

# Minutes of the Ninth Annual General Meeting of the Guildford Institute

Held in the Institute's Assembly Room on Saturday 12 November 2016 at 10.30am

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## 1. Quorum

The Chairperson (Sandra Robinson) confirmed that the quorum requirement (one 25th of the membership) as set out in the Articles of Association had been satisfied, with **38** voting members present.

## 2 Proxy Forms & Applications for Membership

**21** proxy forms had been received – a list is appended.

All membership applications received during the year had been approved by the Board of Trustees.

## 3 Minutes of the meeting held on Saturday 7 November 2015

The minutes of the eighth annual general meeting held on Saturday 7 November 2015 were approved. There were no matters arising.

## 4. Report of The Board Of Trustees

The Chairperson (Sandra Robinson) presented highlights of The Trustees' Report 2015 - 2016.

### PEOPLE NEWS

#### The Trustees

At the November 2015 AGM, three new trustees were elected: Ali Venables, Janice Hurdle and Terence Patrick (who rejoined the Board).

In April 2016 Mike Adams stood down as Chairman and the new Chairperson - Sandra Robinson - was elected by the Trustees.

Grateful thanks were expressed to Mike Adams for his period of stewardship of the Board. He saw the Institute through the redevelopment programme and his long association with the

Institute and involvement in clubs and societies; room hire and music has brought useful perspectives and insights to Board discussions and decisions. His experience, knowledge and wisdom will continue to be much used and valued by the Board.

After three years' service, Chris Blow has announced his intention to retire from trusteeship from today's AGM. The Trustees are sorry to be losing him from the Board, but delighted that he is to continue his commitment to organising the very successful Young Musicians' Recital Programme, which he plans to develop further.

***The Institute is therefore seeking suitable people to join the Board of Trustees as soon as possible.***

### **The Staff**

Amy Rice was promoted to Deputy Manager when Ffion Jones left, a role she is fulfilling admirably. Amy Mason is currently on maternity leave and her son James was born on Monday 15 February. She is expected to return to work in January 2017. Vicky Pursey was originally appointed as a full-time temp to cover two part-time posts and the Trustees are delighted she has now become a permanent full-time member of staff. Mark Finn, a very longstanding evening steward, had a second child - baby George was born in September.

The staff team, led by Trish Noakes, work very hard to ensure that everything runs smoothly and to provide Guildford Institute users with a wide range of courses, events and activities.

### **The Volunteers**

Betty Batten, a long-serving Library Volunteer and Member, retired. Peter Curievici, also a Library Volunteer, resigned to take up a new job. The Trustees offer their thanks to both Betty & Peter for the work they have done and their contribution to the running of the Library.

Maya Pednekar and Ann Smith have both recently joined the Reception Volunteer team.

## **ACHEIVEMENTS**

### **The Trustees**

A key achievement of the Trustees has been the development of a new Strategic Plan for the Institute, a ten-year vision with five key strategic objectives to:

- Broaden the range of activities we offer
- Improve our image and make the Guildford Institute better known
- Strengthen our management and governance
- Improve our building and facilities
- Strengthen our financial position

More detail of the Strategic Plan is available on the website in the section called **how we work** or feel free to ask in the office for a copy.

### **Reception Volunteers**

The Reception Volunteers are the first point of contact for all who come to the Institute; they also handle all incoming calls and telephone enquiries.

In addition they:

- Provide admin support to the second-floor tenants
- Handle cash & cheque transactions and in-person card payments
- Maintain the courses and membership databases as well as the talks, visits and events spreadsheets

They are frequently the unofficial 'tourist information office' of Guildford!

### **Library Volunteers**

On Heritage day, the Library hosted more than 90 visitors. Over the year, 325 new titles have been added to the Library but there has

been a decrease in book lending. The special collections are increasingly used by family and national researchers and local history enthusiasts. In the summer term, the Library Volunteers gave a showcase presentation of the Library and special collections as a Wednesday talk which was very well received.

### **‘The Keep’ Volunteer Editorial Team**

*The Keep* is masterminded by two volunteers - Margaret Westwood and Val Monaghan - with support from Vicky Pursey. Two editions are published per year, now in full colour, and circulated to all Members. Trustees know from feedback that it is read and valued by Members as their newsletter of the Institute.

### **Music**

Over the year there were thirteen young musician recitals which were successfully organised with local schools by Chris Blow. They presented a variety of instruments, beautiful voices and musical styles to more than 300 attendees.

### **Publicity**

Raising the profile of the Institute is a crucial priority. This is done in a number of ways:

- The brochure: we produce three brochures a year, each of which is circulated to 3000 people across an increasing geographical area
- Attending promotional events including Farnham Refreshers Fair – where staff met over 50 recent retirees - some of whom have since become Institute users
- Increasing use of social media and local community boards such as *Streetlife*

### **Courses & Institute Activities**

To produce the course offer, the Guildford Institute works with over 35 tutors. Last year this resulted in 5,000 learning hours of education delivered across 142 courses. Five new subject areas were introduced

including science, architecture and health & wellbeing with courses offered with durations varying from single session through to term long. The times courses ran were expanded with more courses available on Saturdays and in the evenings. The *Summer School* was increased and proved immensely popular. For courses, 2015-16 was the most successful year ever.

Over the year, 33 Wednesday talks were given and since the summer term, these are now free to all with booking priority for Members. Eighty percent were fully booked in advance – many within days of the new brochure being released. Over 1,600 places were filled and the diversity of experts and topics garnered very positive feedback. The number of special events has now increased and there are plans to run three per term. The special event format enables staff to offer extended talks from experts and also to run Member-focussed events. This year, a hugely-popular afternoon tea party was hosted to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday.

The visits programme last year offered 12 trips, a mix of coach and 'make-your-own-way' excursions to a variety of cultural, educational and inspirational locations – all with a social atmosphere. The Institute sold a total of 322 spaces on these visits and feedback from participants was hugely positive.

### **Membership**

During 2015-16 there were 568 individuals in membership. This was a slight increase on previous years and also shows an increased geographic spread. Renewals in 2016 have so far been strong and the Institute continues to attract new Members.

### **The Premises**

The building itself is now looking much more elegant thanks to the exterior redecoration which took place over the summer. Within the building there has been a significant increase in room hire – there are often days when every room is in use day and night. The

management of rooms falls to Amy Rice and there is a huge juggling act to try to accommodate everyone from courses, talks, events, clubs and societies as well as room hirers and the Beano within our 5 meeting spaces. Many clubs and societies are hosted regularly at the Institute and this year Trustees were particularly pleased to see a reincarnation of the cinema club as well as a retro gaming club join the ranks.

## **LOOKING FORWARDS**

Trustees are planning:

- To increase the number and range of courses with more evening and weekend courses on offer. Autumn term saw new course areas and there are a further five coming in the spring brochure which will be released at the end of November 2016.
- To broaden the scope of our talks and events programme.
- To improve the website including adding a shopping basket feature.
- To focus on making the Institute better known.
- A consideration of how to increase the use of our Library.
- A facelift for the Assembly Room and Ladies Room.
- To rearrange the office and reception to accommodate four staff and new working arrangements.
- Progressive upgrades and updates to meeting rooms as finances permit.

The year 2017 will mark the Institute's 125th birthday. Celebrations will start on Saturday 22 April 2017 beginning with a special 'Members & guests only' event. There will then be a succession of events of different types spread across the year. Details to follow shortly.

## 5. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer, Martyn Kearney, had produced a synopsis of income/expenditure and the balance sheet which summarised the financial status and activities for the year –2015 to 2016.

**In summary and in comparison with the previous year:**

### BALANCE SHEET

- Fixed Assets - are showing an increase of £11k.
  - The additions relate to the purchase and installation cost of a replacement IT server at £13k plus the new air conditioning system of £7k less depreciation.
- Current Assets – increased considerably compared to last year.
  - There has been a small decrease in debtors but, more importantly, cash in the bank has increased by 30% to £237k – mainly reflecting the cash impact of our net surplus for the last 12 months.
- Current Liabilities – have remained largely the same, with a £2k decrease compared to the previous year.
  - Creditors & Accruals are showing an £1k decrease to £20k, mainly as a result of lower cost accruals, which is purely a timing issue.
  - Building Loans – these, together with the amount shown under Long Term Liabilities, amount to £76k and are long-term loans from Members and others towards the funding of the major renovation project which occurred in 2013. The split on disclosure between Current Liabilities of £39k and Long Term Liabilities of £37k is because some of the loans allow the lender, exceptionally, to request, with 3 months' notice, repayment of the loan before the expiry of its full period.
- Other Liabilities - those due after more than 1 year
  - Deferred income, this time relating to Lifetime memberships. We spread the financial impact of these subscriptions over 10 years.

- Funds/Reserves section
  - The Restricted Fund, which is the fund through which project resources are collected and expended, had net incoming resources for the year of £3k. This sum is the difference between donations and a grant received and costs comprising depreciation and expenditure relating to the air conditioning project.
  - The Restricted Fund totalled £463k at the year-end.
  - The Unrestricted Fund shows net incoming resources for the year of £73k - the same figure as the previous year.
  - The Unrestricted Fund has a separate fund within it called a Designated Fund which was set up by the Trustees two years ago for the painting of the building's exterior. This fund stood at a total of £15k at the year-end. The external redecoration was finalised in September 2017 and our original estimate of the likely cost has proved to be reasonably accurate. The Unrestricted Fund totalled £359k at the year-end.
  - As expected by the Charities Commission, the Institute has a reserves policy. At the 2016 year-end, the Institute has more than adequate reserves to cover its policy requirement of 3 months' expenditure. The Trustees remain committed to maintaining the charity's reserves to at least the level of its stated reserves policy and will keep the situation under constant review.

## **RESULTS SHEET**

- Total income at £251k has increased by 8% over last year's £232k. The two main drivers being room hire and courses. Room hire increased by more than 25% to £52k and courses by a similar % to £54k.
- The Trustees have continued to maintain a tight control over expenditure, however, total expenditure is showing an increase of £19k which is just under a 12% increase compared to the previous year. This is due to the following reasons:

- Staff Costs - costs are £7k higher than the previous year. The demands on the staff running the main office have increased considerably during the year and we have had to 'staff up' to cover this requirement. In addition, the Institute has been required this year to set up an auto-enrolment pension scheme for its employees. This has resulted in employer pension contributions of £1k for the current year.
- Office costs - costs are £12k higher than last year. Depreciation of the new IT server has contributed an additional £4k to costs. Also, increased professional costs of £8k, made up of 'auto-enrolment' set up costs (£5k), legal fees (£2k) and an increase in audit fee (£1k).
- In total, net incoming resources from our normal operations amounted to £73k plus net incoming resources of £3k make £76k in total as reflected in the balance sheet.
- The current year from 1st August has started positively – with room hire and course revenues still proving strong.

## **GIFT AID**

- Gift Aid is a scheme set up by the government which enables charities to reclaim tax on a donation made by a UK taxpayer which effectively increases the amount of that donation by 25%.
- As a charity, the Institute has been using this facility and has been claiming Gift Aid on subscriptions and donations received, when possible.
- However, HMRC has issued specific guidance on its interpretation of the rules and specified that, to qualify for Gift Aid, payments for annual subscription must be for membership only and must not give Members specific benefits resulting from their subscription.
- There is however, a de minimis rule which allows charities to claim Gift Aid on subscriptions as long as the benefits enjoyed do not exceed 25% of the membership fee received.

- This guidance has relevance for the Institute but especially in relation to the Wednesday afternoon talks which, in the past, were free to Members but cost Non-Members the sum of £4. As so many Members attend the talks, the 25% benefit level was quickly reached and meant we were unable to claim Gift Aid on those Members' subscriptions.
- As a result, we decided that we would no longer charge for the Wednesday talks as it was impacting our ability to claim Gift Aid.
- A flyer was produced on the above and circulated at the Wednesday talks. This flyer was aimed at Members for information purposes and to Non-Members for the purpose of emphasising that there are costs resulting to the Institute from running the talks and to encourage them to either make a donation or become a Member.
- There is in operation a Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme which enables charities to claim on small donations up to a specified limit, without the need to identify the donor or have a signed Gift Aid declaration form.
- We still need however, to have a completed Gift Aid declaration form for any Member or donor who is a UK taxpayer and is happy for us to claim Gift Aid on their subscription or donation.

## 6. Members' Questions

There were no questions asked.

**The reports of the Chairman and Treasurer were unanimously accepted.**

## 7. Approval of the appointment of Auditors:

- To approve the appointment of A J Bennewith as Auditor
  - Proposed by Neil Chambers. Seconded by Lesley Scordellis.

**APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**

## 8. Approval of the re-election of Trustees:

- Martyn Kearney

- Proposed by Lesley Scordellis. Seconded by Eric Earle.

**APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**

## **9. Any other business**

There had been no items of business submitted by the deadline.

### **The meeting closed at 11:15am**

#### **Trustees in attendance**

Sandra Robinson  
(Chairperson)  
Martyn Kearney  
(Treasurer)

Mike Adams  
Lesley Scordellis  
Chris Blow  
Terence Patrick

Ali Venables  
Mike Wheatley  
Janice Hurdle  
Susan Roche

#### **Members in attendance**

Mike Adams  
Lawson Aldred  
Mavis Archer  
Maurice Barham  
Chris Blow  
Jean Bridger  
Trevor Brook  
Joan Butler  
Neil Chambers  
Stephanie Chambers  
Margaret Clements  
Rob Durham  
Joy Dyson

Auriol Earle  
Eric Earle  
Nick Farbridge  
Penny Farbridge  
Russell Feaver  
Janice Hurdle  
Margaret Jack  
William Jackson  
Lisa Kearney  
Martyn Kearney  
Kathleen Lamb  
Lois Marchi  
Peter Marchi

Pam Palmer  
Terence Patrick  
Barbara Payne  
Graham Robinson  
Sandra Robinson  
Susan Roche  
Lesley Scordellis  
John Shorto  
Avis Thorniley  
Ali Venables  
Mike Wheatley  
Joan Wrenn

#### **Patrons in attendance**

Gordon Jackson (Mayor of Guildford)

#### **Non-Members known to be in attendance**

Trish Noakes (Institute Manager)  
Amy Rice (Deputy Manager)

Vicky Pursey (Administrator)  
Nina Hammond

**Proxy voting forms were received from:**

Gay Elvidge	Denise Pake	Julia Wake
Carol Gallacher	Sam Pake	Roy Wake
Peter Green	Caroline Pitt	Margaret Walker
Sybil Jubb	John Pybus	Tony Walker
Jean Jupp	Mike Sanders	Jocelyn Willcox
Marjorie Kirby	Hewett	Walter Willcox
Jackie Luben	Doreen Shaw	
Anthony Marsom	Linda Stevens	

**Apologies – in addition to those submitting proxy forms:**

Shirley Bell	Phyll Morris	Jane Thorp
Gwyneth Craske	Pauline Read	Olive Wholey
Sheila Davidson	Lady Gay Shepperd	Reg Wholey
Hilary Fletcher	(Patron)	
Val Monaghan	Graham Thorp	

**Copies of these minutes in large font are available on request**