

MINUTES of AEJ UK Section AGM, at Europe House, January 27, 2017, 11.15-12.15.

Chaired by William Horsley. 15 members were present. Apologies for absence: Michael Springate, Nick Hopkinson.

Treasurer's Report:

In Michael Springate's absence William raised some points from the Treasurer's written report. There was a 'comfortable amount' in hand. The free rooms at Europe House were in demand and new rules aimed to limit any organisation to 3 bookings per year in the large meeting-rooms. William was in discussion with the Europe House management; the downstairs dining room and upstairs briefing room, could also be used, but they are smaller. There was discussion about the overspend on catering caused by no-shows, student subsidies and caterer's costs. Margaret had been reducing wine and food orders and would continue to monitor quantities. Members agreed to keep the wine on the side to cut down on unfinished bottles. Any members with suggestions for more competitive catering should contact Margaret. The lunch price charged to attend meetings would remain at £25.00.

Chairman's Report:

William presented his written report. The UK section had been represented by six members at the International Congress in Kilkenny, which had been well-organised in a beautiful part of Ireland. David Barker was now regularly posting material about media freedom and Brexit on the website; any member who would like to contribute original AEJ-relevant material or links to articles should contact David or William. William and some other members were aiming to write summaries of guest meetings to post on the website. Firdevs Robinson has set up the section's social media presence and is now posting items on our Twitter and Facebook accounts. Members are encouraged to add comments and retweet items. William recommended members to follow the Council of Europe Platform on the Safety of Journalists www.coe.int/fom.

Secretary's Report

Margaret's written report was also circulated. Good lunchtime speakers had been arranged for the first three months of 2017, with April and May so far kept free for topical guests depending on events; suggestions for speakers to David Lennon and William please.

Preparations for UK Section's 50th Anniversary in 2018.

10 years ago there had been a 40th anniversary party. William noted that informal discussions have begun about possibly hosting the 2018 International Congress. With Brexit it would be very topical and might attract up to 100 delegates. He had consulted the Irish (2016 Congress hosts) to map out the main requirements and timescale. We would need sponsorship (maybe £40K+), a good location and a tight organising group. He asked for any specific proposals for a location, venue (hotel) and sponsors to be sent

to him as soon as possible.. A decision to offer to play host in 2018 should be taken by autumn this year, in advance of the 2017 Congress.

Election of Officers

There had been no nominations for new section officers. The existing officers were willing to serve again. So William Horsley (Chairman) Margaret Hughes (Secretary) and Michael Springate (Treasurer) were elected unopposed for a further year. David Lennon would continue as Events Director and David Barker would continue as Website Manager. with Firdevs Robinson looking after the Facebook and Twitter accounts. Tony Robinson proposed a vote of thanks to the officers for their very hard work for the section, with high-quality guests throughout 2016, and pleasant social occasions. The meeting ended with a warm round of applause for the section officers.