



# *The Birmingham Civic Society*

Company number 6426178. Charity number 1123806

## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting**

Held at Cornwall Court, Cornwall Street, Birmingham B3 2DT  
on Tuesday 12th November 2013 at 6:30pm

### **Present**

President: The Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Cllr Mike Leddy, accompanied by the Lady Mayoress, Pauline Leddy

Chair: Christine Cushing and Vice Chair: Paul Lister

Members: 53 members of the Society, as listed at the end of the minutes

### **1 Welcome**

The Chair welcomed the Lord Mayor, as President, and all officers and members.

The President congratulated the Society on almost a hundred years of sterling work. He paid tribute to its engagement with young people, for example through the Next Generation Awards of which he had attended the recent Finals hosted by Newman University, and also to the Birmingham Big Art Project (BBAP) in which he and future Lord Mayors would be Patrons of the fundraising campaign.

The Lord Mayor was thanked for supporting the Society in his role as President, and for pledging the assistance to the BBAP of himself and of his successors.

### **2 Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from 40 members of the Society, as listed at the end.

### **3 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 8th November 2012 were approved as a true record.

### **4 Annual report**

The Chair presented the annual report, including the Annual Review booklet which had been circulated with the notice of the meeting.

She noted that the Society had dispensed with both paid administration and also its office, while retaining the correspondence address, as well as saving much of the money previously spent on printing Perspectives and the Annual Report. She thanked PwC for hosting the meeting, as well as all the Society's volunteers including the Trustees and members of various Committees and the Secretary.

During the year a blue plaque to Julia Varley had been installed, and a Gold Medal had been awarded to Mick Hipkiss – only the 39th in the Society's history. The first new Committee for seven years had been formed to consider Public Art.

The Birmingham Trees for Life project had planted more than 28,000 trees in seven years, maintaining one of the Society's founding purposes of enriching the city's environment through public open spaces. The Next Generation Award was another flagship project of the Society.

A monthly newsletter had been distributed by email on the third Thursday of every month, thanks to Cathy Connan's commitment as editor. For members without access to email, a quarterly printed version had also been produced.

The Chair proposed a motion to adopt the annual report, which was seconded by Dr Jagjit Taunque and carried unanimously.

## 5 Annual accounts

The Hon Treasurer, Robin Barnes, presented the annual accounts which had been circulated with the notice of the meeting.

He had described at last year's meeting the need to restrict expenditure, and as a result of prudent planning and increased reliance on volunteer work the costs had been reduced by approximately half this year, so the General Fund had a surplus of about £3,800. A similar outcome was expected in the current year.

In reply to a question from Tony Cook it was noted that corporate membership had held up well, while individual membership had declined a little. Members were encouraged to recommend friends to join the Society.

The Hon Treasurer proposed a motion to adopt the annual accounts, which was seconded by Len Gregory and carried unanimously.

## 6 Election of trustees

The Chair explained that, as required by the constitution of the Society, one third of the seventeen existing trustees were due to retire by rotation.

Two retiring trustees, David Clarke and Paul Lister, had decided not to stand for re-election. Both intended to continue supporting the Society. They were thanked for their valuable contribution over many years, and the Chair expressed gratitude for their wise counsel during her first year in office.

Four trustees, being eligible, had offered themselves for re-election:

**Cathy Connan**, proposed by Lorraine Francis and seconded by Kelvin Rose;  
**Peter Miles**, proposed by Bryan Manley-Green and seconded by Robin Barnes;  
**Dr Jagjit Taunque**, proposed by Joe Jordan and seconded by Geoff Cole;  
**Dr Nick Venning**, proposed by Karen Daw and seconded by Judy Dyke.

Motions to re-elect all four were carried unanimously and the Chair welcomed back those Trustees to the Board.

There were two nominations for vacant places as Trustees, and application letters had been circulated:

**Kirsty Davies-Chinnock**, who had been co-opted by the Trustees in May to take responsibility for social media, after being a member of the Citizenship Committee for some time, proposed by Dr Nick Venning and seconded by Cathy Connan;

**Gavin Orton**, who had been a member of the Planning Committee for some time, proposed by Paul Lister and seconded by the Chair.

Motions to elect both were carried unanimously and the Chair welcomed those Trustees to the Board.

## **7 The year ahead**

The first increase in subscriptions for two years had taken effect on 1st July. That did not appear to have had an adverse effect on the number of members renewing.

The Chair and committee chairs who were present outlined their plans for the coming year. These included proposals for three blue plaques, and the possible development of a blue plaque trail. The Society's archives were to be transferred to the Library of Birmingham, which intended to mount an exhibition to coincide with the Society's centenary in 2018.

Geoff Cole explained that Big Tree Plant funding from the Government would continue until April 2015. Birmingham Trees for Life maintained an online blog to publicise all its tree planting events. Cathy Connan described plans for engagement with various community groups, including consultations to consider what makes for good citizenship. These initiatives would focus on the activities of the Society.

The Chair reported that Glyn Pitchford had taken the lead in the Birmingham Big Art Project. The debate after last year's meeting had been followed by a series of articles in the Birmingham Post and a meeting at Eastside Projects in which two experienced curators described their experiences. Both a Steering Group and a Foundation were being established to manage the fundraising process. This was another project that followed the wishes of the Society's founders who organised competitions and awarded medals for public art and architecture.

## **8 Any other business**

Geoff Purkis was concerned about derelict property and the effects of the proposed changes to public transport including HS2, as well as wanting to protect the city's best examples of 20th century architecture.

In reply Gavin Orton summarised the Planning Committee's role as a consultee in commenting on planning applications, particularly for listed buildings or in conservation areas. It kept a register of buildings at risk, in parallel with English Heritage. There was a working group on 'meanwhile' uses to try and avoid dereliction. The Rotunda was cited as a good example of restoration and rejuvenation of a modern classic.

Tony Cook urged the Society to press for renovation of the old Queen Elizabeth hospital, a listed building, with a view to giving it a new lease of life.

Viv Astling wondered whether the Society should adopt a clear position on HS2. Cllr Paul Tilsley believed it was important to acknowledge the limited capacity of the present West Coast Main Line, and encouraged the Society to act as a sounding board and enable a wider debate whilst not becoming a lobbying group.

Joe Jordan, on behalf of Trustees, officers and members, thanked the Chair for achieving such success during her first year in office. Taking over at a difficult time, she had exceeded expectations.

The meeting closed at 7:15pm. It was followed by a short trailer and a question and answer session relating to the film 'More Canals Than Venice' which had been produced by Steve Rainbow. Rita McLean, chair of the Heritage Committee, had helped him with research. The full film was to be premiered on 28th November in the Birmingham and Midland Institute.

#### **Members present who signed the attendance sheet**

Fiona Adams	Bryan Manley-Green
Viv Astling	Gerry McLaughlin
Robin Barnes	Rita McLean
Sue Behan	Catherine Ogle
Geoff Cole	Anne O'Meara
Cathy Connan	Gavin Orton
Tony Cook	Brian Peace
Kirsty Davies-Chinnock	Sally Pennington
Karen Daw	Geoffrey Purkis
Judy Dyke	Chris Rice
Martin Dyke	Kelvin Rose
Phyllis Eaton	Dr Barrie Smith
Susan Elias	Alan Stanford
Paul Farrow	Dr Jagjit Taunque MBE DL
Lorraine Francis	Satinder Kaur Taunque OBE DL
John Gale	Cllr Paul Tilsley
Hon Alderman Len Gregory	Mr Treadwell
Steve Harris	Mrs Treadwell
David Henson	Peter Troy
Pamela Henson	Linda Troy
John Hipkiss	Barry Tunnicliffe
Hari Jindal	Elizabeth Tunnicliffe
Usha Jindal	Dr Nick Venning
Joe Jordan DL	Steve Walker
Jamie Justham	Hon Alderman Jim Whorwood
Thelma Justham	Marion Wilson
Paul Lister	

#### **Apologies for absence**

Margaret Bassett	Katie Kershaw
Mary Bellamy	Dame Julia King
Ross Bellamy	Revd J N Latham
G B Bowater	Derek Lea
Henry Briggs	Janette Lloyd
Sir Adrian Cadbury	Demetrious Markou
David Clarke	Yvonne Maslen
Anthony Collins	Neil Maybury
Sir Frederick Crawford DL	Carolyn McLaughlin
Jackie Cummins	Peter Miles
Ruth Davies	Martin Paretti
J G Dutton	Glyn Pitchford
Ellie Gabbay	Heather Ramsay
Ian Greaves	Audrey Randall
Gill Gregory	Steven Shakerl
Colin Hammersley	Charles Smith
Stephen Hartland	Mike Steventon
Peter Heath	Rt Revd Dr David Urquhart Bishop of Bham
Adrian Hindmarsh	Bob Warman
Chris Horden	T H Webster