



All Party Parliamentary Water Group

Co-Chairs: Angela Smith MP and Baroness McIntosh of Pickering
Vice-Chair: Neil Parish MP
Treasurer: The Earl of Selbourne GBE FRS

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 6 February, 4.30pm, Jubilee Room, House of Commons

1. Welcome

Baroness McIntosh chaired the meeting and welcomed attendees.

2. Election of Group Officers

Earl Selbourne took the chair and nominated Baroness McIntosh as Co-Chair of the APPG and Neil Parish MP as Vice Chair. The nominations were seconded by Lord Mackenzie and The Bishop of Salisbury.

Baroness McIntosh of Pickering nominated Angela Smith MP as Chair and Earl Selbourne as Treasurer. The nominations were seconded by Lord Mackenzie and the Bishop of Salisbury.

Officers were thus elected as follows:

- Chair Angela Smith MP
- Co-Chair: Baroness McIntosh of Pickering
- Treasurer: Earl Selbourne
- Vice Chair: Neil Parish MP

3. Income and expenditure

Connect Communications will continue to act as the APPG's secretariat. The prepared income and expenditure statement was agreed. The current sponsors are as follows:

- Affinity Water
- Future Water Association
- Gemserv
- Northumbrian Water
- Plastic Pipes Group
- Wessex Water

4. AOB

There was no AOB so the AGM was closed.

Water stewardship in the UK and internationally

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The All Party Parliamentary Water Group's meeting was jointly held with the St Paul's Institute to launch the JustWater2017 programme, a series of events designed to bring stakeholders together to highlight the issues around water usage in the UK and internationally.

Guest Speakers:

- Nick Holtam, The Bishop of Salisbury, Church of England's lead bishop for Environmental Affairs
- Rob Fuller, Water Sector Adviser at WaterAid
- The Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin, Speaker's Chaplain and Prebendary at St Paul's Cathedral
- Kathy Hughes, Freshwater Programme and Policy Specialist at WWF

Baroness McIntosh chaired the session and introduced the guest speakers.

The Bishop of Salisbury described water as a "*scarce and valuable commodity*" explaining that only 1% of water on the planet is available for human use. He then went on to discuss environmental concerns relating to water, and said that, as climate change does not accept national boundaries, a global response is needed from the international community. He argued that one of the best ways to tackle climate change, is to address poverty, including addressing the need for water.

He then explained the JustWater2017 initiative, and said that it is designed to be an integrated programme with business, science and the arts to raise awareness of water poverty and build a shared community of action. He said such a movement is important in a world where nationalism has gained a resurgence, and where people are anxious about their livelihood and struggling to address environmental issues.

Rob Fuller agreed with the comments made by the Bishop of Salisbury and said that water connects people across the world. He then discussed Water Aid's work more generally, and said that its success is partly due to its longstanding relationship with the water industry in the UK. He said that in order to reach people across the world who don't have access to clean water, strong political leadership is needed. While the signing of the Sustainable Development Goals was the first step to achieving this, he argued that greater impetus is needed from those with political influence.

Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin spoke about her experience of growing up in a country without access to clean water. She also highlighted the importance of the Sustainable Development Goals, and emphasised that compassion is needed to encourage people to work together and address access to water. Finally, she stressed that Government should ensure that water does not entirely become a profit making business, when it is such a necessity of life.

Kathy Hughes agreed with the points made by other speakers and also emphasised that access to water is an issue to wildlife as well as humans. Focusing on the business need for water, she said that water risk could be one of the biggest inhibitors to growth in the future. As such, businesses should work to develop innovative solutions to the challenges surrounding water supply. She then highlighted a number of projects WWF has been working on in this area, such as working with Coca Cola to mitigate the impact of sugar beet crop in East Anglia.

Baroness McIntosh then opened the floor to questions.

Lord Selbourne asked how international commitments to clean water fit in with tourism in countries where there is a water deficit. **Rob Fuller** said that Governments must ensure that everyone in a country benefits from the proceeds of economic growth. **Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin** agreed and added that working alongside community groups is an important means of ensuring this.

Lord Mackenzie asked about the impact of nationalism on the global response to tackling environmental issues. **The Bishop of Salisbury** re-iterated that environmental issues do not respect national boundaries, meaning that the international community has no option but to work together.

Finally, Baroness McIntosh asked about the impact of Brexit on the EU Water Directive. **Brian Smith from Yorkshire Water** said that the water sector has a role to play in driving forward Government's approach to integrated water management.

The group's next meeting will be on resilience and will be held on 28th March.