



CHELTENHAM CIVIC SOCIETY

Cheltenham Civic Society CIO: Executive Committee

Minutes of Meeting held 5.00 pm Monday 14 September 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)

1. Introduction and Apologies

Apologies were received from the following non-trustees

Hugh Curran (HC)

Rob Rimmel

2. Minutes of CIO ExCom meeting of 11 May 2020

The minutes were **approved**

3. Matters Arising:

1. CA continues to work with Lloyd's Bank to transfer authority to sign as Treasurer from AC to herself.
2. An update on possible streamed meetings is noted below under AOB, but apart from this and HODs the agreed position is to assume that activities will be suspended until around April 2021.
AN mentioned that, having missed holding an AGM in 2020 owing to Covid-19, we should plan a virtual meeting for March 2021 (assuming that a physical meeting is still inadvisable at that time). **It was agreed to ask HC to consider the technical logistics of a virtual meeting with a large number of likely participants.**
3. Performance of contractors on website project was considered under Item 5.2.
4. A CCS subscription has been taken out for Zoom and Phil Collins is handling the possible subscription to Dropbox as the likely main user.

4. Governance

The meeting had before it a draft Trustees' Annual Report and accounts for 2019. As the accounts showed an income of less than £25,000 no Independent Examiner's report needs to be filed with the Charity Commission as part of the Annual Return. After discussion:

1. **The draft Trustees' Annual report (with slight amendment) and the circulated accounts were formally adopted by the meeting.**
2. **AN was authorised to sign and submit both documents to the Charity Commission.**

AC mentioned that he is prepared to deal with current expenses claims pending CA getting bank authorisation to make payments; **this was agreed.**

5. Updates

a. HODs

We are half-way through this year's HODs events and various walks and online displays have been organised. The format of walks needed to change for the coming week in line with updated government guidance.

The meeting expressed its thanks to SH for the huge amount of work she had put in. It was felt that the popularity of walks might suggest an opportunity to expand membership of the Society by providing a regular programme of walks as an additional member benefit.

SH asked for a check to be done on whether the grant payment of £2,000 due from CBC for HODs activity had been received. **CA to confirm.**

b. Branding/Website

SB updated the meeting on further inaction from the website designers and on the basis of this information Trustees agreed that it would be best to find an alternative contractor prepared to do the required work within the budget of £3,000. There was a discussion about process, and uncertainty about what (if anything) has been paid to the current contractor.

Agreed that PS and SB will decide how to best to draw a line under the current contract and appoint an alternative web design contractor.

c. Comms and Campaigns

High Street

Change is happening quickly with CBC making changes to road and pavement layout to support Covid-safe shopping. The Society has been a little slow to respond, though a meeting is planned for next week. Concerns are:

- a. Length of High Street – may be too long currently
- b. Financial future of larger retailers
- c. Impact of vacant units
- d. Apparent lack of support by central government

Enforcement

AB felt that CBC's enforcement of rules around conservation areas and listed buildings is inadequate and (potentially) under-resourced. He felt that there may be a case for the Society to issue as press release expressing concern.

Rotary Centenary Project

It was proposed that £1,000 be contributed to the project from bequests made to the Society by two recent donors. This would enable the purchase of three trees to be planted in public spaces, along with plaques to mark the names of the donors and recognising the Society. **This was agreed. (AB)**

Electricity Sub-station in Lansdown

AB mentioned his correspondence with a concerned resident who has asked the Society to use its influence to improve the look of the building. AB will hand over to HC in the hope that it may lead to action which can be celebrated by means of a press release highlighting the Society's role.

d. **Planning Forum**

Planning White Paper

Adrian Phillips has agreed to co-ordinate a response giving an overall view of the proposals with a response to all of the 26 questions posed in the White Paper.

As the Gloucestershire Group of Civic Societies is not blessed with the equivalent of the Planning Forum it is hoped that our draft could be the model for other responses.

Terms of Reference

Some minor tweaks have been made on the basis that currently there is no architect on the Forum - as the current ToR requires; also, the scope of the Forum's work may need to be slightly extended to cover activity such as the response to the Planning White Paper. The website will be updated to reflect the new ToR.

(PS)

6. **Hon Secretary - succession plan**

AN advised that it would be helpful to the effective running of the Society if his successor could be identified soon so that a smooth handover can be arranged.

Trustees agreed to take steps to identify a new Hon Secretary.

(ALL)

7. **AOB**

- a. **The dates set out on the agenda were agreed.** AN will let Phil Collins know the dates for when meetings can again take place at Parmoor House.
- b. AB has proposed Zoom workshops or webinars in interview format and suggested that these could be evening events starting at about 7 pm with one each in the months of October, November and December. Dave Oakhill, CBC Planning Officer, has agreed to be involved; an interview about proposed development of the High Street might also be lined up. It was suggested that Adrian Phillips might do a session on the Planning White Paper.
- c. RdeC mentioned a request by a member for the newsletter to be sent out by PDF. After discussion it was **agreed the RdeC and AB consider options around replacing or duplicating the printed version and the impact on finances.**
- d. CA mentioned that she intended to consider insurance provision for the Society but declared that this could provide a conflict of interest. It was **agreed that either AB or AN (or both) should consider any recommendation which CA may make to address any potential conflict.**
- e. AC asked what action was being taken on the idea of disposing of Parmoor House. AB explained the complexity of the position given factors such as the need to ensure that the Society continues to have a base going forward, the use to be made of any surplus proceeds and the impact on finances of losing revenue from room hire and letting the ground floor flat. He proposed a new working group to look at options and it was **agreed that NS and CA form such a group under the Chairship of PS.**

8. **Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 16 November 2020 at 5.00pm Parmoor House (or Via Zoom)

Agreed dates (all are Mondays) for meetings of the Executive Committee for 2021 are:

**25 January
1 March
10 May
12 July
13 September
15 November**

The agreed date for the next AGM is:

Wednesday, 17 March 2021