

The City of Winchester Trust Ltd

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Held at the University of Winchester On Monday 26 September 2016

Opening welcome and apologies

Keith Leaman (Chairman) welcomed Members and invited guests, including the Deputy Mayor of Winchester Cllr David McLean, the Deputy Mayoress, Mrs Diane McClean, Professor Joy Carter, Trust President, and Vice Chancellor of Winchester University, Sir Donald Insall, Trust Vice President, and the guest speaker, Freddie Gick, Chairman of Civic Voice. A list of Members present and apologies received is available on request from the Secretary.

Welcome by Professor Joy Carter, President of the City of Winchester Trust

Professor Joy Carter thanked the Chairman, Trustees and colleagues for the fantastic job they all did on behalf of the Trust, and said it was a pleasure and privilege to welcome everyone to the meeting tonight. Professor Carter commended all present for their interest in the Trust, which could not work without their participation.

It was also a privilege for the University to be in such a wonderful city, and the University liked to be in touch with the Trust over its plans; it was always challenging to fit new buildings in with the old, and they tried hard to get it right. The University was particularly proud of the refurbishing of its chapel, and a lot of money and thought had gone into restoring it to its original design, whilst adding new and lovely features. Professor Carter invited everyone to visit the chapel and look at what had been achieved.

Looking to the future, Professor Carter spoke of the University's plans for a brand new development on the Romsey Road next to the West Downs school, which it was hoped would make a beautiful entrance to the City. The University was also planning a new leisure centre in partnership with the City of Winchester.

Professor Carter thanked the Trust for staying in touch with the University, for being here tonight, and for all the Trust would be doing in future years.

Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on 28 September 2015

Copies of the minutes were available at the meeting. The recommendation to approve the minutes as a true and accurate record of proceedings was proposed by John Stanning (Trust Council Member) and seconded by Sir Donald Insall (Vice President). The recommendation was carried unanimously.

Report and Accounts for the Financial Year ended 31st March 2016

- **Chairman's Report (Keith Leaman)**

The Chairman commenced his report by thanking all those who had undertaken a great deal of work for the Trust, which enabled the Trust to operate as it did.

The Trust had taken part in the recent national Heritage Open Days, and the Chairman thanked the Trust's two secretaries, Mollie and Janet, for their sterling work in the clearing and preparing the Heritage Centre ready for an exhibition of drawings. The event had proved a great success and some of the drawings had been hung in the foyer at The Stripe, for members to enjoy.

Paul Williams had master-minded a very successful series of interesting walks around Winchester over the summer of 2016 and was now organising next year's perambulations. Iain Patton and Sue Owers are preparing outings of interest further afield, having organised some really fascinating expeditions this year. The Chairman thanked all involved, and invited all members to come along and join the walks and outings.

The Chairman spoke of Robin Freeman who had died recently, reminding members of Robin's wise architectural advice, his encyclopaedic knowledge of Winchester buildings, but most of all, just Robin himself and his calm, cheerful outlook on life. Sadly the Chairman had also to report the death of Norman Roberts, an architect who had worked for Hampshire County Council. Norman had been a member of the Trust for many years and involved himself with the Chippendale venture for children, as well as organising the 2007 Design Award Scheme with his wife Anne. He had also worked on planning applications with PAG.

Referring to last year's Trust Design Awards, there had only been one worthy scheme out of several applicants, which was by T2 Architects for a housing scheme. In 2016 this scheme went on to win a Civic Trust Design Award presented to T2 at Portcullis House. This award, given by Civic Voice, was for housing schemes up and down the country and again this was the only entry the judge could find worthy of receiving an award in this category. How disappointing that on the whole, mass housing scheme design is so weak.

The Chairman then referred to the Station Approach saga, where the two final competitors had been unsuccessful with their proposals. In the Trust's opinion, the brief made demands on both sites that could not be accommodated without placing far too much pressure on each site, creating a density that the Trust considered was unacceptable. Fundamental to the scheme's weaknesses were two floors of car parking. The Trust believed that research should be undertaken into vehicle movement within an overall strategic plan philosophy for the whole of the City, before preparing the brief for the Station Approach area.

Whatever you do at the Station ricochets around the whole of the City. The same applies to Silver Hill, Barton Farm, the possible new Recreation Centre, and Winchester's future as an attraction to both shops and visitors. It seems to the Trust that it is difficult to develop anything of quality without sorting the basics. Until recently, neither authority has taken up the challenge. We do understand, however, that the County are in the process of undertaking a traffic report.

The Heritage Open Days were organised in Winchester by a brave Nicky Gottlieb who managed what turned out to be a well-attended, first class, and enjoyable four days of interesting, sometimes, surprising historic tours of buildings, many seldom open to the general public. Heritage Open Days are a national event, held on the same dates throughout the country. We opened the Heritage Centre to the public, our attraction being a display of paintings and drawings of Winchester by Andrew Rutter and John Bulford. This was well attended with over 200 people passing through our doors.

Now for a problem the Trust has not considered for 15 years, the annual subscription. At present it is £10, with family membership being £15. The Trust has made a deficit for the last four years and cannot rely on investment returns in the current financial climate to increase its income. We are therefore often limited in asking for expert opinions on planning, traffic, legal matters etc. The Trust's current subscription rates are below average when compared with other civic societies, so Trustees have decided to increase membership from £10 per year to £20, with family membership increasing from £15 to £30. I can assure you this decision has not been taken lightly.

Finally I should like to thank Nick Gibbins for his excellent work in preparing this year's financial statement. Rodney Morgan-Giles has volunteered to present the statement on behalf of Nick, so thank you, Rodney, and over to you.

- **Treasurer's Report (Rodney Morgan-Giles for Nick Gibbins)**

The accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016 have been circulated in the Annual Report and Accounts 2016, including the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and supporting notes.

The Statement of Financial Activities summarises how the Trust's overall funds have changed during the year. This is a combination of the operating deficit for the year, ironically described as Net Incoming Resources, which was in deficit by £4,157 and changes in the value of the Trust's investments, which fell by £9,105. Overall, therefore, the value of the Trust's assets fell by £13,262 in the year, almost exactly cancelling out the increase in the Trust's assets reported last year.

The Trust has in fact incurred an operating deficit in three of the last four years and its operating income, though sufficient to cover its regular ongoing expenses, leaves little margin for new projects or for unexpected events. The deficit last year arose principally because of the costs incurred in maintenance and improvements to the flat at 30A Upper Brook Street following a change of tenancy. These have increased the rental value significantly but in the short term have resulted in higher management costs and a loss of rental income during the work. The Trust has built up reserves in previous years and can afford to finance modest deficits in the short term but we need to take steps to avoid incurring continuing deficits into the future, and this explains the proposal to increase membership subscriptions next year.

The Balance Sheet shows that the Trust's financial position remains strong despite last year's deficit, with assets valued at over £686,000 including the leasehold property at Upper Brook St, valued at £475,000. However, the Trust's assets provide the majority of the Trust's income, some 73% last year, so these assets are not simply to provide a reserve.

The Trust's working capital has been reduced during 2015/2016 as it was employed both to meet the operating deficit and to finance the capital expenditure incurred on the let property.

The value of the Trust's financial investments fell from £184,118 to £175,020 during last year. The majority of these investments are equity based with a view to increasing asset values in the longer term. However, this does mean that the Trust is exposed to greater volatility in the short term. During the current year equities have done better, so that currently the Trust's investments are worth about 10% more than shown in March.

I'd like to finish by offering particular thanks to all those members, including Trustees, who have contributed their time and expertise towards generating the Trust's income, and to the University of Winchester for the use of this theatre.

In conclusion, I would like to assure you that Nick may be abroad but he hasn't taken our reserves with him, so I would like to recommend that the Report and Accounts be adopted.

Adoption of Annual Report and Accounts

The Annual Report and Accounts 2016 are presented to members for adoption, the accounts having been approved by the Council at its July meeting.

This was proposed by Judith Martin (Trust Council Member) and seconded by Iain Patton (Trust Council Member). The recommendation was carried unanimously.

Election of Independent Examiners

The Treasurer recommended that Butler & Co be elected as the Trust's Independent Examiners for the financial year 2016-2017 and that the Council be authorised to set their remuneration.

This was proposed by Sue Owers (Trust Council Member) and seconded by Barrie Brinkman (Trust Member). The recommendation was carried unanimously.

Retirement of Trustees

Thanks were expressed to Peter Radcliffe for his long and valuable service to the Trust, and especially his expertise when he was Treasurer of the Trust.

Election of Trustees

Trustees retiring by rotation and offering themselves for re-election:

John Beveridge, Michael Carden, Sue Owers and John Stanning

This was proposed by Shione Carden (Trust Council Member) and seconded by Barrie Brinkman (Trust Member). The recommendation was carried unanimously, and the Chairman thanked them for their continuing support and contribution to the Trust.

Election of New Trustee

Mr Barrie Brinkman was standing for election as a Trustee.

This was proposed by Michael Carden (Trust Council Member) and seconded by John Beveridge (Trust Council Member). The recommendation was carried unanimously.

Presentation by Freddie Gick, Chairman of Civic Voice

Freddie Gick outlined the importance of generating civic pride, emphasising there were now 150,000 people who belonged to civic societies throughout England. Civic Voice and civic societies were involved in various activities, including planning work, organising Design Award schemes, and tree planting. Civic societies wanted to retain the character and what is best about where we live; and to encourage everyone to take pride in their neighbourhoods and interested in how they develop in the future. Everyone was concerned about transport, housing, and the retention of conservation and planning staff all over the country.

Civic societies can lobby on behalf of everyone, but would only have any authority if they can say they are representing a strong and thriving movement; which is why it is so important for Civic Voice to help to build this movement.

It was recognised there was a need for additional housing, and Civic Voice felt the best way to develop and build more houses was to get local people involved through collaborative planning, and Civic Voice hoped that societies would lead the way on this. Civic Voice would be running its Design Awards again, and would be delighted to have some entries from Winchester. Shared space and town centre transport were other issues that Civic Voice would be highlighting. During 2017 there would be a big focus on conservation areas, and it would be the 50th anniversary of the Civic Amenities Act. Civic Voice would be surveying 20,000 war memorials over the next 3-4 years, and the national Civic Day on 17 June 2017 was an opportunity to bring to the attention of the local community all the work carried out by civic societies.

Sir Donald Insall thanked Freddie Gick for a most enjoyable, inspiring and thought provoking presentation, and said that Winchester was a very special place to so many people.

In conclusion, the Chairman, Keith Leaman, thanked everyone for coming along to the AGM, and especially the Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress of Winchester for representing the Mayoralty.

[The meeting closed at 8.15 pm]