

**SHREE KSHATRIYA ASSOCIATION OF UK**  
**MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**HELD ON SUNDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER 2011**

**Venue:** SKA Hall, 2a Villiers Road, London NW2 5PH  
**Time:** 3.25 pm – quorum achieved and meeting began

**Chaired by:** Bhavin Shantilal Khatri (**BSK**) - President  
**Minutes by:** Kiran Narhari Kapadia (**KNK**)

**Total Number of Members Present at time meeting convened:** 40  
**Total number of Members Present when meeting concluded:** 67

**AGENDA:** As Published in SKA Newsletter No. 134 – August 2011

1. Approval of 2010 AGM Minutes
2. Approval of Audited Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2011
3. Re-Appointment of Auditors
4. Replacement of Annual Report with extensive Newsletter
5. Ending of Floral Presentation at Community Weddings
6. Hall Ownership/ Conversion to Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee
7. Any Other Business

BSK thanked everyone for coming and then asked Mukesh Vallabhkhatri (**MVK**) to present the first Agenda Item

**1. Approval of 2010AGM Minutes**

**MVK** hoped that everyone had familiarised themselves with the Minutes as they had been prepared in both English and Gujarati, it was agreed that he would allow 5-10 minutes to allow everyone to read the Minutes.

**MVK** then asked if there were any issues in connection with the Minutes and as there were none the Minutes were approved by **Harendra Dhirajlal Khatri (HDK)** and **Naresh Shantilal Kapadia (NSK)**.

**2. Approval of Audited Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2011**

The SKA Treasurer, **Vinod Chhaganlal Khatri (VCK)** presented the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2011 and gave a detailed explanation for the various movements within the Detailed Statement of Financial Activities. He confirmed that although it looked like membership income was less, this was due to the cut-off issues linked to the earlier preparation of this year's Financial Statements.

Going forward the Committee had purchased a notebook computer and appropriate SAGE software and, in future, the intention is to keep the Accounts up to date on SAGE on a more regular basis. This would hopefully result in membership invoices being issued earlier and all

the income will be accounted for before the year end. He was aware the decision to buy this equipment had been taken by the previous Committee, but the delay in the purchase arose as a result of the current Committee trying to see if it was possible to amalgamate the current membership database and SAGE. Unfortunately, although this was possible, the cost involved and the technical issues resulted in the Committee deciding to proceed with the twin systems.

**MVK** then gave a brief explanation of the movements on the Balance Sheet and then the floor was opened for any questions.

**Navin Durlabhbai Vakharia (NDV)** wanted to know how much free cash was available. **MVK** said that further information on this was available in Note 11 of the Financial Statements. **NDV** wanted to know how the analysis of the £46,368 was made up and it was agreed that this would consist of £42,614 of debtors and £3,754 of free cash.

As there were no further questions, **VCK** took the opportunity to thank **Prakash Thakorlari** and **Anil Kanaiylal Jadav (AKJ)** for all their hard work.

The Accounts were approved by **Sudhir Dayaram Khatri (SDK)** and **Harivadan Kantilal Kabawala (HKK)**.

### **3. Re-Appointment of Auditors**

**MVK** stated that MCT Partnership had agreed to continue as Auditors. Although the fee had not been agreed, a large increase was not anticipated.

The re-appointment of Auditors was approved by **Chandrakant Harkishandas Damania (CHD)** and **Jitendra Thakorlari Ambaram (JTA)**

### **4. Replacement of Annual Report with Extensive Newsletter**

**BSK** stated that in a previous AGM we had agreed to reduce the content of the Annual Report. However, it was felt by the current Committee to take this one step further and as the Newsletter provides comprehensive information about the Mahotsav together with donations received at the Mahotsav, it was intended that, in future, it would be the intention of the Committee to provide a year end Summary of Financial Information, together with a list of all donations received, which would be agreed to the Annual Accounts.

**Chandrakant Harkishandas Damania (CHD)** wasn't clear as to whether we were proposing to publish pledges or final amounts included in the Accounts, or were we going to publish both. **BSK** confirmed that our intention would be just to publish the final totals reconciled to the Accounts and not just the monies received at the Mahotsav.

**Girdharlal Bhanabhai Balsara (GBB)** wanted to know whether we were going to put everything online or whether hard copies would be available as he felt there were many elders who didn't have access to the internet and sought the Committee's assurance that we would still be providing hard copies. **MVK** confirmed that for the foreseeable future this information would be provided in hard copy, however ultimately things will move online. **MVK** also felt the old Annual Report took too long and was not of use to anybody.

**Pravin Thakarlal Jariwala** confirmed that the late publication of several years' Annual Reports was not productive, rather the printing of summary information in a concise and clear manner with summary Accounts sooner rather than later would be a good way forward. He suggested this should be available at the Annual Mahotsav. **MVK** confirmed that although the idea was good, it would be difficult to have this ready so early in the year. **MVK** also thought this revision would hopefully make joining the Committee more attractive to a younger generation who find the process of preparing the Annual Report laborious and unproductive.

**Prakash Thakorlal Jariwala** said it was important to get the right information into the newsletter and felt as the Mahotsav donation information was already collated during the Mahotsav, on Excel, surely it could be put from Excel into SAGE and a list could be prepared which would reconcile to the Accounts, so why would we not proceed along these lines. **MVK** confirmed that this was a valid option, however many people are unable to donate money during the Mahotsav because of the difficulties the Donation Team has in contacting everybody and now there seems to be a significant number of people who donate after the Mahotsav when they receive their annual Payment Reminders. Therefore, to publish a list based on people who only pledged at the Mahotsav may not give a true picture.

At this point several people indicated that they had not been approached during the Mahotsav to make their donations and would confirm they would pledge later. **Prakash Thakorlal Jariwala** said we should keep the pressure on people pledging at Mahotsav and this should be continued.

**MVK** felt we should review the situation. People attend the Mahotsav to enjoy the entertainment and listen to the speeches and this can all be disrupted by the Donation Appeal. Possibly, we should consider another option – one suggestion currently being considered at Committee level was not to raise any donations on the day, and hope that people will pledge their donations upon receipt of their annual Payment Reminder. Another option would be to have several tables at the back of the venue and ask people to voluntarily confirm their donations. Although this was a distraction from the main AGM Agenda, there was universal approval of this suggestion and, therefore, this will be implemented at the next Mahotsav.

**Harendra Dhirajlal Khatri (HDK)** felt Mahotsav speeches should be included in the Newsletter as these would normally be included in the Annual Report. **Pravin Shantilal Kapadia (PSK)** felt this was not necessary as the speeches could be uploaded directly onto the website and anyone who wanted to could listen to them. **MVK** confirmed the speeches should be listened to during the Mahotsav and there isn't a need to circulate the speeches at a later date. However, the Committee acknowledged the issue which arose at this year's Mahotsav whereby the serving of tea and speeches coincided and, therefore, we have agreed to ensure that Prakashbhai's speech is uploaded onto the website and **MVK** already has the text and we are just awaiting confirmation of whether the video is available. We will endeavour to post both onto the website in due course.

The proposal was then put to the floor and was approved unanimously and approved by **Jitendra Ambaram Thakarlal (JAT)** and **Chandrakant Harkishandas Damania (CHD)**. Therefore in future we will print Summary Financial Statements and the full donation listing in the Newsletter before the end of the calendar year, but there will be no speeches

## **5. Ending of Floral Presentation at Community Weddings**

**MVK** gave the background for the Committee bringing this matter to the AGM. It would appear that in most other communities this tradition has now lapsed. The wedding itself is a family event and the constraints of a modern wedding have restricted SKA's ability to make floral contributions at these weddings. Also the increase in the number of weddings with non-Khatri families has, on occasions, resulted in potential tension with the new in-laws who do not wish to have SKA present. The wedding announcements with photos would continue in the Newsletter

The young members of our Community don't see the significance of SKA attendance and would prefer SKA not to attend. **MVK** felt there was an element of natural progression here. In the past we used to have Phoolpan for all overseas visitors. This has now also ceased, because of the number of overseas visitors, so we need to change this tradition.

**CHD** stated the reason we no longer present Phoolpan to overseas guests was because there was reluctance amongst overseas visitors to have Phoolpan and make a donation to SKA and not because of the number of visitors. He felt that floral presentations at Community Weddings were a proud tradition in our Samaj and we should not stop it.

**Mahendra Jagmohan Gohil (MJG)** said that this tradition had now been going for 51 years and could see no valid reason for stopping it. These are blessings from our Community and this tradition should continue. People should be proud that our Community has continued with this. Similar views were echoed by **Harilal Narsai Kapadia (HNK)** and **Ratilal Motiram (RM)**, as well as **Bhanumati Ratilal Motiram (BRM)**.

Some other options should be considered such as presenting the bouquets at the Shantak if it was difficult to attend weddings. **Sudhir Dayaram Khatri (SDK)** stated that it was a brave agenda item to bring on board but this is a traditional issue and should continue and individuals can decide if they want to invite SKA or not to Weddings

**Pravin Thakarlal Jariwala** said there were three Sunskars in our religion – births, weddings and death and we must recognise the institution of marriage and give blessings.

**Hinesh Mahendra Khatri (HMK)** felt this will phase out eventually and also felt the giving of flowers wasn't a good idea as they ultimately die and go in the bin. Perhaps we should consider other options such as giving everybody a card at weddings.

**Dhirajlal Maganlal Kapadia. (DMK)** acknowledged all the elders had spoken previously, but felt this tradition should end as the young people of today are not interested in blessings and this should be changed.

**Ravi Pravin Jariwala (RPJ)** stated that he had an interest in this matter given that he is soon to be wed. He felt that the SKA attendance had no place in a modern wedding and it was two extra people to invite and explain to prospective in-laws who ordinarily would not make a donation to another Community.

**Kiran Narhari Kapadia (KNK)** was of the opinion that we should continue to publish wedding photos in the newsletters. We shouldn't feel pressured into having SKA attendance at weddings.

**Girdharlal Bhanabhai Balsara (GBB)** stated that surely the issue wasn't the blessing, but the donation. This would be a loss to SKA. **MVK** categorically confirmed that this issue was not

about donations or money, it was about floral presentations. The money was not an issue and should never be an issue at such an event.

**Harendra Dhirajlal Khatri (HDK)** stated that weddings are only at the weekends so this shouldn't really be a problem for the Committee. **Harivadan Kantilal Kabawala (HKK)** stated that if an invitation is received then Committee should go. **CHD** stated that if SKA received an invitation they should go and normally someone from the Committee is invited in a personal capacity. If that is not the case then that would be exceptional.

**MVK** acknowledged the Community's view on the matter and overall everyone wishes to continue. The Committee is happy to continue but felt this issue needed to be aired and he re-stated the problems which had arisen recently in respect of weddings at which SKA were not invited and were not making floral presentations. At such weddings he requested members of the Community do not ask SKA Committee Members why they were not making floral presentations and furthermore do not ask those families whose wedding it is why they have not invited SKA. This matter is purely between the families getting married and the SKA Committee.

#### **6. Hall Ownership conversion to Company Limited by Guarantee**

BSK gave a short summary of the issue which was about to be discussed in Gujarati and then handed over to **MVK** who said he would do his best to explain this in Gujarati although this is a very technical issue.

Currently, SKA is a Charitable Trust. As such the Trust is unable to own property, the property has to be registered in the name of the Trustees. The current Trustees on our Trust Deed are Anil Amratlal Hazratwala, Mahendra Jagmohan Gohil, Bharat Jagjivan Vakharia and Chandrakant Harkishandas Damania. All of these individuals are no longer on the Committee and this issue has not been addressed now for many years. If we continue as a Trust then with each change of Committee it would be appropriate for the new office holders on the Executive Committee to be registered at Land Registry. This would incur some legal fees but there would have to be a binding agreement on succession of a new Committee that they will take over these roles. In the past Community Members have felt nervous about taking on this role because of the responsibilities it brings.

**MVK** felt that those people who were on the Title Deeds presently, although they have a duty, in reality this duty has passed to the Executive Committee and any repercussions about the Hall would honestly be the responsibility of the current Committee.

Going forward, consideration is being given to converting SKA to a Company Limited by Guarantee with charitable registration. Essentially, we would transfer all the assets and liabilities of the current Trust to a Company Limited by Guarantee with Charitable registration. As the Charity would now be a Limited Company, it would be eligible to hold a property in its own right. Not only would this remove the need for regular re-registration of the property but it would also offer a marginally more protection for the Committee. The Accounts would still go to the Charity Commission where they are available free for download but the Accounts would then have to go to Companies House. All the Committee members would also be appointed at Companies House as well as the Charity Commission.

The Committee have sought legal advice on this matter and other options such as Mutual Associations more importantly a Community Interest Company. However, as a Community Interest Company cannot also be a Charity, we would lose the benefit of Gift Aid and reduce Council Tax, and therefore, the Committee decided not to go down this route.

**Harivadan Brijbhukhan Gohil (HBG)** wanted to know if we became a Charitable Company we would still need to re-register everytime there was a new Committee. **MVK** confirmed this would not be required and this was one of the benefits of becoming a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee.

**Sudhir Dayaram Khatri (SDK)** wanted to know on re-registration, would we run the risk of our surplus funds being reviewed by the Charity Commission and that we are not undertaking charitable activities **MVK** was of the opinion that, as a Charity we do undertake a reasonable amount of charity work and funds have been set aside for the purchase of a larger Community Hall. It's possible this may not happen in the current generation, but it is hoped it would happen with the next generation and no doubt for a Community of 1,300, a Hall with a current capacity of 60 is limiting.

The Committee was at the early stages of this process and it's likely that an EGM may have to be called to formalise the conversion. We will also need to circulate constitutions both in English and Gujarati to the Community and, therefore, this task will require a significant amount of effort and even if we approve this Resolution today, the Committee will endeavour to see if this can be done by March 2012 but more likely it would be March 2013.

**Jitendra Ambaram Thakorlal (JAT)** commended the Committee for taking this matter on board and fully supported the conversion to a Company Limited by Guarantee with charitable status. However, he felt this should have been brought to everyone's attention during the annual Mahotsav. **MVK** felt it was difficult to obtain people's attention during the Mohatsav for such matters, but the point was noted. **JAT** felt that we should at least make sure that clear guidance is given in the newsletter about what this process entails. **MVK** confirmed this would be the case and this is why it may take to March 203 before it happens.

**MVK** confirmed the current fee quote for this conversation could be as high as £6,000 including VAT.

Those attending unanimously supported the Executive Committee's decision and asked them to proceed with this.

## **7. Any Other Business**

**BSK** then opened the floor to AOB but stating that prior to this the Committee had an AOB issue and asked **Kamlesh Ratilal Motiram (KRM)** to explain.

**KRM** confirmed that since the last AGM serious efforts have been made to progress the Hall capacity issue. We had been in contact with Sathy Estates who had the leasehold on 134 High Road and they had refused us access. It later transpired that they actually did not own the building and the property was owned by a Mr Patel. We had great difficulty in obtaining his address as the address he had given was 134 High Road. We then engaged the services of a Solicitor who confirmed that the passageway was not registered on the Deeds of 134 High Road

and appeared to be shared between 132 and 134 High Road, the SKA Hall and 246 Sandringham Road.

Mr Patel refused to acknowledge our correspondence and therefore he received a house visit from **KRM**. Mr Patel categorically stated that he had no intention of granting SKA access. However, recently as a result of some more legal correspondence, his stance seems to have mellowed and the feedback we have had is that he is prepared to meet us to discuss this matter and hopefully the meeting will be arranged shortly.

**Deepak Pranjivan Khastri (DPK)** wanted to know why we were not contacting the other interested parties to see if we could get their support. **KRM** stated this was a good point but we were concerned they may not be in favour of our proposal and initially we wanted to get Mr Patel on our side prior to progressing matters.

**Jitendra Ambaram Thakorlal (JAT)** wanted to know if there had been a material change in the passage. Was it a public pathway and do we have the right to access? **KRM** confirmed there had been a material change with the installation of the gate and it is now a public pathway. We do not have the access right and in fact Mr Patel may be able to claim 'Squatters Rights' and this may give us a potential problem.

**Mahendra Jagmohan Gohil (MJG)** reminded everyone that according to the recent visit undertaken by Solaria the restaurant was refused permission by Mr Patel for an external flue. However, the Restaurant took him to Court and he lost and, therefore, Mr Patel is not keen on engaging in other legal fees and we do have a good chance with our case.

The members present were appreciative of the progress the Committee were making and the Committee agreed to progress matters further.

At this point, AOB was opened to all.

**Dhirajlal Maganlal Kapadia. (DMK)** stated the 2011 Mahotsav was actually the 50<sup>th</sup> and the 2010 Mahotsav was the 49<sup>th</sup>. He understands there was no Mahotsav in one year and two Mahotsavs were held together, but that makes no difference. This year was actually the 50<sup>th</sup> Mahotsav and if you read the Gujarati translation in the most recent Newsletter then it does state this. **BSK** said he was pleased that people were reading the Gujarati translation in the newsletter and stated that this was a typographical error. **MVK** said this question had to be answered by people who were around previously as he had very little knowledge of these issues.

**MJG** confirmed that the first Mahotsav was in 1960 and then there was an issue with the 24<sup>th</sup> Mahotsav, which wasn't held and the 25<sup>th</sup> Mahotsav was held as a Silver Jubilee Mahotsav and the clock was effectively re-set and therefore the 50<sup>th</sup> Mahotsav was the 50<sup>th</sup> and it also coincided with our 50<sup>th</sup> year.

**CHD** stated that the Committee had made a mistake by making the tea provisions during the speeches at the 51<sup>st</sup> Mahotsav. He also said that the current generation of young people will have tuition fees of £9,000 per year which equates to £27,000 of debt and according to recent BBC Survey they will not be able to pay off this debt until they are 46 years old. Therefore the money set aside for the Building Fund should be re-allocated in the form of interest free loans and provided to the Students of our Community.

**Harivadan Brijbhukhan Gohil (HBG)** was of the opinion that youngsters do not care about such things. They have grand and elaborate weddings which their parents have to pay for and they will buy and spend as they wish. SKA funds should not be used to pay for their tuition.

**MVK** assured **CHD** that the Tea issue had been noted in the 51<sup>st</sup> Mahotsav de-brief. It was a good idea but unfortunately poorly executed. The Educational Grants/loans was an interesting proposal but it would have to be ‘means tested’ and we would be restricted on how much help we could give as SKA does not have substantial funds.

**CHD** stated that he was not talking about people with good incomes in the UK, he was talking about those people who have recently come from India and whose children are hoping to go into higher education and perhaps people with income of less than £20,000 are the ones that should be helped. **CHD** also stated that the current generation of these people are no longer buying houses but living in flats and that times have changed.

**MVK** stated that whether they live in a house or flat is not entirely relevant as, for example, everyone in Mumbai lives in flats and don’t have houses. Also the result of the increasing fees would lead to a structural shift in the way students’ progress through higher education. There will be more emphasis on working and studying at the same time. However, we will minute the point and consider this for future discussion.

**MVK** then thanked everyone for coming to the AGM and wished that more people came. In particular he thanked the ladies for attending and wished more ladies would attend.

**BSK** then thanked everyone for attending and for supporting him during the last four years of his Presidentship and said that next year he would be sitting with the audience and making his views felt.

AGM concluded at 5.30 pm

The above is a true representation of the proceedings derived from the Notes made at the meeting.

Ratified by .....  
Bhavin Shantilal Khatri – President

Ratified by .....  
Mukesh Vallabhkhatri – Secretary

Dated .....