshire Green Party Constitution</b></p> <p>BW explained that the idea of the branch having its own constitution had been put forward a few years ago but had then stalled. As West Oxfordshire Green Party was growing in its activities it was important that we have some rules to control the way we operate. The proposed text was based on the one drafted by CK in 2015, and had now been revised and further developed by himself, the Deputy Chair and the new Treasurer.</p> <p>CK then went through the proposed Constitution section by section, drawing attention to points that she considered important. She began her presentation by mentioning what she saw as the aims of adopting a constitution for West Oxfordshire Green Party:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) To define our relationship with the national and local (i.e. Oxfordshire) Green Parties.</li> <li>(ii) To define our aims, structure and procedures within the above framework.</li> <li>(iii) To establish financial responsibility through trusteeship.</li> <li>(iv) To enable us to carry on our activities, in terms of both electoral and issue-based campaigning, with confidence in our autonomy, on the one hand, and our harmony with the wider party, on the other.</li> </ul> <p>Referring to Section 1b, where it is stated that WOGP is subject to the rules and constitutions of both GPEW and OGP, she explained that this meant that in the case of any clash between our constitution and that of the higher body, the latter would prevail.</p> <p>When CK had finished her presentation, BW called for questions.</p> <p>SM suggested that the words “in relation to its own area” in 2a should be deleted, because they implied that the West Oxfordshire Green Party should restrict its concerns to its own area and not consider national policy at all.</p> <p>JS thought the phrase “in relation to its own area” might be important to safeguard our right to promote rural and farming concerns which tended to be overlooked by OGP. In response to this, AP said our membership of the Green Party of England and</p>	

<u>Item</u>	<u>Action by</u>
<p>Wales was sufficient to protect this right, and FM agreed. SM’s amendment was therefore adopted.</p> <p>The meeting then went on to consider the Appendix to the Constitution, which is loosely based on the corresponding OGP document (although considerably fuller and more precise on many points) and whose function is to describe the responsibilities of the WOGP Officers, both collectively and in their individually named roles.</p> <p>TE said that the OGP Constitution is currently undergoing an overhaul led by Kate Robinson and Mary Franklin. The existing document combines an original 2006 document with about 10 later revisions. The new Constitution would be submitted to the AGM [in February].</p> <p>CK said two topics on which the WOGP Appendix expanded considerably on the OGP one were</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) the collective definition of the Officers as a class with a corporate identity and set of responsibilities (sections 1.1, 1.2)</li> <li>2) the responsibilities of the trustees (a status held automatically by the Chair, Deputy Chair and Treasurer) – this section is based on the Trustee Act 2000, so has a clear legal underpinning.</li> </ol> <p>CK asked for and received confirmation from BW that the Appendix was a flexible document that could be amended at a Business Meeting (i.e. much more easily than the Constitution itself) and that in its current form it was a work in progress. It would therefore not form part of the subject matter of the vote that was about to be taken, which was confined to the main body of the Constitution.</p> <p><b>The vote on the Constitution</b> took the form of an electronic poll, with three options: approve, reject or abstain. The result was that of a total of 11 votes cast, <b>100% were in favour of accepting the Constitution as amended</b>, i.e. with Section 2a shortened to:</p> <p>“To promote the aims and objectives of the GPEW as interpreted by the WOGP.”</p> <p>The EGM ended at 8.31 pm and was immediately followed by the November Business Meeting.</p>	