



CHELTENHAM CIVIC SOCIETY

Cheltenham Civic Society CIO: Executive Committee

Minutes of Meeting held 5.00 pm Monday 13 July 2020 by Zoom

Register:

Trustees:

Claire Attenborough (CA) (Treasurer)
Andrew Booton (AB) (Chair)
Steve Bryson (SB)
Richard de Carteret (RdeC)
Andrew Chard (AC)
Sarah Harvey (SH)
Andrew North (AN) (Secretary)
Peter Sayers (PS) (Vice Chair)
Nick Symondson (NS)

Other attendees:

Hugh Curran (HC)

1. Introduction and Apologies

By way of introduction AB identified some significant changes in personnel working for the town.

- Jem Williamson has left the CDTF which is now intending to concentrate action on Covid-19 recovery. Tracey Crews is the contact within CBC.
- Kevan Blackadder is currently absent from the BID owing to illness.

Notwithstanding these changes, it is important links are maintained. For example, the Society's Landlords Group meets tomorrow against a background of 14 shop voids on the Promenade alone which the Society is keen to see addressed.

No Apologies were received.

2. Minutes of CIO ExCom meeting of 11 May 2020

The minutes were **approved**

3. Matters Arising:

1. CA is now the Treasurer but does not yet have full authority over the bank account. AC will be able to process transactions until this has been addressed. AB thanked AC for all his hard work as Treasurer.
2. As to points raised on the accounts, it was suggested by AC that AB contact James at BPC to resolve them. **AB agreed to do this (as well as picking up the points below under 4. as regards completion of the accounts).**

4. Governance

AN explained that the Charity Commission still requires the Society to file three documents by the end of October. They are:

1. The annual return which **AN will draft and put to the next meeting of the Trustees for approval**
2. The accounts for 2019 which will need to be completed and also presented for approval to the next Trustees meeting. **AB to arrange for completion as part of his conversation with James as note at 3.2 above.**
3. An Independent Examiner's report endorsing the accuracy of the accounts. This is a crucial document and the filing process cannot be completed without it. AC suggested that another partner of BPC may be able to complete the report for us. **AB will enquire of James.** If this does not prove possible then AN suggested that using Lloyd Surgenor's contacts we may again be able to look to our previous Independent Examiner, Chris Coleman. **AB will let AN know if this is going to be necessary after his conversation with James.**

5. Getting back to business after Covid-19

AB asked Trustees about the likely appetite of members to participate in a programme of events consistent with Covid-19 regulations and safety measures. This might, for example, involve web events or walks and talks in the open around town with strictly limited participation.

There were mixed views expressed though the majority were keen to get back to a degree of normality – but only where safe to do so.

Other points were made:

- HC said this was a good time to get material on social media and the WhatsApp group was indicated as a successful way for members to have a voice and to participate in the work of the Society
- SB suggested that any talks organised are also put onto YouTube to extend our online presence.
- From her HODs experience SH felt that would be interest from people willing to host town walks.
- It was agreed that the time is not yet right to open up Parmoor House to events or to bookings. **AB will contact Trustees by email if the situation changes.**

It was agreed that AB, HC and PS will consider, and potentially arrange, a few activities that can be safely managed; but a formal programme for the Society will only be considered for 2021.

6. Updates

i. HODs

SH had circulated a spreadsheet of likely events for this years' HODs, much of which is virtual though some venues are willing to offer access to their buildings subject to safety requirements.

ii. Branding/Website

SB explained how the website project is not going as smoothly as had been hoped. Given concerns about the performance of the contractors Trustees considered whether a change of contractors was necessary. **PS proposed (and it was agreed) to give the current firm two weeks to turn their performance around before considering an alternative company.**

SB presented for comment a possible logo for our Civic Society brand using a lime leaf. Trustees reaffirmed their previous view that use of text alone would be sufficient subject to a suitable font being identified.

iii. Comms and Campaigns

The concern was more about outward facing communications and in particular how the Society can play a part in influencing improvement across the town - such as in robust listed building enforcement or in the state of the High Street. PS felt the current state of Boots Corner should be regarded as a priority.

AN felt that our existing groups were in the best position to identify campaigning issues; CA wanted to be clearer about areas of responsibility for the groups that do exist.

AB will take comments forward for discussion with group leads.

iv. WhatsApp Group

HC commented that there are 47 people subscribed to the WhatsApp group who are looking for a voice and can contribute thoughts on campaigns. He felt this interaction with members is helping to make the Society more relevant in terms of influencing.

7. AOB

It was **agreed** that the Society should subscribe to Zoom (for meetings) and to Dropbox (for the photo album). **AB will action.**

There had been an email about the Society working with Rotary in the planting of trees in the town. **RdeC will forward the email to AB for action.**

CA is keen to get Society email addresses put on a proper footing as certain emails are not being delivered. **This idea was supported for further consideration by the website working group.**

SB is considering a special edition of the Newsletter – details to follow.

8. **Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 14 September 2020 at 5.00pm Parmoor House (or Via Zoom)

The only other agreed date for a meeting of the Executive Committee in 2020 is Monday, 16 November 2020.