



Stretford Public Hall

Minutes of 2023 AGM

Sunday 12th November 2023

Board members present: Simon Borkin (Chair); Christine Duffin; Sarah Higham; Hayley Hughes; Anthony Williams (Treasurer); Dan Williamson

Board member apologies: Christine Henderson, Chris Lee.

1. Introductions & welcome

Simon Borkin (SB) welcomed members to the AGM and confirmed that a quorum (over 5%) of members were present.

2. Minutes of the November 2022 AGM

The minutes of the 2022 AGM had been circulated to members and were approved.

3. Director's Report & Accounts 2023

Anthony Williams (AW), Treasurer, presented this year's financial accounts.

AW explained the previous year had been the first year fully open without Covid-19 restrictions in place, allowing the hall team to test activities and hire arrangements.

Overall income for 2022/23 = £371k, of which grants were £209k. £162k of unrestricted income from rents, coworking space, artists studios, events etc.

Overall funds £808k, slightly down on previous years due to depreciation of the building

General reserves have gone up £77k which is positive and allows further capital investment in repairs and maintenance.

Overall we are taking a cautious approach to financial management, due to the impact of the increase in the cost-of-living and uncertainty around grant income.

Questions

It was suggested that volunteers could receive training to help secure grant funding. Kate McGeevor (KM), hall manager, spends much of her time on grant applications, so yes would welcome this.

Question about the cost of private hire for events and the costs quoted on hall website. KM explained the hall has a different pricing policy for private weddings and events. The team have

learnt from experience that private events require different staffing levels and involve different admin costs, so pricing needs to be flexible.

Key events and achievements

Hayley Hughes, Board member, and Kate McGeevor, hall manager, presented on the year's main achievements.

- Busy programme of events and activities: Fish and Chip Fridays, family discos, community cookery classes, cinema nights etc.
- Community hub more important than ever due to increased cost-of-living. Host weekly citizen advice sessions.
- Strategic development include securing a licence for late night events and a wedding licence. The hall held its first official wedding in October.
- Poverty Truth Commission, wrapped up Feb 23 with all four policy recommendations adopted by Trafford Council.
- Emma Finn, community hub co-ordinator, has supported over 400 residents with the Household Support Fund.
- UK Cycling launched an electric bike hub at the hall, providing free e-bike loans
- Stretford Town Centre Forum launched - a forum for community and local businesses to work together.
- The hall now has 87 volunteers, thanks to the fantastic job done by Kaf Bays, volunteer co-ordinator.
- Car park redevelopment project in 2024. £12k raised from different funders to plant more trees and new flower beds.

Questions

Q: Visitors are not allowed to bring bikes into the building but the ebike scheme involves bikes being stored in the basement.

KM: Agreed this is inconsistent. One problem is that current bike storage is not well located and not very secure. Hoping to get funding to improve cycle storage so people are more comfortable leaving bikes locked outside.

Q: Storage of electric bikes and risk from lithium batteries. Do we have appropriate insurance for fire risk.

KM: Have strict arrangements with Cycling UK that bikes are only ever charged when staff are present and supervising.

Q: Improvements on car park – shrubs are overgrown and the car park is too small already.

KM: plan is to only remove 5 or 6 spaces. Most of the time, the car park is not full. We want to encourage less car use.

4. To approve arrangements for interest payments and withdrawals on withdrawable shares

SB confirmed that FOSPH will pay 2% interest on community investment this year. SB thanks all of investors who continue to support the hall.

5. Resignation & election of Directors

SB began by paying tribute to Sue Ferguson, a longstanding volunteer who very sadly died in August 2023. Sue was much loved by staff and volunteers at the hall. Over £1,200 had been raised in Sue's memory and will be used to commemorate Sue.

Simon also thanked Jessica Loveday, the hall's Arts and Outreach Coordinator, who left in July 2023. Jess had been a core member of the hall team for many years and we are grateful for the creativity and enthusiasm she brought to the delivery of our events and activities.

Anoushka Deighton, former Chair of FOSPH, was invited to say thank you to Dan Williamson, on behalf of the hall team. Along with Annoushka and Lisa Heanley, Dan was one of the founding members of the campaign to save the hall. Dan stepped down from the Board at the AGM and was thanked for everything he had done for the Board as Chair. Dan responded to say how much he had enjoyed his time and was very proud about what had been achieved.

Richard Browning, who also stepped down from the Board, was thanked for his contribution. SB confirmed that 9 members are remaining as Directors, and a new Board member, Sarah Higham, had joined the Board.

6. AOB & questions

There were no further questions and the meeting closed. Attendees were invited to remain for the launch of the 2023 community share offer.