



European Movement Sussex Branch

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 8 December 2012

at St Pancras Catholic Church Hall, Irelands Lane, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1QX

Before the AGM - François Duchêne travel bursary holders report for 2012

Satoka Harii from Japan, researching on the EU's external border agency Frontex, and Mari Martiskalnen from Finland, researching community energy generation, both reported in person and answered questions about their research. Gentian Elezi from Albania researching his country's preparations for joining the EU sent a written report as he had to return home but will return next spring. Michael Rider read his report.

MINUTES

Present: Sarah Leigh (Chairman), Martin Toomey (Secretary), Christopher Jones (Treasurer), Andrew Bartlett, Yupin Bartlett, Grace Blaker, Bob Booth, Cohn Child, Kate Evans, Nigel Fox, Charles Goldie, Gisela Hendriks, Ila Hayward, Oliver Hayward, Jonathan Jaeger, David McGlue, Terry Metheringham, Geoff Pullen, Stephen Quigley, Betty Rider, Michael Rider, Susan Stokes, Jenny Toomey, Margaret Tuccori.

Apologies: Apologies had been received from Fred Taylor and David and Margaret Young.

- Minutes of the 2011 AGM
The Minutes of the Meeting were approved.
- Chairman's report for the year 2011-2012
Sarah gave her last report after seven years in the Chair of the Sussex Branch, and expressed her gratitude for all the support she had received from Members, and in particular from the Committee, and all those involved in running particular events and activities. The Chairman's full report is attached.
- Jubilee Library report
Martin Toomey demonstrated the stand and literature set up in Brighton's Jubilee Library on the third Saturday afternoon of every month. The stand is in a prime position next to the Library shop, and attracts much attention. Since this time happily coincides with the discussion sessions arranged in Brighton in the mornings of that date, manning the stand could conveniently be combined with attendance there, and he circulated a form giving the forthcoming dates and hoped Members would sign up for sessions.
- Cricketers' discussion session report
Gisela Hendriks said the monthly discussions had now been running for nearly three years. There had been some problems with the venue at The Cricketers, which was not available in the summer months, and the alternative at the Crown & Anchor had not proved very suitable. Another venue would be sought for 2013. Although the group usually consisted of the same people, there were often two or three new attendees. Topics had included the rise of the extreme Right in Europe, the Eurozone crisis, and the position of the UK within Europe. Responding to a request from the floor that a programme of future topics be circulated to Members, Gisela replied that the group wished to concentrate on issues as they arose. For example, at the December meeting it would be considering articles in the newspapers resulting from the forthcoming EU Summit Meeting. Thanks were expressed to Gisela for the considerable efforts she had made to organise the group.
- Treasurer's report
The Treasurer reported no changes to the Branch's financial position since the previous year as it has no significant income or expenditure. The two major events of the year were self-financing and did not produce any profit, and subscriptions go to the national office. A full spreadsheet is provided to the Committee before each meeting, and full financial details can be provided to Members on request. Substantial grants had been received for the Citizens of Europe website, which is not included in the Branch accounts. In the foreseeable future it is likely there will be a demand for campaigning events, but the costs would be more than the Branch could sustain. The democratic deficit exposed by the elections for the new PCCs is not encouraging. Ila asked if money was available for further Francois Duchene bursaries, and the Chairman replied that the scheme would continue for the next year, but this would exhaust the available funds.
Adoption of assessor for the accounts Marilyn Dodd had agreed to continue as assessor for the year.

6. Election of officers and committee for 2012-13

The following were nominated as willing to stand as officers and members of the Committee. No post was contested and the nominations were proposed en bloc by Sarah Leigh, seconded by Stephen Quigley and carried unanimously.

Acting Chairman – Kate Evans
Secretary – Betty Rider
Treasurer – Chris Jones
Members – Illa Hayward
Oliver Hayward
Gisela Hendriks
Terry Metheringham
Martin Toomey
Martin Vasey

Before taking the Chair, Kate Evans, on behalf of the entire Branch, expressed appreciation for the seven years of Sarah's tenure, during which time her leadership had put the Branch on the map nationally - the name 'Sussex' was frequently cited in the Minutes of the Branches Forum meetings. She presented a commemorative gift to Sarah on behalf of the Committee, and said it was sincerely hoped that, although no longer on the Committee, she would remain an active Branch Member

7. Plans for the next year

Once again it was intended that the annual Seminar, organised by Kate Evans and Michael Rider, would take place at Alfriston, on 9 May 2013. Since arrangements at Deans Place had provided value for money, and been largely approved, Kate had been discussing with the management using the same format again, with flexibility for people to arrange their lunch break as they wished. The Speakers envisaged would be: Sir Stephen Wall on the advantages to the UK of a positive engagement with Europe; Alan Mayhew of the Sussex European Institute at UoS on reforming EU structures and priorities; and Stephen Quigley on the work of his team on EU Citizenship.

8. Citizens of Europe website

Christopher Jones reported that this had been developed for schools over four years, intended for inclusion in the Citizenship part of the curriculum - although of the 14 modules in this area the EU came 13th. Unfortunately, in a packed curriculum teachers sometimes tended to skip over this and proceed straight to 'global' matters. Following advice on the needs of teachers, fact sheets and lesson plans were now available on the site, and a full package of information on each member state - and some associated states, e.g. Russia. At the suggestion of teachers, the subject of migration is now covered. There is now a tremendous amount of information available - the problem lies in keeping it up to date. In the past year, the site has been clearly divided between resources for students and teachers; a key word search facility is available; and an adult 'fun-type' version is envisaged. It is, however, hard to market the website and could be costly: e.g. the Times Educational Supplement would probably include editorial and/or comment, following placement of an advertisement (at a cost of about £1000). Stephen Quigley said the team had joined the Association of Citizenship Teachers, but at a conference their stall had been outclassed by a large adjacent EU stand.

Sarah Leigh congratulated the team of Christopher Jones, Stephen Quigley and Margaret Tuccori for the tremendous amount of work they had put into this development and their achievements. The Branch continued to rely on Christopher Jones for management of the Sussex Branch website.

9. Any other business

From the floor there was a request that any change in the timing and format of the Annual General Meeting be notified to Members in advance. This was agreed. There was no further business.