



Annual General Meeting 2023

Exeter Street Community Hall Ltd (FCA registration no 8161)

**7:30pm, Wednesday 14th June 2023
at Exeter Street Hall**

Minutes (approved by the Board, awaiting approval at the next AGM)

1. Members Present

29 Members were present at the meeting. A further three Members had nominated other Members as personal representatives to vote for them at the meeting and 20 members had nominated the Chair of the meeting to vote on their behalf. In all, there were 52 Members voting at this year's AGM (51 for the first two items).

Directors present: Robin Bailey, Jo Camplisson, Rosie Dewick, Graham Thomas.

1.1 Opening of the Meeting

The Chair of the ESCH Board, Dave Fellows, had unfortunately had a bad cycling accident three days before the AGM and was unable to attend the meeting. In his place ESCH Secretary Graham Thomas chaired the AGM, with the Members' consent. He opened the AGM at 7:35pm, introduced the management committee and the agenda and explained the voting procedure. Voting was by a show of hands (using voting cards), with the votes being counted by tellers and then added to the Chair's proxy votes.

2. Approval of Previous Minutes

The Minutes from the 2022 AGM, which had been approved by the Management Committee and made available on the Hall website, were presented to the meeting. In his role as Secretary Graham Thomas outlined their content. There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

The resolution to approve the Minutes of the 2022 AGM was proposed by Dexter Coombe and seconded by Nick Szczepanik.

The AGM Minutes were overwhelmingly approved (47 votes in favour; none against; 4 abstentions from Members who were not present at the previous AGM).

3. Presentation of the Directors' Report

The report had been made available on the website. The Chair of the meeting, Graham Thomas, presented the Directors' Report for the financial year April 2022 – March 2023 on behalf of Dave Fellows.

This year, with the ending of the Covid pandemic lockdowns, the Hall had been able to get back to normal and host a full set of activities and events. Hirers had returned and we were able to support some very worthwhile organisations such as the Grace Eyre Foundation and the Migrant English Project (MEP). In the context of the presentation of the Directors' Report Maude Casey of the MEP told the meeting about the project's work and the issues it faced in supporting local migrants. Her presentation was warmly received by the Members.

The major building project this year was the renovation of the kitchen, which is now of commercial standard and has received a 5-star food rating from the Council. The new kitchen enabled us to introduce "Friday Friends", an initiative offering soup, bread, cakes, tea & coffee, as well as a warm, sociable environment, to the local community on a "pay as you feel" basis. Support had been provided from local traders and our ward councillors and the initiative had broadly covered its costs.

A long list of events included the return of the children's Halloween parties, which rapidly sold out, and the new "Pudding Club" that provided desserts, newspapers, board games, etc. to people on a couple of Sunday afternoons. The annual 'Great Get-Together' took place on a sunny day in June 2022 and was very well-attended.

The Chair thanked Hall employees, volunteers and hirers for their work and help during the past year and stressed that new volunteers are both always needed and always welcome.

The resolution to approve the Directors' Report was proposed by Caroline Norman and seconded by Marianne Craig.

The Directors' Report was approved unanimously (51 votes in favour; none against; no abstentions).

4. Presentation of the Accounts

Copies of the full report had been made available on the website and the income and expenditure page was placed on chairs at the meeting for Members to consult. ESCH Treasurer Jo Camplisson presented the Financial Report and the accounts for the financial year April 2022 – March 2023.

Jo summarised the accounts and explained the income and expenditure account in more detail. The return to full activities this year was reflected in increases in both trading revenue and running costs. The biggest increase in costs was for energy, reflecting (inter-)national price increases.

Overall, the Hall made a net loss of just under £6,000 in this financial year. Increased energy costs contributed to this but the biggest factor was expenditure on the new kitchen and other building works. We had received a small grant of £4,000 for the kitchen renovation from the Enjoolata Foundation but the costs of this and other building/decorating works were considerably higher, totalling over £19,000. In 2021/22 we had declared a surplus of £12,000, so that surplus helped to fund the larger building projects carried out this year, in line with our commitment to reinvest all surpluses into the Hall.

The resolution to approve the Financial Report for the year April 2022 – March 2023 was proposed by Mike Fox and seconded by Jonathan Dall.

The Financial Report was approved unanimously (52 votes in favour; none against; no abstentions).

5. Appointment of Auditors (if required)

In his role as ESCH Secretary Graham Thomas explained that, as our income is below £250,000 per annum, the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 gives the Society the option **not** to have an (expensive) external audit, but instead for the accounts to be presented to the AGM for approval and signed off as correct by the Secretary and two Directors. This must be agreed at the AGM every year for the current financial year. Our Treasurer is a qualified accountant and the Directors are confident that the accounts are accurate and fulfil all legal requirements.

The resolution **not** to have an external audit of the accounts for the current financial year April 2023 – March 2024 was proposed by Jo Camplisson and seconded by Pete Golton.

The resolution was approved unanimously (52 votes in favour, none against and no abstentions). The result of this vote meets the legal requirement that no more than 20% of the total votes cast may be against this resolution for it to be valid.

6. Appointment of Directors

As Chair of the meeting Graham Thomas explained that under ESCH rules, one third of the Directors (or the closest number to it) must stand down each year. If they so choose they may stand for re-election.

Current directors:

Robin Bailey (standing for re-election)

Jo Camplisson (standing for re-election)

Rosie Dewick
Dave Fellows
Graham Thomas

Nell Killick, Kate McAleenan and Alexa Povah (Bar Managers) have been co-opted to the Management Committee for the coming year to help fulfil the requirements of our premises licence; they attend as required. The Hall Manager, Susan Corlett, reports to the Management Committee and also attends as required (which in practice is for most meetings, though she does not attend when employment terms and conditions are being discussed).

6.1 Election of Directors:

The Chair introduced the election of the two candidates standing for re-election as Director. Robin Bailey and Jo Camplisson had provided photographs and written statements on their background, their interests and their involvement with the Hall; these had been made available on the website and were shown to Members. After the candidates had been introduced and had said a few words the Chair called for votes for each candidate in turn. The results of the votes were as follows:

Robin Bailey, proposed by Rosie Dewick and seconded by Alexa Povah

52 votes in favour; none against; no abstentions.

Jo Camplisson, proposed by Glynn Sweet and seconded by Amanda Nichols

51 votes in favour; none against; 1 abstention.

Robin Bailey and Jo Camplisson were declared to have been elected as Directors.

7. Any Other Business

There was no other business, but Hall Manager Susan Corlett made short announcements about the next Get-Together street party, taking place on 25th June 2023, and the month-long celebrations of 10 years of community ownership of the Hall in September 2023. There will be an extensive programme of activities, displays and events

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and formally closed the AGM at 8:55pm. The end of the meeting was followed by a social gathering where Members could interact with each other and the Management Committee.