

Minutes of IBM Hursley Retirees' Club

AGM 16 March 2021 held via Zoom

1. Welcome and Apologies:

The meeting was opened by the chair, Eric Bodger. Eric explained to the 88 participants signed in that our first speaker will be David Cousins from Hursley Lab standing in for Nyree Spencer, the new Laboratory Manager, who is busy settling into her new position.

Apologies were received from Paul Homewood.

2. Hursley Laboratory Update:

David Cousins is a key member of the Leadership team for the UK Labs. He is the Program Director, App Integration & Events Streams Development. He also is the UK Lead for Engagement for the UK General Manager.

David introduced himself saying he had been at Hursley for 23 years and had begun his career at the ground roots as an apprentice. He explained how it had been a big wrench activating the lockdown last March and how remote working had started strangely for his team of 125, as he personally had been summoned for jury service at the very start of this period. However, his team and the rest of the Lab settled into their new regime well and the positives were there to be seen, including more time back due to no commuting, more family time and it seemed to give everyone an energy boost. The 'new normal' as it became did produce fatigue as home schooling became necessary and the need to be aware of individual caring needs and being aware of how each person was dealing with the new situation. The good news was that there was no difference in delivery of projects despite frequent strategy changes and those were harder to put across when physical contact is absent. Clarity of communication was key and across the Lab 65 deliveries, mainly cloud, were made which is the same as an average year. At the end of 2020 there was a dip in confidence followed by 1st quarter unease. However, given the vaccine success we have hope back for the second half of 2021. During shutdown the improvements to the Hursley site had continued well and David showed a slide of the C1 South improvements such as calm spaces, adjustable desks and individual lockers. It is a blueprint for future plans and will satisfy the work environment for next 10 years. In conclusion David assured the audience that the Lab had not missed a beat and the time spent remotely this past year had been used to good effect. Everyone was now looking to the future and to getting back to physically working together at some point this year.

3. Pensions News:

Eric thanked David for his upbeat presentation and continued by introducing Robert Tickell the co-Chair of the IBM UK Pensions Trustee Board. Robert joined the Board as an MND at the end of 2009. Robert was pleased to tell us that funding in the Main Plan (includes the C Plan) is at record levels. This has allowed the actuarial reduction for early retirement to be restored to the 3% that it used to be, from the 6 or 7% applied in recent years.

All retirees in this plan should have received an email from Mark Griffiths, Pensions Trust Manager in January 2021 outlining that the Trust has entered into an insurance contract with Rothesay Life plc who will provide the trustee with sufficient funds each month to meet part of members' benefits. IBM fully supported the Trustee decision to proceed. Robert said this was good for our retiree members who generally had a positive longevity risk (males have an average life expectancy of 87, and females 88). Our retirees include a few centenarians. Regarding pension increases, these will remain low due to inflation and at present they are based on CPI figures issued in January. As previously announced, from 2023 discretionary increases will be introduced but he assured the members that the board will want to look after the reputation of IBM UK and that the aim is to do their level best to

keep increases at a reasonable level. The increases over the past years had not kept up with inflation so C Plan members had lost out considerably. There followed a number of questions from the audience which Robert covered in detail. He is very happy to communicate with members and gave his contact details as follows: Email: Robert_tickell@talk21.com - Mobile: (07711) 058 782.

4. Election of Officers and Committee for 2021-22

Robert Tickell took the chair for the election of the new committee. The existing committee put themselves forward for re-election, and were proposed, seconded and appointed *nem con*. The committee will therefore be:

	Role	Trip Organizers
Eric Bodger	Chair	Ingrid Bond
Richard Walker	Treasurer	Ron Bowater
Pauline Bell	Secretary	Paul Homewood
Merv Quick	eBusiness	Roger Marlow
Ron Wilks	Web	Joy Matthews
Beth Roberts	Trip Bookings	Alan Stubbs

5. Minutes of AGM on 3rd March 2020

Eric thanked Robert for his comprehensive presentation and proceeded with the meeting as per agenda. The minutes have been available on the Hurrec website during the year and the members present were asked to approve them for the record. Proposed by John Jones, Seconded by Richard Wright, and Carried.

6. Matters Arising:

Richard Walker referred to his Treasurer’s section last paragraph re price reduction of trips and made the comment – ‘Watch this space’.

7. Chairman’s Report:

Eric began his report by producing a slide showing retirees who had passed away during the year from March 2020. It was sobering to note there were 37 names this year. This information is kept up to date via a listing received from North Harbour and regularly added to the Hurrec website.

Following our AGM last year, when we listed all the planned trips, only one trip took place on March 16th to Bletchley Park. This was just as the virus began circulating in the UK, but thankfully did not cause any infection. The committee have met on a regular basis via Zoom, and when it became obvious no trips would be allowed anytime soon, we began to offer Zoom talks and bought a subscription to enable up to 100 attendees without a time-limit. These talks have proved popular and a suitably varied programme has been put together. They are to continue until at least the end of May or when it is safe to run trips and will be advertised through the normal channels via email from Merv Quick. Joy Matthews continues to check with local theatres, especially the Mayflower, but no group bookings are available until April at the earliest.

A show of hands indicated that many members would be prepared to undertake theatre and coach trips once these can be run under conditions that avoid risk of infection.

8. Treasurer’s Report:

Richard showed charts outlining the difference between 2019 and 2020. At Year End 2019 we had £9K left which we were preparing to spend on the many trips in 2020 that we could not run. In addition, the refunds added to the total. E.g. Refund from Mayflower (King & I) £4,000 all back in the funds. Early 2020 we received our normal first half year subsidy but needless to say, it was cancelled for second half of 2020. This all resulted in a year-end balance of £20K. Richard explained that he has been involved with the Financial Steering Group which is a group of treasurers in the UK Retiree Clubs who work to get standard rules across the clubs with regard to finance and constitution. From

the beginning of 2021, and in the immediate future, the subsidy rules have been relaxed in order to make the spending easier. Providing our expenditure is non-profit making and for the benefit of our retirees the committee now have discretion to be more generous when subsidising trips. To start with all the Zoom talks we organize will be free regardless of cost. Some cost £60, others are over £100. We are making enquiries regarding visits to local venues that will not need a coach. Current rules on coaches mean they would allow 30 people on a 59-seater coach, and once venues allow groups, we could then order two or more coaches on this basis.

Retiree club rules mean that if a group of 10 or more get a trip organised, then they can contact the treasurer for the appropriate subsidy to be arranged. This is common in other retiree clubs, and Richard encouraged people to come up with ideas based on this information. Jill Robinson from the audience informed the meeting that Hursley Club are arranging an outdoor theatre event of Henry V on 6th June and retirees were encouraged to come along and support the Club.

9. Constitution Update for Approval

IBM have agreed there should be one constitution for all retiree clubs, and a group of treasurers in the UK retiree clubs produced the generic version to cover us all. This contains nothing contentious, and is published on our Hurrec website. The committee recommended adoption of this constitution, which was endorsed by a show of hands by members present.

10. Plans for 2021 Trips

As previously outlined, Zoom talks have been booked up to May, and as lockdown is relaxed we will begin to offer physical trips – initially local trips that do not necessitate a coach, followed by coach trips possibly after 21st June if all goes to plan.

11. AOB – None

The meeting closed at 15.45.