



# The Campaign for Homosexual Equality

## Minutes of the 2019 Annual Conference

Held at the London Friend Office on 14 December 2019

### 1 Conference Opening

- 1.1 The meeting was called to order at 2.30 pm with 19 people (members and guests) present. Apologies for absence were received from 10 members and guests.
- 1.2 Peter Burman was appointed to chair the Conference sessions. Peter Burman and Nettie Pollard were appointed to form the Steering Committee.
- 1.3 Peter Scott-Presland and John Marshall were nominated to form the Appeals Committee (subject to their subsequent agreement, as they were not present).
- 1.4 Notification was received of one Emergency Motion - concerning the LGB Alliance.
- 1.5 Peter Burman expressed his thanks to Ross Burgess for all his work in preparing the Annual Report and arranging the Conference in this and recent years, and this sentiment was echoed by those present at the meeting.

### 2 CHE Annual General Meeting

#### 2.1 Approval of the Minutes of the 2018 AGM

The Minutes, handed out at the meeting, were read and adopted unanimously. Matters arising from the Minutes:

**Millivres-Prowler Photographic Archive** - Ross Burgess reported that Peter Scott-Presland had found out that the situation about the loss of the Archive was not as bad as we had at first thought. Further details would be sought and reported to the membership.

**The Emergency Motion regarding a member being deported to Nigeria** - Nettie Pollard reported that there had been two further hearings about the repatriation of the member to allow him to conduct his appeal but that no decision had yet been made about allowing him to return to the UK; however, a new solicitor and barrister, both with experience of representing deported LGBT people, had been found to represent him at those hearings and she was hopeful of a positive outcome.

#### 2.2 Approval of the Statement of Accounts for 2018

The Treasurer, Ross Burgess, informed the meeting that, due to awaiting bank statements, the Audit of the 2017 and 2018 Accounts had not yet taken place; once those statements have been received, the auditing of the accounts would take place; he also pointed out that the income from Proquest was in respect of royalties for sales of CHE publications that had been digitised, as detailed in the Annual Report. The Treasurer's Statement, as detailed in the Annual Report 2019, of the unaudited accounts for 2018 was adopted unanimously.

#### 2.3 Approval of the Annual Report for 2019

The Annual Report, which had been circulated beforehand, was adopted unanimously. Matters arising from the Annual Report:

**ProQuest digitisation** - Ross Burgess pointed out that although ProQuest had intended to include the CHE Women's Newsletter in their project, they had not found any copies in the Hall-Carpenter Archives; Nettie Pollard offered to look into this and to see whether any copies could be found.

**Tony Cross** - Peter Burman reminded the meeting of the sad loss of another long-standing CHE member and Vice President, and asked for a minute's silence to commemorate him and others, including Dr Jonathan Miller, and this was duly observed.

**Feminist Library** - Nettie Pollard reported that the Library had now moved into new premises, and

had thanked CHE for our donation towards their cause.

## 2.4 Reports and Updates:

**Membership and Administration** - Ross Burgess and Peter Burman reported that work had been undertaken on making the records compliant with the GDPR, and that eventually the work would be handled by Metro on our behalf.

**Amiable Warriors** - Ross Burgess reported on behalf of Peter Scott-Presland that work was still progressing on Volume 2; Peter had expressed his wish to seek someone to collaborate with him in finishing the Volume, and that he felt he would be unable to work on Volume 3 and was therefore seeking a writer who, under his direction, could produce that Volume. The audio interviews that Peter had undertaken, and their transcriptions, would eventually be lodged with the Bishopsgate Institute; their availability for researchers would depend upon privacy and data protection considerations. Ross also reported that we were seeking another publisher for Volumes 2 & 3; our current publisher, Paradise Press, had been having troubles with their own website and with their sales through Amazon.

**LGBT History Festival** - Ross Burgess reported that he and Nick Billingham had attended the pre-launch event in Oxford in November 2019. CHE had again provided £500 in funding for the pre-launch, and a further £500 for the Allan Horsfall Lecture, expected to take place in May 2020. Further funding would depend on how the future of CHE pans out.

**The LGBT Archive** - Ross Burgess reported on the continued growth of the Archive, and invited people to volunteer to write articles for inclusion.

**Edward Carpenter** - Peter Burman reported that this year was the 175th anniversary of Edward Carpenter's birth and therefore an appropriate point to celebrate his life, including his support for LGBT people and his challenging of restrictive Victorian conventions.

## 2.5 Questions to the Executive Committee - None.

# 3 Motion on the future of CHE

## Motion proposed by the Executive Committee:

*This Conference, having noted the Executive Committee's proposals for the future of CHE, as laid out in the Annual Report for 2019, authorises the EC to proceed with the formation of a 'trust' or equivalent to take over CHE's funds and be responsible for the publication and marketing of Amiable Warriors, and the winding up of CHE in its present form, to be approved by an extraordinary meeting of Conference during 2020.*

Ross Burgess and Peter Burman reminded the meeting of the motion passed at last year's AGM calling on the Executive Committee to explore the possibility of CHE forming a partnership with another organisation or of CHE transforming itself into a grant-awarding trust. They outlined the work that had been done since then and drew the meeting's attention to the draft Constitution of the CHE Fund, which was handed out.

The draft Constitution was read and discussed. The general consensus of the discussion was that this was a viable and reasonable way forward given the reduced membership and volunteer effort available to carry on running CHE as it is.

Several people expressed the hope that if we to have no further AGMs we could at least have an annual reunion.

Two amendments were proposed and agreed:

1. After "to proceed" add "*after consulting with a solicitor*".
2. After "Amiable Warriors" add: "*and to support other projects which further the exploration and appreciation of LGBT+ history*".

**Following discussion, the Motion as proposed and amended was carried unanimously.**

## 4 Emergency Motion

### **Motion proposed by Nettie Pollard.**

*This AGM reaffirms its commitment to TS and non-binary rights and support for CHE's Trans members.*

*The recently formed Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Alliance have now announced their launch meeting on 28th January. The Alliance opposes changes to the Gender Recognition Act, treatment for gender dysphoria for under 18s, and mention of transsexuality in schools, and supports women only 'safe spaces' excluding those born with male characteristics. They oppose self-definition of gender.*

*CHE commits itself to opposition to the aims of the LGB Alliance.*

Nettie Pollard explained that she believed the LGB Alliance had been formed to demonise trans people, and that LGBT people should be denouncing their views and campaigning against any efforts to promote discrimination against trans people.

It is believed they have wealthy backers, with £26,000 already in funds, and they are planning to employ 3 or 4 full time staff. Their launch meeting is expected to be arranged by private text messaging to vetted members only.

Nettie reminded the meeting that CHE has offered strong support to trans people and for trans rights, and she urged the meeting to support the motion.

**After discussion, the Motion as proposed was carried unanimously.**

## 5 Constitutional Amendments

None received.

## 6 Invitation to join the Executive Committee

Ross Burgess reminded the meeting that it was normal practice to hold an election for places on the Executive Committee but due to the uncertainty on the future of CHE this had not formally been arranged. He did however ask if any member wanted to put themselves forward for election they should inform him.

[Post-meeting note: no nominations were received, so the existing Executive Committee has continued in office]

Ross also stated that the proposed 'Trust' or equivalent would in due course need people to run it. He asked for anyone interested in this to inform him of their intentions.

## 7 Film Showing - *Are You Proud?*

Regrettably, the film was unable to be shown due to a problem with the display equipment.

The Director, Ashley Joiner, was unable to attend due to personal reasons. However, Nettie Pollard, who appeared in the film being interviewed, gave a short resume and hoped members would obtain a copy of the film for their own viewing.

## 8 Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 5.00 pm. Votes of thanks were given to the organisers and speakers.