

Patcham Memorial Hall AGM MINUTES

Thursday 30th September 2021, 4.30pm. Patcham Memorial Hall, 3 Old London Road, Brighton, BN1 8XR

Present: John Hogg, Pamela Hubbard (U3A), Jan Mulreany, Mary Taylor (WI), Elizabeth Storey, Hugh Woodhouse (PMH & PCA), Christine Eden (U3A), John Williams;
Cllr Carol Theobald, Rita Hards, Fred Hards, Maria Hogg, Richard Greenwood, Michael Shade, Annie Corpe, Sue Seymour, Carol O'Brien, Shirley Killick, Kitty Feher, Lesley Brown.

11 members of the public and one City councillor joined the 8 trustees and committee members, with a total of 15 Patcham residents so the minimum of five to form a quorum was present.

Apologies received in advance from: Trevor Powell, Sandie Cooper, Margaret Stewart, Penny Balchin, Caroline Lucas MP, Rebecca Mann, Cllr Alistair McNair, Valerie Shipley, Richard Shipley.

The AGM was chaired by the Trustees Committee chair, Elizabeth Storey.

- The PMH Trustees' Annual Report, Treasurer's Report and Accounts for the year January to December 2020 had been circulated to attendees by email prior to the meeting and copies were available for reading at the hall. Reports were largely centred around the impact of the Covid-19 crisis, as guided by the Charity Commission, which asked for trustees to confirm the charity as a going concern after the Covid-19 emergency, and to outline plans for future resilience in the light of the impact of national and local lockdowns, closures and funds shortfalls. The Chair thanked the Committee for its work during the difficult year under report, commending the Covid Crisis committee (HW, JM, JW, JH) who had worked to follow Government and Charity Commission guidance during the year of unprecedented and uncertain events. Thanks were echoed from the Floor, for "keeping it going".
- Previous to the AGM the Trustees had approved the 2020 accounts for presentation; HW noted a small change from the earlier version of the accounts sent to attendees, ie. the addition of £223 trustees' expenses to the spreadsheet under section A3, Payments, with a subsequent adjustment to the total payments for the year as £9036. The Trustees are pleased to report that, financially, the Hall is a going concern for 2021, with crucial funds having been received from the national Business Support Grant, and a business-interruption clause in the Hall's insurance policy. Consequently, the Trustees have approved the proposal by the Treasurer to increase the level of Reserves to £10k annually, (previously £3k) in the light of the advice by the Charity Commission to use reserves to maintain the hall during the Covid-19 crisis. The adoption of the Accounts was proposed by Mary Taylor and seconded by John Hogg.
- Councillor Theobald congratulated the Board on the management of the Hall and the Accounts.
- Formal thanks were made to John Hogg for managing the continued maintenance of the Hall, and the implementation of the Estates refurbishment plan: at a point when the hall was closed, the new Air Source Heat Pump system was installed with little disruption to hirers and this has helped to maintain the small income stream for the end of the post-lockdown period. John explained the operation of the new Air Source Heat Pump system, which has enabled the hall to reopen with improved facilities, including a cooling facility.

Jan Mulreany, for the Garden Task Group, explained the plan for the now-established garden areas, which had been 'rewilded' following the approval of plans at the 2019 AGM. With the help of local gardener Rebecca Mann, it was fitted with a "meadow mat" wildflower lawn, and perennial planting in raised beds, in place of the crazy-paved patio at the front of the hall. Its maintenance is now being supported by a volunteer (Lesley Brown) who is an expert mower using a scythe, and the Garden Task Group will supervise it over the winter.

- The Chair welcomed the co-option of Maria Hogg as a resident to the management committee, as she has been a volunteer member of the Garden Task Group this year. An invitation was extended to those present to join the Committee as Hall user representatives, without having to be a full legal Trustee member of the committee, especially if anyone has a particular expertise in activities to raise funds.
- Priorities for the coming year were outlined:
 - a limit to numbers caused by the Covid-19 emergency has now been lifted, following the relaxation of regulations for community spaces by the government. The Hall's previous fire risk limit of 100 people seated is now reinstated. Users will be advised of this immediately, and the committee will continue to maintain Covid-Secure measures for the foreseeable future, and take immediate action if the Covid case numbers related situation changes significantly, both nationally and locally.
 - the continued and final refurbishment of the hall, especially following the heating system installation. Post-Covid demand on painters and decorators means that interior decorating is delayed until early 2022, but there is a committed tradesperson engaged to do this.
- Any Other Business
 - a number of estates-related issues were raised by members of the audience, namely a request to check the operation of the automatic lighting on the steps, and refinishing the drain-covers with anti-slip paint. Fred Hards

welcomed that the refurbishment had increased the number of power points around the hall, for safer use of electrical equipment.

- the question of installing a Defibrillator to the area outside the Hall was introduced; discussion about its cost and provenance led to the committee noting an action to (a) seek advice about a low-cost supply of this life-saving equipment to charities, and (b) approach the Co-operative Group to ask for support, either in providing funds for installing one at the Hall, or installing one at the newly-refitted shop at the crossroads nearby.

- The formal business of the AGM having been concluded, the membership of the meeting went outside to witness two activities - the 'inauguration' of a small bench in the new wildlife garden, which was carried out, at short notice, by Councillor Theobald. Valerie Shipley, a previous Trustee, had been unable to come. Lesley Brown gave a lively demonstration of the cutting of the lawn, with a commentary and answered questions from the audience.
- It is noted that this AGM relates to a year now almost nine months gone, as the usual timing of June was not appropriate because of the knock-on effects of the Covid restrictions. It is proposed that the AGM 2022 will be scheduled for a date in June, so that the report on events is closer to the year under scrutiny.

Signed:



Jan Mulreany, Charity Secretary to the Trustees
3 October 2021

