



## **The British Malaysian Society**

### **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting Tuesday 29 June 2020 at 5.00pm via Zoom**

#### **1. Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies noted from Andrea Maiolla, Bobby Chen, Martin Gilbert, Dato Kah Ming Ng and Rahiya Yahya who were not able to attend.

#### **2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 25 June 2019**

The minutes of last year's meeting were approved.

#### **3. Matters arising not dealt with on the Agenda**

There were no matters arising.

#### **4. Chairman's Report and updates from Executive Committee and Subgroups**

The Chairman, Mei Sim Lai welcomed all those attending.

The Chairman reiterated her main focus areas and ambitions for the BMS, including growth, finance, profile, events and membership. In 2019 the BMS had continued to be active and again hosted and attended numerous events with a balanced mix of business, cultural and educational themes. The BMS has diverse membership and the Executive Committee will continue efforts in recruiting new members.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Chairman emphasised the importance of maintaining our engagement with the members and had invested in a Zoom package to hold virtual events. A BMS Zoom production team led by David Stringer-Lamarre and Carole Still had also been created to support virtual events for the remainder of 2020.

The BMS had made donations to two Covid-19 related causes, Mercy Malaysia UK and to some members of poor communities in the East coast of Malaysia that was not able to access government help. The Chairman also thanked BMS members who personally donated to these appeals and to the UKEC Student Appeal which BMS publicised for them.

The Secretary, Dr Euvian Tan, announced the resignation of Rahiyah Yahya and thanked her on behalf of BMS for serving on the Board. This was followed by the announcement of four

new BMS members who have agreed to be co-opted onto the BMS Executive Committee: (i) Gavin Wilkins; (ii) Navin Sivaganam; (iii) Alex Swan; and (iv) Rav Roberts.

In terms of Marketing and Communications, further website development will continue in collaboration with the Membership subgroup to pilot and run the CRM system more effectively to streamline membership management and payment process. Robin Stevens would lead and reactivate the BMS Newsletter to ensure regular engagement and communication with members.

David Stringer-Lamarre provided a brief report on student engagement (on behalf of Stephanie Cheong). Ongoing liaison with UKEC, the umbrella body for Malaysian students in the UK & Eire is working well and BMS is also keeping in touch with Education Malaysia at the Malaysian High commission in London. Navin Sivanganam had also set up the BMS-UKEC Mentorship Programme and the Young Professionals Group and both initiatives would be expanded in the coming months.

The Culture subgroup lead, Zehan Albakri-Verden, provided a brief overview on the BMS New Year event at the British Museum. BMS had switched to holding virtual events starting with the Eid Hari Raya Virtual Party in May 2020 which was a great success with Malay poetry reading, silat demonstration and music performances by both members and invited guests. The Tourism subgroup lead, Martin Barrow, shared his tourism perspective in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and emphasised the importance of both UK and Malaysia tourism sectors working together to resolve common issues.

The Trade and Investment subgroup lead, David Stringer-Lamarre, noted the rescheduling of the BMS Business Delegation to Kuala Lumpur event due to Covid-19 pandemic. An informal virtual gathering was organised for all those interested in joining the BMS delegation which is likely to take place in Spring 2021n subject to the pandemic being over.

Finally, members who would like to be more involved with the Society were invited to express their interest in any specific areas they would like to help with, such as social media, digital communications and events organisation.

## **5. Treasurer's Report and 2019 Independently Examined Accounts**

Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2019 were approved. The Treasurer highlighted our healthy financial position with more than adequate reserves. Subscription income rose by 19% in 2019 with corporate membership representing 53% of the total sum of £16,899. IT costs rose almost three-fold in 2019, representing a third of total expenses. This was due to one-off costs associated with the creation of a new website and CRM system totalling £2,284.

With a 19% rise in income and a smaller 14.7% increase in expenses, the surplus for 2019 rose by 23% to £9,300. Net assets carried forward at the year-end rose to £44,111. Cash balance rose by 28% to £51,686 at the year-end as a result of the surplus achieved and a rise of £3,452 in the charity/student funds held as well as the fund held on behalf of the ASEAN Societies. Events income and expenses fell by 9.6% and 11.2% respectively, resulting in a 16.8% reduction in the deficit to £4,149 (due mainly to two events which were free for members, the 2019 Christmas drinks and the Welcome Reception for the new Malaysian High Commissioner). BMS also received sponsorship of £1,000 during 2019 and members

attended the majority of events at no charge.

## **6. Re-election of Joe Lee of Leftley Rowe & Co as the Independent Examiner for 2020-2021**

The Chairman proposed that Joe Lee, Partner at Leftley Rowe & Co be re-appointed as the Independent Examiner for the financial year 2020-2021 This was duly seconded and agreed. The Chairman thanked Joe Lee, for his work on the 2019 accounts.

## **7. Election of the Executive Committee**

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

That the following members of the Executive Committee, including those co-opted since the last AGM, it being assumed that being eligible for re-election they so offer themselves, be elected:

Mei Sim Lai OBE (Chairman)  
Dr Euvian Tan (Hon Secretary)  
Stuart Eu (Hon Treasurer)  
Stephanie Cheong  
Martin Barrow  
Zehan Albakri-Verden  
Simon Clinton  
Bennett Pape  
David Pittaway QC  
Robin Stevens  
Carole Still  
David Stringer-Lamarre  
Christopher Scott

New co-opted members at 2020 AGM:

Rav Roberts  
Navin Sivanganam  
Alex Swan  
Gavin Wilkins

Resignations since 2019 AGM:

Rahiyah Yahya

## **8. Any other urgent business**

The President, Sir Mark Moody-Stuart, thanked the Chairman for her leadership and efforts in raising the profile of the BMS. He also thanked the Executive Committee for their services across different aspects to ensure the smooth running and further development of the Society.

The Chairman closed the AGM and invited members to join an online session on the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the UN Global Compact and the UK Local Network. The

session was led by Sir Mark Moody-Stuart who is the Chairman of the UN Foundation for the Global Compact. He was also joined by Steve Kenzie, the Executive Director of UN Global Compact UK since 2008.