

**Minutes of
the Eighth Annual General Meeting of
The Soper Hall Community Centre Ltd
held at Soper Hall on Friday 27th September 2019 at 7.30pm**

Present:

Directors: Beverley Connolly (Chairman), Andy Parr (Deputy Chairman), Matthew Baker, Hilary Hopkinson.

Company Secretary: John Howarth

Guest: David Gold (Patron)

Volunteers & Members: Various volunteers and members of Soper Hall Ltd.

1. Chairman's Welcome & Introduction

The Chairman welcomed everybody to the meeting and pointed out that it was five years since the current Board took over. She commented about the legacy of William Garland Soper to provide community services and facilities for the residents of Caterham and District.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Michael Cooper.

3. Minutes of the Seventh Annual General Meeting

3.1 Accuracy

These were **ACCEPTED** unanimously as a true record of the meeting.

3.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising that would not be covered in the agenda.

4. Finances

4.1 Finance Director's Report:

It is my pleasure to present accounts showing a healthy surplus this year.

In fact, we have seen a very healthy increase in income for the 2018 year thanks to increases in both hall and office rental income. The biggest increases were in office rental, thanks to renegotiated leases for the first floor offices as well as some income from an NHS Trust for meeting room hire.

Overall our costs are up a little compared to the previous year, we are for example having more cleaning of the halls but costs are slightly down overall due to a reduction in spending on repairs and refurbishments although this was partly due to us saving up for the new toilet area next to the Garland Hall.

We renovated the offices on the first floor during the year in preparation for new tenants and spend £3.5k on new emergency lighting throughout the building as well as £2.5k on knocking through from the clockmakers area in the basement into the basement safe area. All of these changes have helped us to gain more rental income.

Further spending on refurbishments has continued in the current year most notably the new toilets next to the Garland Hall which were a significant expense and we've already spent more than £30,000 this year already.

Despite this spend our bank balance has remained healthy and having finished last year with £52,000 we still have £41,000 in the bank today.

I am pleased that strong financial performance has allowed the board to approve refurbishment projects 3 years in a row spending on average over £30,000 per year. Investment in the halls will keep the local community wanting to use the halls for many years to come.

On being put to the vote the Finance Director's Report was **ACCEPTED** unanimously.

5. Chairman's Report

In keeping with the tradition established in previous years the Chairman began with two quotes:

"If you are persistent you will get it, if you are consistent you will keep it"; and "I never dreamed about success - I worked for it".

She went on to comment about the projects that had been completed: (1) New toilet and disabled facilities, (2) outside lighting, (3) installation of kitchenette facilities in the Garland Hall and (4) the refurbished floor in the Memorial Hall. She pointed out that apart from the outside lighting all the projects had been self funded. She thanked Hilary Hopkinson (see 6.1) for all the work she had done as project manager on the projects.

Projects planned for the near future were (a) refurbishment of toilets in the basement and (b) replacement of windows throughout the building.

She also mentioned the various events that had taken place during the year and how they had contributed to the financial performance and said she was pleased that new tenants had come in.

Finally she commented that two new contracting staff were in place - Paula Macbeth (Admin) and Russell Fisher (Caretaker).

On being put to the vote the report was **ACCEPTED** unanimously.

6. Directors' Reports

6.1 Hilary Hopkinson's Report

Hilary commented first of all on the events that were held in the Hall. There were events organised by the Board (Christmas Fair, Fashion & Beauty Nights, Wedding Fairs) and events that were organised by others but which the Hall hosted (Comedy Nights, Music Nights, Psychic Fairs, Wrestling Nights, Beer Festival). She reminded the meeting that all the events were publicised on the Soper Hall web site.

In respect of advertising and promotion she said that the new web site had been well received and that most advertising was via social media, although it was hoped that the newly resurrected Caterham Independent would be a useful "hard copy" medium.

6.2 Michael Cooper's Report

Michael Cooper had sent in the following report that was read out by Andy Parr:

As a charity SHCCL looks to provide facilities to enable local people to run regular activities for the local community and also support local business activity for the benefit of our community.

You will understand that SHCCL have taken on an old and venerable building which, sadly, was not in the best of condition. To enable us to improve the facilities and the structure of the building the SHCCL Board have taken the view that we should use all opportunities to develop the building to provide sufficient income to achieve that aim.

You will note from the accounts that SHCCL income from tenant lettings was around £44,000 in the last financial year. We have welcomed as tenants the following organisations this year:

January: Ridge Radio

May: Aspire and Heating Services

June: Associated Neighbour Training

September: Bourne Tax

The above income has been achieved by using all available unused space to provide basic office facilities for what are now local businesses to the benefit of our local community.

In terms of regular hirers, once again there has been some turnover as some start-ups have not been successful and new ones have taken their place. However, it is nice to report that many of our weekly hirers are running well established activities covering: yoga, diabetes prevention, fitness dance, Pilates fitness, slimming, junior dance, aerolates, youth drama, church services.

The regular hirings are part of the £37,000 made from hall hire generally. We also have monthly activities such as: Tandridge Art Society, U3A, Comedy Night, Music Night.

The last two are now well established and successful Friday evening events at which SHCCL volunteers run the bar and add further to our income.

Obviously we are always looking to welcome further regular hirers to bring yet more different opportunities to our local community.

Many thanks for your support.

7. Election and Resignation of Directors

(The Chairman handed the meeting to the Company Secretary at this point.)

7.1 Resignation of Directors

The meeting noted the resignations during the year of Sara Corker and Sue Pozzoni.

7.2 Retirement by Rotation

Matthew Baker and Beverley Connolly retired by rotation in accordance with the Articles of Association and offered themselves for re-election. On being put to the vote this was **AGREED** unanimously.

7.3 Nomination of new Directors

There were no nominations.

8. Election of Chairman

It was proposed that Beverley Connolly be appointed Chair for the following year. On being put to the vote this was **AGREED**.

9. Election of Vice Chairman

It was proposed that Andy Parr be appointed Vice Chair for the following year. ON being put to the vote this was **AGREED**.

(The Company Secretary handed the meeting back to the Chairman at this point)

10. Determination of Membership Subscription

It was unanimously **AGREED** that the Membership Subscription be set at £12 (£10 plus VAT) for the following year.

11. Any Other Business

There were no further items of business.

12. Date of next Annual General Meeting

To be advised.

13. Patron

At the conclusion of the meeting the Chairman invited the Patron - David Gold - to say a few words. He said how pleased he was that the project of transferring the Soper Hall asset from public (i.e. Tandridge District Council) ownership to community ownership had been such a success - despite reservations at the beginning and thanked the Board for all their hard work.

In turn he himself was thanked by Terry Servant (TS) for his support (both personal and financial) before the asset transfer project was undertaken. TS commented that without that support the project might not have happened.