

MINUTES OF THE AGM OF THE ARTS SOCIETY CHESTER

HELD ON 15th NOVEMBER 2022

The Chair welcomed 51 members. Four apologies were received. The papers had been made available to members in advance of the meeting.

1. The minutes of the 2021 Annual General Meeting were approved unanimously.
2. The Chair expressed her appreciation of the work of the Committee over a very difficult period due to Covid and the need to find a new venue. She reviewed the work of the Society in the past 12 months, including the programme of lectures and events and the work of the Community Arts and Heritage Volunteers. She gave particular thanks to Fiona Neame who had worked tirelessly for seven years as Programme Secretary, arranging many fascinating and varied lectures during this period.
3. The Treasurer presented her report outlining that the Society had made small losses over the last two years due to Covid. However, in view of the overall positive financial position, the Committee had decided to maintain the annual fee at £50 for 2022/23. The dedicated fund for Community Arts and Heritage Volunteering had reduced as a result of the loss of raffle income during Covid, when lectures were by Zoom. However, the Society had still been able to fund a number of Community Arts projects and the fund was again benefiting from the raffles now lectures were in person.
4. The accounts for the year ended December 2021 were approved unanimously.
5. Mr Philip O'Neill was approved unanimously as Independent Examiner for 2022.
6. The Officers of the committee as proposed and seconded were approved unanimously

Chair	Jenny Rogers
Vice Chair	Kevin Barnett

Hon Treasurer Ann Ashton

It was noted that the position of Hon. Secretary remained vacant.

7. The continuing members of the committee as proposed and seconded were approved unanimously:

Events Secretary

Sheila Lister and Madeleine Lane

Community Arts

Caroline Robinson and Lea McGee

8. The new general committee members, Eileen Warren and Val Shannon, as proposed and seconded were approved unanimously.

9. The President of the Society recalled the setting up of the Chester Society twenty years previously and the enjoyment and the friendships that had resulted. The Society was thriving but the last two years has been challenging because of the Pandemic. With lectures on Zoom members missed the social aspects of membership and it had been difficult to recruit new Committee members. The situation was now critical, if the Society was to continue after June 2023, at least five new Committee members were needed by February. She urged the members to consider if they could help.

She expressed her appreciation of the existing Committee on behalf of the membership.

10. The Committee resolution, namely:

The committee is authorised to-

- (a) enter into exploratory talks and negotiations with such other local Arts Society or Societies as the committee may consider fit with a view to amalgamation; and*
- (b) to take such steps as may be necessary and as it considers fit to lead to the eventual dissolution of the Society.*

Provided always, that nothing in this resolution shall be taken as authorising an amalgamation or dissolution, which would be decided upon at an Extraordinary General Meeting convened for that purpose.

was discussed.

The Chairman explained that this was a last resort as, despite a number of attempts, it had not proved possible to recruit the number of new Committee members required to keep the Society functioning. She was grateful for those who had stepped forward but informed the meeting that by the time of the 2023/24 programme there would be vacancies for the Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. The Committee had therefore, with great reluctance and sadness, proposed the resolution. However, if sufficient members joined the Committee by February it should be possible to continue to function as Chester TAS.

Members made a number of suggestions on possible ways forward and the Chairman confirmed that a further attempt at Committee recruitment would be held at the December lecture.

The resolution was put to the vote and members supported the Committee resolution.

11. Date of the next AGM - to be confirmed.

Pat Corless, the NW Area Chair, who attended the meeting as a guest, addressed members and emphasised how sad it would be if such a vibrant, well funded society had to close. She urged all to seek a way forward.