



# CHEL TENHAM CIVIC SOCIETY

## Cheltenham Civic Society CIO: Executive Committee

Minutes of Meeting held 5.00 pm Monday 16 November 2020 by Zoom

### Register:

#### Trustees:

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

### 1. Introduction and Apologies

There were no apologies.

AB introduced the meeting by referring to his recent discussion with Gareth Edmundson, new Chief Executive of CBC. Subjects discussed included planning enforcement, a common approach to recycling across Gloucestershire and CCS involvement in the Economic Development task-force for Cheltenham.

### 2. Minutes of CIO ExCom meeting of 14 September 2020

The minutes were **approved**

### 3. Matters Arising:

1. CA was hopeful that her access to the Lloyds bank account had been secured – though some testing of that access was still needed.
2. As the Society is likely to be holding its 2021 meeting by Zoom, AB has investigated a Zoom subscription with slots for up to 100 users at £320 p.a. Purchasing this subscription was **approved and AB will action**.  
The numbers attending the AGM can be controlled by using Eventbrite which, it was understood, is free for charities. **SB will look to give some advance publicity to members** in the December 2020 edition of 'Our Town'.
3. SB gave a detailed account of the trials and successes of the website project. A link to a demonstration of the new site had been sent to Trustees and those who had seen it were happy with it. When some minor flaws are addressed and the balance of the fee is paid to the contractors the site will then become live. **Trustees approved SB's approach**.  
The issues around branding will be left to a future discussion. SB also asked that **Trustees who are not yet using the new email addresses should arrange access**.

AB, on behalf of all Trustees, thanked SB for the considerable amount of good work he has done to further the website project.

4. AN reported the filing of the accounts and annual return with the Charity Commission by the due date. The accounts had not (as normally is required) been approved by an AGM since no AGM was held during 2020 in view of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the Charity Commission appear to be raising no challenge on this point.
5. CA reported that insurance renewal is coming up and she had been in touch with the brokers and been reassured that they will obtain competitive quotes; she awaits information on the likely cost of insurance.
6. AB told Trustees that the working group on the future of Parmoor House had met but he wished to maintain a degree of confidentiality about the discussions. He assured Trustees that the working group intends that there should be clarity about what happens to the proceeds after sale before authorisation is sought for the sale so that Trustees can form a view about how the Society will then operate.

#### 4. CCS Finances

AN referred to the new guidance from the Charity Commission on Trustee oversight of the finances. In discussion it was generally agreed that improvement in financial reporting is necessary. CA is keen to ensure that key policies and procedures are agreed and implemented. It is hoped that the Xero financial system that the Society uses is capable of providing management reports for Trustee meetings. It was also suggested that Trustees who spend money should propose budgets for approval by Trustees. **CA agreed to prepare a paper on how these issues could be best addressed.**

#### 5. Subscriptions

CA mentioned that the Society has traditionally paid a number subscriptions; those mentioned were the Georgian, Victorian and Twentieth Century Societies as well as Civic Voice and Cheltenham Arts Council. Trustees were invited to express views on the continuation (or in some cases reinstatement) of these subscriptions. **CA agreed, in the light of comments made, to circulate a note on respective costs and benefits of these subscriptions.**

#### 6. Updates

##### a. HODs

SH reported on 2020's HODs activity where few buildings were open but there was activity online. Geographical reach seems to have been good. A meeting arranged for February 2021 will take stock but the likelihood is that in future years HODs will involve a combination of online material, walks and talks and open buildings.

##### b. Comms and Campaigns

AB recalled previous Trustee discussions where there was a desire for CCS to identify some constructive campaigning activity which would benefit the town and aid recruitment of members. He felt that a list of campaigns might include:

- Waste and recycling including the visual impact of bins
- Planning enforcement
- The state of pavements
- An audit of the state of listed buildings and conservation areas
- Post Covid-19 economic recovery, particularly in relation to retail.

PS suggested that as an addition to the list CCS might promote points within lampposts to charge electric cars. NS felt that the quality of surfacing work by GCC's new highways contractor would also be a worthy subject.

**AB and SB agreed to put together a campaigns plan for 2021**

**c. Planning Forum**

The forum is operating effectively. The work on the Planning White Paper will be picked up in a meeting with Alex Chalk MP shortly.

Trustees agreed a vote of thanks to Adrian Phillips for his excellent work on the White Paper, in recognition of which he will shortly be presented with a plaque (a publicity photo will be taken for publication in 'Our Town').

**d. Civic Awards**

It was previously agreed by Trustees that Civic Awards should take place every other year and therefore the competition will take place during 2021. It was recognised that it may have to be a 'virtual' process and AB is keen that it be a team effort with a group of around 7 individuals.

Methodology will need to be worked out by AB plus SB from the publicity angle and PS liaising with the Planning Forum.

**e. Safer Streets**

In view of lockdown restrictions there has been no action since the last meeting.

**f. Blue Plaques**

Neela's report, circulated by email, was noted.

**7. Pittville Pump Room - funding suggestion regarding the provision of historical information**

The meeting considered a report explaining a funding idea for an information board at the Pump Room received from a CCS member. Whilst the idea was considered a good one, the timing may not be ideal currently. **AB undertook to speak to the member concerned to explain the timing issue to him.**

**8. Approval of new format and text of CIO constitution**

The new document was approved. **AN will now file the revised constitution with the Charity Commission.**

**9. AOB**

— RdeC reported that around 80 members have said that they are happy to receive the Our Town publication in pdf format rather than in hard copy. This could represent a significant saving in cost of publication and distribution. SB had considered 'flip' software but initially it will probably be necessary to use standard pdf format.

— AB mentioned that Phil Collins had drawn to his attention some scaffolding which had been erected adjacent to Parmoor House as this represented an opportunity to access the party wall for redecoration. An estimate for the cost of work is £450 + VAT and **this expenditure was approved – AB to refer back to Phil.**

— AB agreed to circulate a proposal for events for the winter period.

**10. Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 25 January 2021 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**