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Returning Officer

May 2012

## **AIUK BOARD ELECTION: 2012**

### **Nominations.**

The Country Co-ordinator seat, a network forum seat, a local groups seat and one unreserved seat were available for election this year. Five candidates were nominated. One candidate was nominated for the Country Co-ordinator seat and one for the network forums seat and consequently Rona Keen and Tom Hedley were elected unopposed to the Board. Subsequently an election was required for the local groups seat and unreserved seat.

The preparations for the contest went fairly smoothly thanks to HQ staff at Amnesty and the cooperative assistance of Tom Colling of ERS and with only a couple of minor hiccups.

### **Election Result.**

As reported above Rona Keen was elected unopposed to the Country Co-ordinator seat and Tom Hedley was elected unopposed to the network forum seat. Katie McSherry was elected at stage 1 as she exceeded the quota of 4786 votes required to be elected. The contest went to the 2nd stage at which point Hugh Whitby was beyond the reach of the remaining candidate and was thus duly elected for the final place. As both candidates had stood for either of the available seats it was agreed that Katie McSherry would take the local groups seat and Hugh Whitby the unreserved seat.

### **Voting Turnout.**

Although the number of ballot papers issued this year was down –122,398 as against 129,479 in 2011- the turnout was an improvement at 11.17%. In 2011 the percentage turnout was 8% and 5.8% in 2010. The number of youth and student groups voting remains a challenge. The increase in individual votes might be attributed to the use of social media by candidates but there might also be other reasons. The small increase in the votes of local groups hopefully reflects the attempts to raise awareness amongst the groups.

Category	Ballot Papers issued	Return by post	Return by phone	Return on-line	Total return	2012 % Return	2011 % return
Individual Members	122,396	12,068	252	1312	13,632	11.14	7.95
Local Groups	202	47	4	13	64	31.68	29.79
Student Groups	37	1	1	0	2	5.41	4.26
Youth Groups	41	2	0	0	2	4.88	28.57
Affiliated Organisations	202	24	1	1	26	12.87	15.81
Totals	122,878	12,142	258	1326	±13726	11.17	8.00

± This is the total number of votes cast. The total weighted votes cast was 14,409. There were 51 votes found to be invalid. This gave the total valid weighed votes of 14,358.

Note: The quota for electing the two candidates under the STV system is calculated as the valid weighted votes of 14,358 divided by the number of places to be filled plus one (2+1=3) giving a quota of 4786.

### How Votes Were Distributed Amongst the Candidates

Previously I was asked to provide information on how votes were distributed amongst the candidates and the figures below give the breakdown of this year's election. It should be noted that the figures refer to first preference votes for the respective candidates.

Candidate	Membership Category				
	Individual	Local	Student	Youth	Affiliate
Lucy BARNET	3786	17	1	0	10
Hugh WHITBY	4127	27	0	2	4
Katie McSHERRY	5719	20	1	0	12
<b>Total</b>	13632	64	2	2	26

## **Election Pamphlet.**

On the whole the election documentation appears to have worked reasonably well. The previously mentioned errors had no impact on the election which saw an increased turnout. There was, however, an increase in the number of spoilt ballot papers – 51 as against 41 in 2011 – and it would appear that this is a continuing trend as last year's figure was an increase on 2010. Some work needs to be undertaken to see if we can determine the nature of this trend; please see concluding remarks.

## **Automatic Retirements in 2013.**

The Board members who automatically retire next year are Collette Anne Crill, Sharmila Kar, Brian Landers, Peter James Murray and Sarah O'Grady.

Collette and Sarah are eligible to stand again for a further three years but the six consecutive years rule applies to Sharmila and Peter. Sharmila and Peter will need to have a sabbatical of at least nine months before they can stand again for the Board. Brian is co-opted as Treasurer and a further period of office is a matter for the Board.

## **Appendices.**

Attached at appendix 1 is a list of the current AGM incumbents who are elected by the National AGM and Conference.

At appendix 2 is the list of the current Board members with their terms of office etc shown.

## **Concluding Remarks**

Concerns were raised about the errors in the ballot papers. After investigating the impact of these errors it appears clear that they had little or no impact on the effectiveness or outcome of the election. Nevertheless any errors need to be avoided and measures will be put in place to prevent any further occurrence as far as this is possible. The timetable for ballot preparation is always short but it is possible to expand preparation time by commencing the process as soon as it is clear that an election is required rather than waiting until the closing date for nominations. There are also a number of tasks that can be undertaken before close of nominations which would allow for a longer period of preparation. Work to effect these improvements will be incorporated into the Board Ballot Project Plan for next year's election. The Plan will be drawn up in the period up to September 2012.

Part of the Project Plan will incorporate work on investigating the slowly increasing numbers of spoilt papers mentioned above. The problem may lay with the wording of the instructions on how to vote or there might be other reasons. Any lessons learnt will be incorporated into the preparations for next year's ballot.

Some work will also be undertaken on the issue of the election turnout. A comparison with other similar organisations will be attempted and some thoughts given to addressing the low turnouts from student and youth groups. There was a noticeable use of social media in this year's election for raising awareness of the candidates which might have had some impact on turnout although this would not be easy to establish. It is likely that the use of social media will increase in future elections.

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I can report that the number of members using the facility to vote at the AGM remains very small. Voting by post remains the dominant form of voting followed by on-line voting while the use of the telephone facility remains low. The services provided by ERS (Electoral Reform Services) remain excellent but the Board might like to consider whether it is time to re-tender for future elections. However, recognising that the passing of Resolution C2 AIUK Legal and Taxation Structure might have some impact on future governance arrangements including the election of the Board any changes might be more appropriate after decisions have been taken on future arrangements.

In conclusion can I again thank everybody who assisted in this year's election process; without them my task would have been impossible.

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## Appendix 1

### AGM Elections.

AGM Chairperson	First Conference chaired.	Current term ends	3rd Consecutive Year
Alex Pool	2012	2013	2014

SOC	Current term ends
Alison Cosgrove	2013
Pascal Jerome	2013
Mike Perrin	2013

There is no cap on the number of consecutive years a candidate can serve on the SOC. However no serving Board member is eligible as a candidate for this committee.

Nominations Committee	First elected	Second Term began	Current term ends	6th Consecutive year.
Sarah Nash	2007	2010	2013	2013
Anastasia Chew	2012	n/a	2015	2018
Alex Siddall	2010	n/a	2013	2016

No serving Board member is eligible as a candidate for this committee.

<b>Membership Appeals Committee</b>	<b>Last elected</b>	<b>Term of office ends.</b>
Barry Hay	2012	2015
Reg Pine	2012	2015
Caroline Twomey	2012	2015

No serving Board member is eligible as a candidate for this committee. The members are elected every three years en bloc. Any casual vacancy is filled at the next available AGM. The replacement so elected serves out the remaining term of the original incumbent.

## **Appendix 2.**

**The AIUK Board as at May 11th 2012.**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Seat Category</b>	<b>1st Term began</b>	<b>2nd term began</b>	<b>Current term ends</b>	<b>Sixth Consecutive year</b>
Katie McSherry	Local group	2009	2012	2015	2015
Cris Burson-Thomas	Co-opted Marketing Expert	2011	n/a	2012	2017
Collette Anne Crill	unreserved	2010	n/a	2013	2016
Hugh Whitby	unreserved	2012	n/a	2015	2018
Brian Gilda	unreserved	2011	n/a	2014	2017
Ciarnan Helferty	network	2008	2011	2014	2017
Sharmila Kar	unreserved	2007	2010	2013	2013
Rona Keen	Country Coordinator	2009	2012	2015	2015
Brian Landers	Co-opted Treasurer	2010	n/a	2013	2016
Harrison Littler	unreserved	2011	n/a	2014	2017
Peter James Murray	unreserved	2007	2010	2013	2013
Sarah O'Grady	local group	2010	n/a	2013	2016
Hannah Perry	unreserved	2011	n/a	2014	2017
Tom Hedley	network	2012	n/a	2015	2018

The Board is empowered to have up to three persons co-opted. The Treasurer is a co-optee as is Cris Burson-Thomas so up to one more can be added to the above Board membership if the Board so decides.