

Minutes of the 39th Annual General Meeting held at the Beecroft Art Gallery Lecture theatre on Tuesday 20th June 2017

1. WELCOME

1.1 Present: Ann Holland, Steve McCartney, the Worshipful Mayor of Southend – Cllr Fay Evans, David Shaer, Gina Warner, Bill Barr, Adrian Green, Rosemary Pennington, Dorothy Turner, Benjamin Scarsbrook, Mary Porter, Ann Robson, Cllr Derek Jarvis, Jess Ellis, Cllr Meg Davidson, Cllr David Burzotta, Simon May.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

3. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES OF THE 38TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

3.1 The minutes of the 38th Annual General Meeting held on Monday 12th June 2016 were received as a true record, proposed by Cllr Ann Holland agreed by David Shaer and Rosemary Pennington.

4. MATTERS ARISING

There was nothing of major note.

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Ann noted the recent sad demise of Florrie Holland who has been chairman in excess of 30 years. She was an accomplished actress and we noted our appreciation for her during here long and successful tenure.

5.1 Ann mentioned the excellent visual arts exhibition and preview with the guest artist and the art donated for auction.

5.2 Southend Musical Festival was excellent and rich seam of talent and Ann was proud to be associated with it.

5.3 Ann thanked all the officers for their hard work throughout the year and Trevor and Cherie Bason and their contributions throughout the year.

6. REPORTS

6.1 HON SECRETARY

Over the past 6 months SOSAC have received 150,000+ visitors to the web site which was excellent, SOSAC continues to support their members events through the Facebook, Twitter and regular website. The new flipbook newsletter has also proved very successful. Membership has stabilised around 40 groups. SOSAC also offer local show reviews as an additional service.

Our newest addition is an Instagram account and we have begun to use Facebook live.

HON TREASURER

- 6.2 David reported we are continuing to be frugal with our bank account we actively encourage arts grants up to £1000. We have issued less in grants in the last 12 months but we have an increase of grant issuance more recently. If the event involves disabled people the Mayoral Fund can be used for this which is considerably more. And indeed we recently issued a grant to a young author with MSE to assist with a future book fair.
- 6.3 End of year accounts, expenses exceeded our revenue by approx. £1200.
- 6.4 There was no Visual Arts exhibition in the last financial year which has led to a blank in that section of the report, but the recent exhibition will be included in the latest financial year.
- 6.5 We have surplus grant funds and £12,000 in our account of which £10,000 is the amount in the mayoral fund.
- 6.6 Accounts were proposed by Rosemary Pennington and Seconded by Cllr Derek Jarvis

7 ELECTION OF HONORARY OFFICERS

7.1 The Mayor Cllr Fay Evans presided over the re-election of the current committee for 2017-18.

All the existing officers were re-elected.

Hon Chairman: Ann Holland.

Hon Secretary: Steve McCartney.

Hon Treasurer: David Shaer.

The election was done by a show of hands.

8. APPOINTING AN HONORARY AUDITOR

8.1 David pointed out that the turnout within our accounts did not require an external auditor.

9. DIVISIONAL PAPERS

a.) Drama

Steve outlined the excellent success of the amateur drama community in the Palace Theatre and the Dixon Studio – all the groups were flourishing with the musical theatre groups leading the way with strong audience attendance. Special mention of an original play L'Occupation which made its debut in March 2017 to sell-out houses. There was a proposed hire in 2018 but the groups felt it well worth it. Ann mentioned Lindisfarne's work was of high quality and greatly enjoyed by its audiences.

b.) VISUAL ARTS

c.) It was decided not to use the Becroft Gallery as it was felt not to be quite ready to host our exhibition.

d.) The Visual Arts was held at the Museum gallery as the display facilities there were outstanding. The preview evening was well attended with guest artist Paul Karlake doing a live demonstration. Some items were sold. Payment to artists will need to improve Steve and David are going to look into card readers which can be used during the 2018 Visual Arts exhibition to make the payment system to artists easier and more secure. It was felt that it was better not to involve Southend Council's financial systems to the same extent as previously. The next exhibition will take place from 6th Jan – 10th Feb 2018. Venue to be decided.

e.) MUSIC

Music continues to thrive and flourish with the choirs covering a large range of musical tastes. Southend Choral Society musical director Roger Humphrey's Never Forget was a special event for Remembrance Sunday - which enjoyed big audiences and involved children. Audience numbers fluctuate but groups work hard to advertise their events.

This year saw the return of Roy Wales who conducted Israel in Egypt. Sadly a few months ago Roy Dowling passed away being a well-respected member. Funding is always difficult thanks to SOSAC for the funding assistance given.

Florrie Holland was chairman of Southend Festival Chorus and will be much missed.

Plans are afoot for a large collaborative concert in the Cliffs Pavilion in 2018.

Ann mentioned the Poppies Wave and how many people had visited throughout it time at Shoebury due to end on 25th June.

Rosemary mentioned the Southend Young Men's Chorus and their success and work towards the DVD - BBC Ten pieces educational programme as well as their forthcoming appearance in BBC proms in July.

Cllr Burzotta talked about the possibility of English Touring Opera visiting Southend to visit schools in an education outreach project.

f.) WRITTEN WORD

The SALAD event at the forum over two days March at the Forum was very successful with talks and readings across that weekend in the Deeping Room. This event is held in conjunction with Essex Book Festival.

Storytellers Xmas organised by Wordsmiths– grant provided by SOSAC at Leigh Wesley Church – 30 tables. There will be a raffle proceeds to Southend Mencap and a Xmas grotto.

Leigh community centre do regular book fairs Ann has attended some of these.

Former mayor CllrMahon has talked about the Saxon King and Priory Park. Ann mentioned the forthcoming Estuary Experience with a re-creation of the tomb.

Dorothy Turner from Southend Poetry Group spoke about their newly published 33rd anthology. £3.30 Their regular meetings invite members to talk about their areas of interest. One of their members has recently had a book published by Mica Press. They were also present at the recent book festival. Dorothy represented SPG at the SALAD event.

Ann retired as Written Word Rep – we were pleased that Adrian Green agreed to take over from Ann in this role.

Ann mentioned perhaps looking at a film representative at a future meeting as an area of visual arts not currently included.

10. WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA

The assembly was pleased with the website. SOSAC are now on Instagram – they will continue to promote all the group events taking place as well as postings in the calendar, Facebook, Twitter and the newsletter (which is now in a flipbook format).

Steve indicated the high numbers of visits to the web site in excess of 150,000+. Steve appealed for groups to email information to us as we have to trawl websites to get the latest postings.

11. OPEN DAY 2017

Some confusion has set in regarding the date of this year's Open Day due to a booking anomaly by Southend Theatres the day was originally advertised to members as being 3rd September this has been changed 10th September 2017.

Follow on through Rosemary Pennington has now confirmed this to be the final date. As Southend Art Group are using the venue on the 3rd September.

Any performers chosen to take part are current members of SOSAC.

12. SUBSCRIPTIONS PROPOSED INCREASE

SOSAC proposed an increase on the highest tariff of £5 to take effect from 1st Jan 2018. This is in line with inflation and SOSAC operational costs. The lower tariffs will not be increased.

21-40 members will now be £25 and not £20 per annum.

This was voted through unanimously.

The Mayor spoke to the assembly for a few minutes about her recent appointment and the excellent work done by the arts council of the committee and their provision of an excellent bedrock in the town and she commended the local artistic groups for their regular exhibitions and getting their work out to be viewed by the general public. She spoke about her chosen mayoral charity. The mayoral charities are Prostate Cancer and Breast Cancer. Success rate is now 85% any funds will go to purchase of equipment to help treat these forms of cancer at Southend Hospital.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

David suggested using canons at the Poppies Wave but Rosemary stated that the conditions of the Poppies Wave would not allow this to take place. Rosemary Pennington stated that there has been approx. 100,000 visitors.

Could SOSAC put information of Safeguarding of Children polices on their website - to alert members to its importance,. Steve to action this.

A live auction on Facebook took place of a "Picasso" by Paul Karlslake this was purchased at £120 by David Shaer. This will go into SOSAC funds.

14. The meeting ended at 9.02 p.m. Date of next meeting to be advised.