

Hebden Bridge Community Association

AGM 10 April 2021

Virtual Meeting conducted via Zoom // 11.00am

In attendance

Richard Needham, Chair of Hebden Bridge Community Association, introduced the meeting and welcomed all members, visitors, volunteers and staff to the meeting.

1. Apologies

7 apologies for absence had been received from Members of the Association, including from two current Trustees.

Apologies were received from Sarah Helliwell (our Auditor from Cresswells)

In attendance:

Staff (&Members): Graham Mynott

Directors (&Members): Richard Needham, Amanda Ward, Pat Fraser, Dai Lerner, Jane Morris, Julia Woodhouse, Eileen Cann (co-opted during the year and being proposed as a Trustee at this AGM)

Members: 10 other members in attendance (per signing in sheet available)

Those present (19) meet the Association's quorum of members in attendance for AGMs

2. Minutes from last years AGM

- The minutes were approved as a correct record of the meeting. Proposed by Dai Lerner, seconded by Amanda Ward.

3. Matters Arising

Graham Mynott (Director) reported on the following items:

- *The Old Building*
At the June 2020 AGM we reported that a £10,000 Feasibility Study for the old building had been completed and that final reports were imminent. The Board had planned to set time aside later in 2020 to properly discuss the outcome and plan a way forward. Graham will cover this in more detail later, but the good news is we have secured further investment from the Architectural Heritage Fund to push our plans to the next stage.
- *Calderdale Council's 10-year lease ended 31st March 2020.*
Again, we reported this at the 2020 AGM: Calderdale MBC are still holding over on the lease. At the June 2020 AGM we thought this might run until March 2021 when a clearer picture should arise, but in truth we are no clearer in terms of progressing this. Graham wanted to the AGM to note that the feasibility study includes an assessment of the impact of the loss of Calderdale as a tenant.

- *Volunteer Representative on the Board*
Eileen Cann who raised this as an issue at the last AGM has gone through our normal process with prospective Trustees and was formally co-opted on the 18th February 2021 and is being proposed as a Trustee at this AGM.
- *Oil Paintings*
We have now completed the printing from digital images of x2 John Holland paintings and framed them. They now hang in the Greenwood Room. The originals had previously been in the Town Hall prior to the Asset Transfer.
- *Member Engagement*
We have taken some small steps on this and expect to take larger ones as the next phase for the Old Building takes shape. The Board have explored a toolkit called the Seven Modes of Everyday Participation (Graham briefly showed a slide giving the overview of this). We will progress this further going forward. A question was asked about how widely we would draw that engagement. Graham confirmed it will cover members and the wider community.
- *Celebration of 10 years of the Asset Transfer*
This hasn't been forgotten – we would still like to have a celebration when the COVID-situation allows. It might make sense now to celebrate 10 years from the formal opening (which would be summer 2022).
- *Building Refurbishments*
Graham reported that in 2019-2020 we completed a wide range of planned refurbishments across the building:
 - Another section of our roof-line coping stones was addressed on the Hangingroyd Lane elevation
 - This in turn enabled us to complete repair and redecoration works on the 3rd Floor around the lift and toilets
 - A series of works were carried out on the roof and guttering of the Old Building
 - We also completed major works to enable the building to open in late July 2020 after the COVID-19 Lockdown#1 including the installation of new UV hand-driers and air-sterile units in all our public toilets (we have 17 in all)

3. The Chairs Annual Report- Richard Needham

- Richard noted that this is the Association's second virtual AGM as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Town Hall had not yet reopened to the public since the start of the November 2020 lockdown, but plans were in place to reopen in May 2021.
- Richard commented generally on the high levels of tenant occupancy which had been so supportive throughout the FY 2019-2020 and continued. This, along with maximising the usage of furlough support, the various Government grants and success in securing additional grant funds, like those from Power to Change, have enabled the Association to remain stable.
- Richard talked about the completion of the loan deal with Calderdale MBC which was completed in February 2020 during this FY, and the assistance we have received from Power to Change in that process and on an ongoing basis to support our finances.
- Richard thanked the staff team in what has been a difficult time, we have generally been able to maintain staff salaries at 100% of contract throughout the pandemic with the exception of a single month. Richard also commented on the impending departure of Ebony (our Events Co-ordinator) – we all wish her well.
- Richard highlighted the contributions of Trustees Amanda Ward & Dai Lerner, who are both stepping down at this Board meeting having completed their 6 year terms, commenting on

the quality of the advice and their unfailing support to the Association. They will be greatly missed. Both played a major part in the resolution of the loan deal mentioned earlier. Dai will remain on the Café Board.

- Richard also thanked Antonio who is leaving the Board at this AGM having moved to live in Spain.
- Richard finished by all the Staff team and all the Volunteers for all their contributions to the Town Hall over the last 12 months.

Directors Report- Graham Mynott

Graham reflected on the Directors Report and drew the meetings attention to some specific aspects:

- COVID-19 – In this Financial Year (Sept 2019 – August 2020) we closed to the public in March 2020, re-opened in late July 2020 and have then had to close again in this FY in November. We remain closed but plan to open in mid-May 2021. Graham wanted the role of staff during this whole period: those who have worked throughout and those who have been furloughed and come back to work so enthusiastically. Our financial performance is not just down to securing good grants and furlough: when we have been open we have traded very well.
- Staying Well has continued as a project throughout the pandemic – pivoting to online and telephone support and contributing to the overall community response. We will also be taking on new work under the Active Calderdale banner later in 2021.
- Graham wanted to highlight that thanks to securing two different grant streams we have been able to complete a revamp of the website. It's been quite rushed so there is lots still to do, but it's much easier to manage and should be an enhanced tool for us going forward.
- Graham wanted to comment on the new Architectural Heritage Fund grant. This is for £30,000+ and will enable us to take forward the preferred option from the Feasibility Study completed in 2020 towards full planning / listed building consent. This fund will enable the detailed drawings, structural and quantity surveying considerations, and business planning necessary as well as a comprehensive community engagement process around the Town Hall. The goal of this project is to improve accessibility to more of the old building, bring parts into use / into "better" use, address necessary refurbishments and repairs amongst other things.

Finally, Graham thanked the staff and volunteers that support the Town Hall daily. There is no way that the building could run without the volunteers who support the front desk and help the smooth running of the building. Volunteers are the face of the building for most people who visit the Town Hall. We have 20 volunteers filling 15 slots a week and we could not operate without them. Our staff team similarly, are fantastic, and every week go beyond the call of duty to make the building work.

5. Financial Update - Amanda

Amanda highlighted some of the issues that have led to our financial reporting for the year via a short presentation:

- The overview is the impact of COVID from March 2020 onwards in what is normally our busiest trading period in addition to the impacts from Storm Ciara in February 2020.
- On the main points: overall income from charitable activities is down but there has been strong unit occupancy by tenants. On the other hand room hire has fallen by 50% and Café trade by 45%.
- Costs have also been reduced and have been manageable because of the Government's furlough support. Costs were also saved on some running costs because of the reduced usage of the Town Hall.

- The HBCA accounts showed a small operating loss which was more than offset by the grant support during the year. The figures are complicated by the treatment of the £929k loan write-off as effectively grant income, but overall stripping this out HBCA made a surplus of ©£26k.
- In the Café there was a very small operating loss which is going to be covered by one of the grant streams we secured.
- Overall, Amanda commented that these small operating losses are a good achievement in considering the wider picture.
- On the Balance Sheet we see the effect of the discharge of the old loan and the introduction of the new loan on the current and long-term liabilities lines. The balance sheet is much healthier as a result.
- One slide detailed the overall loan picture of the Association showing the old SIB loan(s), the new Calderdale loan and the old loan from CMBC at the asset transfer.
- Full sets of accounts are available on our website.

Business Strategy

- The challenge of managing the COVID recovery period with uncertain demand for café trading, room hires and the larger events and festivals we have hosted here previously.
- We want to maintain a lovely building and keeping standards high.
- Generating income is always a challenge for us. Our rental income will never be enough to cover everything we do.
- Graham is therefore continually chasing money and funding.

The meeting thanked Amanda for all her hard work throughout this year and over her time as a Trustee with the Association.

There were a couple of questions raised.

Andrew Bibby asked about how we will manage for the Treasurer role with Amanda's departure. Graham advised we had advertised widely and not been successful. The intention is to keep trying to recruit. The Board will benefit from advice from staff and contractors who provide all our finance functions internally (we have a staff book-keeper and external contractor who are both qualified accountants). There was a general discussion about the challenges of setting limits of Trustee tenure.

Geoff commented that the Association and Café have done incredibly well with a remarkable result on the loan, and it is good to see the Association so well refinanced.

6. Ordinary Resolutions from Trustees & Members

None had been submitted prior to the meeting.

7. Questions & Discussion

A question from the floor about how things are progressing this year financially. Graham advised that will the recent success in securing further new grant from Power to Change and AHF, we are in a strong position once again.

A question was asked about venue pricing, who is responsible for it and how we might offer blended face-to-face and online options. This is managed by the staff team and prices are generally reviewed annually, but they have not changed for at least two years. It is certainly worth exploring how we can increase room hire versatility.

When will be open ? We are scheduled to re-open to the public on 17th May 2021, with Volunteers back on the front desk.

8. New Trustees

Graham referenced the papers circulated prior to the meeting:

- Two existing Trustees – Amanda Ward & Dai Lerner – reach the end of their second 3-year terms and therefore must stand down. The meeting thanked them for this service
- The Trustees are proposing 3 new Trustees:
 - Eileen Cann, who is a current Volunteer, and was co-opted to the Board in February 2021 is now being proposed to the AGM
 - In addition, following a recruitment process to fill the role that Dai has fulfilled for the Board around the old building and heritage, the Trustees are proposing Alan Gardner & Damien Woolliscroft to the AGM. Alan is a Chartered Building Surveyor and currently works for the National Trust; Damien is an accredited Senior Conservation Architect working for the largest heritage architectural practice in the UK in Manchester. Both live locally.

The meeting universally accepted their nominations.

We are always on the look-out for new Trustees.

9. Any Other Ordinary Business

None was raised.

Richard thanked the meeting for their attendance at the end of another successful year.

The meeting finished around 12.30pm