



**ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST
THE CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA**

Minutes of the 46th Annual General Meeting, held online via Zoom on Saturday 26th October 2024

OSME Chairman Dr. Rob Sheldon opened the meeting at 10:05

Twelve members were present.

1. Apologies for absence

- **The following members had sent their apologies in advance of the meeting:** John Warr, Effie Warr, Su Gough, Richard Porter and Alexander Scherbina.

2. Minutes of the 45th Annual General Meeting (18th November 2023)

- The draft minutes were posted on the OSME website soon after the previous meeting.

3. Matters arising

- No comments received and the attendees voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

4. Chairman's report for 2023

- Chairman Dr. Rob Sheldon gave a short presentation, highlighting some of the main activities and achievements of the year.
- The Conservation Fund awarded a total of £25,236 in 8 grants across 6 countries.
- The Youth Development Fund continues to grow in terms of expenditure and the range of projects, with £20,244 being awarded to 8 projects across 5 countries.
- OSME's journal *Sandgrouse* was published in two high quality volumes (45/1&2), with papers across all parts of the OSME region, including work supported by the Conservation Fund.
- Active communication via Facebook, blogs on the website, several e-newsletters. OSME had a stand at the Global Birdfair which is the main opportunity to meet face-to-face with members and supporters.
- Overall, a very successful year thanks to the continued support of our members, corporate sponsors and many supporters.
- Many thanks to all OSME Council members for their hard work throughout the year.

5. Treasurer's report and adoption of the Accounts for 2023

- Joint Treasurer Chris Hughes gave a short presentation highlighting the key expenditure and finances for the year.
- Significant growth in expenditure on the various small grants programmes, largely due to increased donations and sponsor money of which the Treasurer gave thanks.
- Fewer paying members although rate of decline is slowing.
- Overall, a year-end balance of £194,927
- Joint Treasurer John Warr was given a special mention for his assiduous day to day management of OSME's payments, receipts and records.
- Chris Hughes invited comments and the following suggestions were made by Paul Goriupp:
 - Could there be differentiated member fees, for online and paper *Sandgrouse*.
 - Could pre-publication versions of papers be released ahead of the full issue of *Sandgrouse*.
 - Open access online for *Sandgrouse*.

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- OSME Chairman thanked Paul Goriup for the suggestions and all options will be considered in the future as part of a broader strategy discussion.

6. Appointment of Accounts Examiner for 2024

- Mike Jennings was formally approved by the members present to continue as Accounts Examiner (*gratis*) for the 2024 Accounts.

7. Election of Officers

- The following are content to continue in office: Murray Brown (2020-2025); Ian Harrison (2021-2026); Dr. Marko Halonen (Secretary 2022-2027); Tomas Axén Haraldsson (2022-2027); Chris Hughes (Treasurer 2023-2028); Dr. Rob Sheldon (Chairman 2023-2028); Dr. Simon Tull (2023-2028); Simon Awad (2023-2028); Su Gough (2023-2028).
- Georgia Locock term ends and is not seeking re-election. Phil Roberts stepped down from Council in May 2024
- Dr. Paul Donald (*Sandgrouse* Editor) term ended at this AGM but will continue for a further 5-year period (2029). Attendees voted unanimously to approve the re-election of Dr Paul Donald to OSME Council.
- The following co-opted Council Members (appointed by the elected Council) will continue: John Warr (Joint Treasurer); Effie Warr (Membership); Abdul Rahman Al Sirhan (Website Manager); and Mike Blair.

8. Any other business

- Discussion on the suggestions of distributing *Sandgrouse* and its costs. There are several options available: Open-access, digital distribution only, increasing founding for conservations. *The Chairman responded that all options will be considered in the future as part of a broader OSME Strategy.*
- The AGM clashed with African Bird Club AGM and this should be coordinated in the future. *The Chairman confirmed that this was an oversight, and we'll try our best to avoid this in the future.*
- It was suggested that AGM email-reminders should be sent earlier than one week before the meeting. *The Chairman acknowledged that notices and reminders were later than usual and this will be rectified in the future.*

The AGM ended at 10:54am UK time