

ITEM 10 Motion for discussion at Surrey Area's AGM 2016

This AGM agrees that Surrey Area should submit the following motion to be debated at General Council 2016.

"At General Council 2013 a motion seeking a governance review was carried overwhelmingly. The motion included a request for an interim report on options considered together with a brief rationale for dismissing those rejected and notes on those remaining. General Council agrees that there is no good reason why the Board should not have produced this report. General Council now requires a report on the options relating to the Board of Trustees and General Council (one option being maintaining the status quo) with advantages and disadvantages of each option, the report to be sent to Areas by the end of September 2016."

Background notes.

To enact changes to the organisations governance procedures 75% of the votes of General Council members must be in favour.

To achieve such a high level of acceptance it is essential that the General Council members (on behalf of Areas and thus Groups) have a good understanding of **why** change might be required. They also need to ensure that proposals put forward are sound, sensible and capable of being implemented. To meet this objective dialogue is required.

The motion in 2013 sought to encourage the dialogue by requesting, as stated above, a report on options considered.

To date from the standpoint of the Area it appears that the discussions and proposals on Governance are being produced in secret. An almost incomprehensible tick box survey was carried out in late 2014 – with very poor supporting documentation. There were only about 600 replies. The only recommendation that the Board then proposed to carry forward immediately was One Member One Vote. At General Council 2015 it was clear to the Board that the case for and costs associated with the proposal were inadequately thought through. The motion to introduce One Member One Vote was withdrawn.

In 2015 the Board agreed a phased approach to changes: GC 2016 make our Articles of Association Gender Neutral and easier to read – but with the intention of no substantive changes; GC 2017 to consider any changes to the Way Areas and Groups are run and finally in 2018 to consider both General Council and the Board of Trustees.

The process currently being used to review governance within the Ramblers is unlikely to secure the necessary majority at a future General Council for any significant changes.

We are trying to help get the process back on track so that a reasoned debate can occur and widespread agreement reached on the best set of actions.