



## **The British Malaysian Society**

### **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting Held at the Oriental Club, Stratford Place, London at 6.00 pm on Thursday 21 June 2018**

#### **1. Apologies**

There were 46 attendees and apologies were received from 15 members.

#### **2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 15 June 2017**

The minutes of last year's meeting were approved.

#### **3. Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

#### **4. Chairman's report**

The Chairman, Anthony Cooper, welcomed all those attending. He was pleased to see that Mr Charles Hay, who will be the next British High Commissioner to Malaysia, was present.

Although the BMS is a non- political Society the Chairman said that he had written to Tun Dr Mahathir congratulating him on his election as Prime Minister and reminded members that Tun Dr Mahathir, the Malaysian Prime Minister in 1983, had supported the formation of the BMS when it was founded.

In 2017 the BMS had continued to be active and again hosted 14 events, including two jointly with other organisations. Five of the events were on education and culture, three on business matters and only one was topical. As this year was the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Merdeka more emphasis was put on education and cultural events, the highlight of which was the Merdeka Concert held at St Lawrence Jewry organised by our two Deputy Chairwomen, Zehan Albakri-Verden and Mei Sim Lai . Distinguished Malaysian musicians performed at this concert led by Bobby Chen who also played pieces composed by Malaysian students who had won BMS Awards. We finished the year with a Merdeka Chairman's Reception at the House of Lords, which was the last of the five networking and social events held each year.

During 2017 and continuing into 2018 members have been invited to many other events organised by the Malaysian High Commission, MATRADE, MIDA, the Sarawak Association and others. Particular thanks must go to the Malaysian High Commissioner, HE Dato' Ahmad Rasidi Hazizi, for his support of the Society during his tenure in London. Dato' Rasidi has now returned to Kuala Lumpur and the Chairman wished him well in his retirement. At the same time the British High Commissioner to Malaysia, HE Mrs Vicki Treadell, has also been supportive of the Society and continued to give an annual talk in London on "the State of the Nation".

The Chairman said that he had now completed some three and a half most enjoyable years as the BMS Chairman and thanked the President, Sir Mark Moody-Stuart, and all the members of the Executive Committee for their support and for all the energy and time they have all committed to enhancing the work of the Society. Without their enthusiasm and engagement little would have been achieved. Many of the Committee, and especially Dato' Neville Green, Dato' Zed Cama and Michael Thompson who are retiring, have served the BMS over a long period. He further highlighted the devotion to figures of the Treasurer, Peter Farrar, whose careful control of the finances over nearly ten years had ensured that the Society is in a very healthy position. He paid further tribute to all the extra efforts made by the ladies on the Committee whose contributions have been enormous. He said that he was delighted to be succeeded by one of them, Mei Sim Lai, who had worked tirelessly over the past year, including travelling to a number of Malaysian events where there has been student involvement.

The Chairman concluded by wishing Mei Sim Lai and her new Committee every success in meeting the challenges ahead in ensuring that the Society continued to be relevant to its members and the wider British Malaysian community. He commented on the need to have better engagement with Malaysian students, more involvement with business, both Malaysian and British, and a closer relationship with the Malaysia British Society in Kuala Lumpur.

## **5. Treasurer's Report and 2017 annual accounts**

The Treasurer advised that the annual accounts for 2017 have been signed and loaded onto the website. The Treasurer thanked Simon Hoy of Anova who are our independent examiners.

2017 was another year of growth for membership especially younger members. To date we have 16 corporate members, 133 individual members and 35 student members. Our website has proved a valuable source of new members, especially students. The Treasurer thanked all members for their continued support, especially some of our corporate members for their provision of meeting venues and refreshments.

Our financial position remains very strong, with substantial reserves. We have again put on a strong programme of events which we can maintain for the foreseeable future.

Finally the Treasurer announced that this would be the last AGM at which he would present the accounts as he intended to stand down during 2018. He thanked all those who have supported him in carrying out his office for the last ten years.

**6. Proposal to amend the Society's constitution to change the designation of the Independent Examiner from "suitably qualified auditor" to "suitably qualified accountant"**

The Treasurer explained that the need for this amendment is that Anova, our auditors, have given up their audit registration, in common with many other smaller firms following the increased burden of the regulations, and could now only provide an "Independent examiner's report". Given that the cost of a full audit could not be justified, and the scope of work Anova would carry out would be broadly comparable, the Executive Committee proposed that the Society's constitution should be slightly amended to accommodate this change.

The proposal was carried unanimously.

**7. Re-election of Anova as Independent Examiner**

The Treasurer proposed that Anova be appointed as Independent Examiner for the financial year 2018, which was duly seconded and agreed.

**8. Election of the Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee proposed the following resolution, which was adopted:

The following members of the Executive Committee are willing to stand again for election and, accordingly, the Executive Committee proposes that, being eligible, they be elected.

Lai Mei Sim OBE DL (Chair)  
Dr Euvian Tan (Hon Secretary)  
Peter Farrar (Hon Treasurer)  
Stephanie Cheong (Events Organiser)  
Zehan Albakri-Verden  
Martin Barrow CBE  
Haliza Hashim-Doyle  
Rahiyah Yahya

The proposal was carried unanimously and the above-mentioned members were elected.

The newly elected Chairman, Lai Mei Sim, then announced that, following the Executive Committee meeting earlier that afternoon the following members had been selected to serve on the Executive Committee which proposed that they be elected:

Simon Clinton  
Bennett Pape  
David Pittaway QC  
Christopher Scott  
Robin Stevens  
Carole Still  
David Stringer-Lamarre

The proposal was carried unanimously and the above-mentioned members were elected.

## **9. Any other business**

A member asked about the implications of new data protection regulations (GDPR) and was the Society prepared. The Treasurer responded that the Executive Committee had considered the issue at length and concluded that the Society did comply. Specifically, as a members' organisation we were entitled to apply the concept of "legitimate interest", in that we can only meet our obligations by keeping in touch with members, and therefore did not need to get consent for us to contact them. All we are required to do is ensure that all mailings make it clear that the recipient can unsubscribe at any time.

Mei Sim Lai, as incoming Chairman, thanked retiring Chairman, Anthony Cooper, for all he had achieved during his term of office. She then reminded members of our upcoming events including HE Vicki Treadell's talk on 28 June, Ashly Nandong's presentation at the Prince's School of Traditional Arts on 5 July and the Eid dinner on 12 July.

The Chairman closed the AGM at 6.28pm and the President, Sir Mark Moody-Stuart, invited members to join the reception.