

**Minutes of Stretford Public Hall Board Annual General meeting held on Sunday 20 October 2019
at Stretford Public Hall
3 pm finishing 4 pm**

Present: 53 attendees confirmed that this was 5% of the membership and constituted a quorum

Board members:

Dan Williamson (Chair)
Simon Borkin (Treasurer)
Petra Morris (Secretary / minutes)
Lisa Heanley
Christine Duffin
Junaid Patel
Charlotte O'Mara
Jonny Haslam
Apologies: Chris Lee

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| 1 | The minutes of the last Annual General Meeting were agreed as a correct record and formally approved |
| 2 | Achievements |
| 2.1 | <p>The chair welcomed members and presented our achievements, events and activities over the past year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff team and volunteers. We are particularly grateful to our staff team including two full time members of staff: Kate McGeevor (Centre Manager) & Jo Padovani (Events, Bookings & Outreach), two part-time staff: Mark Etherington (Caretaker) & Jessica Loveday (Culture Champions coordinator) and we have developed HR policies & better systems to support our staff team • We would like to say a big thank you to Shirley Bainbridge, who was our Finance and Admin Officer from November 2018 until very recently. Shirley helped us during a busy period, developing our finance systems • We now have a new book-keeper Imogen Butler and we will soon be recruiting for an administrator to join the team too • We are very grateful to our excellent team of volunteers and this year provided training, improved induction, provided tshirts and lanyards and implemented a new digital sign-in system which will allow us to record volunteer hours and this helps us to demonstrate our impact for future funding bids |
| 2.2 | <p>Venue hire and activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have completed major refurbishment works to the downstairs meeting rooms which has enabled us to increase our community and commercial hire • Over the next 12 months, we will focus on increasing room hire to commercial organisations so we can increase our revenue from room hire. • We have a number of regular community users, such as Stretford Children's Theatre and our own Stretford Singers Community Choir. We continue to organise a wide variety of activities & community events for the benefit of the local community. Wellbeing Tuesday – run on a weekly basis, offering affordable health and wellbeing activities • We are delighted to be hosting the Children Theatre's Christmas Performance this year, |

on Friday 13th and Saturday 14th December

- We are looking to encourage commercial use of the Hall more widely, as a venue for things like filming and photoshoots. Most recently, the Hall has been featured in the BBC drama World of Fire and as a sports hall in a TV commercial.
- This year – to date – we have organised 19 public event days, five of them in partnership with other organisations including Earth Day – April 2019 – in partnership with Stretford in Bloom and Herstories Festival – May 2019 – with the North West Film Archive and the Muslim Arts and Culture Festival
- Coming up next month, we have our annual Art Exhibition, organised by Stretford Arts Collective SAC32
- Our community cinema, Screen 32, has been running regularly throughout the year. The next event is a Halloween extravaganza Beetlejuice
- Back to Civic regular music local artists to have a platform to perform. We have hosted regular live music nights, showcasing local talent and attracting established artists from elsewhere to perform at the hall.

2.3 **Tenants.** Lofthouse: Provided affordable workspace for local creatives and freelancers, with 15 desks which have been fully occupied for most of the year; Artist Studio: Also fully occupied (13 spaces). We regularly work with artists from SAC32 to deliver community art events e.g. life-drawing

2.4 **Awards and recognition**

- Our work has continued to win us awards and support from across not just the UK but further afield. Last November, we won the national Power of Community Award at the Locality Awards. We were one of three projects picked to front the co-op's Save our Spaces campaign

2.5 **Aims for 2019/20**

- Further community consultation, to make sure the Hall continues to meet local needs
- To complete the next phase of Ballroom renovations (spring 2020)
- Ongoing investment & maintenance to improve the whole building
- Strengthening of the strategic role of the Board
- Further steps to secure more flexible planning and licensing
- Developing a new annual membership scheme, with greater benefits for supporters and volunteers

3 **Financial report**

3.1 Simon Borkin, Treasurer presented the annual draft accounts which have been prepared by professional accountants in line with audit guidelines. Our income falls below the level which requires a formal independent audit.

3.2 Total income increased from £137,315 in 2018 to £148,130 in 2019 which includes restricted grants. Trading income and unrestricted grants income is £97,136. The majority of this is due to room hire which has seen an increase despite the rooms being unavailable during a three month period due to renovation work. There was a slight drop in income from our tenant workspaces. Expenditure has increased as anticipated mostly due to staffing costs having gone from one p/t role to 4 members of staff

3.3 Balance sheet asset value increased due to value of building increasing as a result of renovations. However, due to our structure and covenants we are unable to sell building, but the value can allow us to take on low cost debt in the future if we need to raise finance.

3.4 We have now been granted provisional planning permission for extended opening hours

which will allow us to increase hire and run occasional late events but will need to consider additional staffing costs associated with this.

3.5 We advised that investor members are due to receive 2% interest on their shares based on 2018-2019 year-end performance, subject to performance and trading. Given our current plans and shortfall in funding, Board are recommending that it would be prudent not to pay interest and to review again next year. There was agreement from members around this and members observed that most investor members considered their shareholding as a donation rather than an investment offer.

3.6 The Financial report was unanimously adopted by members

4 Ballroom transformation

4.1 Our Centre Manager, Kate McGeevor provided an update on progress with the Ballroom transformation including timelines to ensure a phased approach to work to allow us to keep the Hall open and continue to host events and activities:

- Autumn / Winter 2018 – Phase 3a was completed which involved a significant structural reinforcement of the Ballroom floor; stripping back the ceilings of all the rooms beneath the Ballroom and adding new joists to increase the strength of the floor; Creation of a new doorway into the side room, so the room can be accessed directly from the landing rather than through the Ballroom; Reconfiguration of the Underhall area – removal of partition walls to create larger rooms; Installation of new lighting and flooring; During the next stage of work, we'll be installing a sliding partition wall in the Underhall, so the space can be split into two separate spaces
- But! Also faced large unexpected expenses – replacement of the roof following theft of lead in August 2018. Roof was temporarily repaired but needed to make an urgent decision about whether to replace with lead, or to replace with stainless steel, agreed that steel would reduce the risk of future lead thefts, and was preferred route.
- Autumn 2019 Delighted to be working with Buttress Architects – Manchester based architecture practice with lots of experience of historic building projects and public buildings like ours such as Quarry Bank Mill, Norton Priory Museum, Withington Baths and Wythenshawe Hall. Finalising key design details: kitchen area; toilet layout; heating & ventilation system in order to be able meet regulations and achieve maximum capacity of 400 people. We aim to submit planning application by November with works commencing in Spring 2020

4.2 **Finances** – at present the cost of the outstanding work is £360k, of which we have just over £200k funding secured. We have identified a number of possible funders who we may be able to secure extra funding from and, as soon as we have designs finalised and final cost estimates confirmed, we will be concentrating on trying to secure the extra funding we need.

4.3 **Question and observations from members:**

- Q. What are our plans to reduce noise? A. The figure of £360k includes options for soundproofing and reducing noise and lighting will also be included
- Q. Happy to see that we are working with Buttress architects who have a long track record and links with Victorian Society A. we agree and confirmed that we are working closely with Council's conservation officer and that future works will complement the listed building

- Q. window boarded up on corner of Chester Road and first thing you see so not a very good impression A. we are aware of this and we will be replacing as part of the overall renovations work as need external scaffolding to access
- Q. What's our approach to gdpr (data protection) which should be included and reviewed at each AGM? A. We have a privacy notice on website and we abide with GDPR regulations
- Q. Very impressed with enthusiasm of Board and that everything is well run. A. we aim to maintain a balanced board with clear roles and responsibilities, Board members receive an Induction pack and are aware of responsibilities of a director
- Q when future renovation work happens in Ballroom can we still open downstairs for activities A. Yes, as far as possible we will aim to manage any disruption during works
- Q is cellar available for use? A. we currently use basement for storage but until we can improve access and fire exits, we can't make full use. It's something we are looking at for a future funded project potentially as an area for young people
- Q. is their plans for in-house catering facilities? A. currently not and we use external caterers but our future plans include exploring a café and possibly a kitchen which might involve cookery classes,
- Q. You mentioned potential of converting existing membership shares into a donation and they may be eligible for gift aid. A. We do not take a high level of general donations and so have not put in places the processes to claim gift aid but something we could consider going forward.
- Q. Need to have some caution opting for gift aid and ensuring that appropriate tax returns and declarations are made to avoid falling foul of taxman.
- Q how do we publicise our events? A. Communications are something wish to improve, currently on the website and social media (Facebook, twitter, Instagram etc), posters, noticeboard, signage on building. We are currently working a graphic designer to improve branding and general leaflets etc
- Q. Suggest we get people in when Buttress Architects have final designs to ensure transparency? A. We have designs here today to view during AGM and we are also currently consulting on future use of the hall, what are people's priorities / preferences.

5 Resignation and election of directors

5.1 The following directors resigned and were re-elected: Petra Morris, Dan Williamson, Lisa Heanley

5.2 The following new director joined the Board: Michelle Farrington

5.3 There were no contested elections and members approved elected Board

6 Final thank you's

6.1 Thanks were given to our outgoing Chair, Annoushka Deighton and our new chair Dan Williamson.

6.2 We are also thankful to our outgoing architects, Loop Systems

6.3 We very much appreciate the work of our volunteer board members and general volunteer team.

6.4 We are most grateful to the work of our excellent staff team.

6.5 Also all our funders and those who have donated

6.6 And finally You! Our members & supporters