**INSTITUTE OF QUARRYING – WEST OF ENGLAND BRANCH**

**98th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Monday 22nd January 2024 At 17.30 Hrs

Held At

The Doubletree By Hilton North Bristol,

Woodlands Lane, Bradley Stoke, BS32 4JF

**MINUTES**

1. The Chair, Otto Karhunen (OK) called the meeting to order and welcomed members. Following a brief housekeeping announcement relating to exits etc, OK reviewed the AGM Agenda item running order.
2. Branch Secretary, Rod Noble (RN) advised that no apologies had been received
3. RN advised that there were no Matters Arising
4. RN invited OK to present his report

**Chairman’s Report for 2023 -** IQ West of England Branch

**Otto Karhunen**

Good evening and thank you all for joining us for tonight’s AGM of the West of England Branch. I’m always grateful for the opportunity to take a moment to reflect on how much we have achieved as a Branch and as an industry.

We started 2023 in an environment of high inflation and rapidly rising interest rates, severely impacting consumer confidence and resulting in a gloomy outlook for our industry. However, construction activity remained fairly strong for longer than anticipated through the Spring and Summer, giving some hope that we might be pleasantly surprised by the resilience of the UK economy.

Against this backdrop, we held our first Technical Event of the year with an excellent webinar looking at case studies of biodiversity improvements from quarrying restoration schemes and how managers can impact this during operations. Still feeling the impacts from the turnover in the HSE, Mark Stallard stood in to hold our in-person “Hot Topics” technical evening which was well received and well-attended. We then hosted Orica for our next Technical Evening on digital blasting technology and services.

Just before breaking up for the summer, we were lucky enough to host three groups for a visit to O.C.O Technology’s Avonmouth plant, looking at their innovative process to produce carbon negative aggregates. We did also attempt our first social event with a Family friendly cycle trip along the Strawberry Line with a few faithful committee members braving the poor forecast. The plan is to focus even more on social events in 2024 and we look forward to sharing a few laughs with you in a relaxed, informal environment.

We closed out the year with further Technical Evenings on Leadership & Workforce engagement and Geotechnical reflections and the importance of good professional relationships. Hybrid events were once again trialed and once again thwarted by technology issues - I apologise and can only thank you for your patience whilst we work through this with the budgetary and venue constraints we have.

Heading into the second half of the year, it seems the impact of high interest rates were finally beginning to impact our industry in earnest and regretfully we are faced once again with a year of miserable output forecasts and economic gloom.

It is against this backdrop that we held our first Dinner Dance in 6 years. A major change going forward is that we have taken the decision to hold this as the South West Regional Event with Devon & Cornwall Branch, easing the pressure on Suppliers to attend multiple events and improving networking opportunities and attendance, whilst taking some of the pressure of us as committee. The intention is next year’s Dance will be hosted by Devon & Cornwall in an easily accessible location for us to attend in turn. Although this decision was made when the market didn’t look quite so dire, I still firmly believe that holding the Dinner Dance this year is the right thing to do. This event is the highlight of every IQ Branches’ calendar and the perfect opportunity to reward hardworking members. It also provides one of the only income streams the Branch has. We are now fully committed to the event and its success will be down to you, the members, being there.

Serving as Chairman the last 2 years has been a real privilege for me. It is at times a demanding role, but I’ve been extremely fortunate to have such a strong and helpful committee behind me, without whom this Branch wouldn’t function, so I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to them all. Finally, I want to close by thanking everyone who has supported the Branch again this year, by both giving and attending our technical evenings. This year our members logged the highest number of CPD hours of any Branch nationally, something we can be extremely proud of, and I hope this is something we can repeat with our packed programme of Technical Evenings and Field Trips this year.

Thank you,

A signature on a white background

Description automatically generated

**Otto Karhunen MIQ**

5. RN thanked OK and invited the Branch Treasurer, Mike Jones-Tovey (MJT) to present his Report

Treasurer Report for 2023 – IQ West of England |Branch

This year we have continued to hold events which has meant the account has been hit, while not holding any activities to raise monies. The AGM was a success and gave us a suitable profit for the event.

There was no income from donations during 2023. But we did make a donation as part of one of the technical talks.

The expenditure on technical evenings and the CPD day came to a total of £1350 which includes room hire and buffet.

As previously mentioned, we were being charged for the use of an online account this led to bank charges of £40. At which point we then transferred over to Lloyds Bank where it is free.

We have gone to be independent on the banking with now taking payments directly rather than putting on the Head office.

The main aims of 2024 are to fund raise with the Annual Dinner Dance kicking off again and provide the branch with a pay by card terminal for when we attend face to face events.

Balance sheet – Prepared by Brian Rexworthy and circulated before the meeting

Surplus Income- Is down by (1061.00) due Mainly to the technical evenings and lack of raising funds.

Cash in the bank = £13,385.70

Which leaves us healthy to be able to plan the dinner dance and book the right activities for the evening.

MJT was open to questions but none were forthcoming

Michael Jones-Tovey

18.1.2024

6. RN thanked MJT and invited the Branch Council Representative, Steve Cole (SC) to present his Report

**Council Report by Branch Representative for 2023 AGM**

This year there have been two branch officer meetings by Teams and one face to face

meeting at Nottingham. All meetings were well attended.

Branches across the country are generally thriving although Lancashire and North Wales

are struggling with to get support for branch meetings.

There has been discussion over Online and Hybrid technical meetings. These have

generally proved successful and resulted in higher attendances, although occasions the

technology has not performed well, resulting in poor presentations. Derby is looking into

what better technology is available to improve matters.

The two big events this year have been 1) securing planning permission for the new centre

of excellence for the industry at the National Stone Centre. Fundraising is now pressing

ahead to make the concept a reality and 2) the appointment of James Thorne as the Joint

CEO for IQ and MPQC. The purpose of this is to align systems and processes in order to

provide greater value to the members of both organisations. For the wider industry it will

also provide unity on standards

Minerals Matter – Future Careers has continued to develop with many links created with

other educational facilities. An important part of the project is to get into schools with

STEM ambassadors. There is always a need for more people in this role and perhaps if not

already involved something members might like to consider. Contact Derby for further

information.

The interest in the new Chartered Engineer qualification has been disappointing. It is ideal

for members who are or have been unable to attend full or part-time education in the

industry. It is usually a requirement to have some form of higher education to enrol. The

process can progress at the candidate’s own pace depending on their workload. Please

contact Derby for further information.

The IQ Benevolent Fund continues to support members and their dependents and they

have been appreciative of contributions received during the year, which has enabled the

work to continue. Some of you may have seen the presentation by Wanda at a recent

branch meeting where she outlined a few case studies of how IQBF has supported people.

If you are aware of any members or their families with difficulties, financial or otherwise,

please ensure they are made aware of the support IQBF can offer or perhaps contact

Wanda.

Once again there was a very successful Fellows Lunch held in London this year to recognise

the student achievement through Derby University. An additional item in 2023 was the

presentation of the Institute of Quarrying’s Emerald Challenge award which has been

created to support, and recognise, IQ members as they develop projects and research

ideas to help their organisations and the wider industry meet global environmental

challenges. The award went to two projects 1) a project to reduce the carbon emissions

through better management of blast design and 2) a project to protect the environment

through preventing pollution of water courses.

If you have any queries or require any support Derby are always at the end of a phone or will respond to an email to assist in any way they can.

Steve Cole

Council Representative

7. RN thanks SC and moved on to the Branch Elections, RN announced that the positions being elected were Chair, Deputy and elect new and reaffirm existing committee members

As nominations had been received, RN proceeded to read the full list (see below) and asked if there were any others before proceeding.

A proposer and seconder was required for each and a show of hands requested to vote in each new post, noted by RN as below:

Chair : **Gary Edmends** proposer . Otto Karhunen. . seconder . Dave McGinty . .

Deputy Chair : **David McGinty** proposer . Mark Hughes . . . seconder . Ben Dormer. . . .

Committee Member : **Mark Stallard** proposer . Gary Edmends . seconder .Dave McGinty. .

Committee Member : **Matt Gilbert** proposer . Rod Noble . . . . seconder . Mark Hughes . .

Committee Member : **Alex Johnson** proposer . Otto Karhunen. seconder . Dave McGinty. .

Following the conclusion of the new elections, RN announced that there were no re-elections of the 3 yearly cycle but it is good practice to obtain the agreement of members every year for the branch officers and committee.

RN asked if there were any objections (none were forthcoming) so asked for a show of hands to vote in the existing committee for another year.

RN concluded the elections and handed back over to OK

OK then said a few words extolling the virtues of his time in the role of chair, being an honour and privilege to have served the Branch and was now time to pass the baton to new Chair Gary Edmends

There was no other business, the chair announced the next event as:

Monday 12th February – **The Importance of Geology in Quarrying**

Ruth Allington – President of The Geological Society **-** \***Webinar\***

**Start time 15.30**

The chair thanked the members for attending and advised that the bar was open and that the meal would be served from 18.30 in the Redcliffe Rooms 2 and 3.

The meeting was closed at 18.00

Rod Noble

Branch Secretary