

The Friends of the Moot Hall Organ
DRAFT Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 12th July 2022

Present: Patron Cllr Tim Young, Mayor. Committee -Nigel Chapman, Ian Ray, Michael Vernon, Derek Lorkin, Mike Hogg, Jennifer Perry, Alison Smith and 4 members (list attached)

Apologies for Absence: Patrons: Sir Bob Russell, Ashley Grote, Lord Petre and Will Quince MP Committee: Mary Chapman, Allan Blundell and Sonia Lewis and 5 members (list attached)

The Chair, Nigel Chapman, explained that he had asked the Mayor to chair the AGM as we were seeking the meeting's agreement for some important decisions and this added gravitas to the event

Minutes of AGM 13th July 2021 These had been circulated and were agreed.

Chair's Report: This had been circulated, was read out by the chair and is attached to these minutes.

Treasurer's Report: The verified accounts were presented to the meeting by the Treasurer, agreed and are attached to these minutes. It was pointed out that the previous year's accounts were for a period of 18 months due to the pandemic, which we were recovering from and had a healthy balance at the end of the year.

The Treasurer proposed that Subscriptions be maintained at the current level (Rule 7.1.4); this was unanimously agreed.

The Treasurer proposed (seconded by Mike Vernon) that we appoint Stonehouse Communications 'to maintain the website' (Rule 7.1.6). The committee had agreed at their last meeting that we needed to upgrade the existing website which was proving inadequate and in need of modernisation to make it fit for purpose. Three providers had been approached and the treasurer and chair had decided to recommend Stonehouse to the AGM. This was agreed unanimously.

Proposal to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) The Treasurer, in making this proposal, explained that the need to consider this had been prompted by the requirements of our prospective new bankers and was anyway a prudent way forward. The Chair agreed and said it had always been an ambition of The Friends to become a charity and he was grateful to the Treasurer for putting this together now. The Committee had considered the matter at their last meeting and had unanimously agreed to recommend it to the AGM. The detailed Constitution, based on the Charity Commission's model had been circulated to all members with the AGM details, no questions had resulted. The Trustees would be Cllr Nigel Chapman, Alison Smith FCA and Dr Michael Vernon. The proposal was seconded by Mike Hogg and unanimously agreed.

Proposal to change Bankers The Treasurer, in proposing this, said that our present bankers, HSBC, had begun charging a monthly fee and transaction fees to their charity accounts. She had spoken to many leading banks to discuss their policy now and in the future on charging. The Co-op Bank indicating that they believe they have a community

duty to support charitable organisations and are recognised for their ethical standards overall. The Committee had considered this and unanimously recommended the appointment of the Co-op Bank to the AGM. The proposal was seconded by the Chairman and agreed unanimously.

Confirmation of Patrons: The chairman asked the meeting to consider adding Allan Blundell to the list of Patrons. Allan had been a generous supporter and served on the Committee since our inception. He had found all three of our treasurers! Therefore, Allan Blundell MBE, Ashley Grote, Sir Bernard Jenkin MP, Mayor of Colchester (ex officio), Lord Petre, Sir Bob Russell and Will Quince MP were confirmed as Patrons.

Appoinment of Committee and Officers for 2022-2023: In addition to the Trustees Cllr Nigel Chapman (Chair), Alison Smith (Treasurer) and Mike Vernon, Mary Chapman (Secretary and Membership Secretary) Cllr Mike Hogg, Derek Lorkin, Jennifer Perry, and Dr Ian Ray were endorsed by the Meeting.

Report on the organ: Ian Ray reported that the Recitals were continuing to regain pre-pandemic audiences. He accepted that the Council would not pursue the electrification of the organ; it was a condition of the Lottery Grant that the restoration was to its original condition. He hoped that given time something may be able to be done.

Future Plans: The chair said that our charitable status would enable us to, for example, apply for grants and that is something we can look to do in the future. He endorsed our longstanding aim to inspire a younger audience and accepted the Mayor's suggestion to encourage more diversity in general. The chair reminded the meeting of the 'Meet and Play the organ' event for National Heritage weekend on September 18th and agreed to see how we could enhance the publicity of that event. He also expressed a wish to see if the very successful Silent Film event of a few years ago now could be repeated.

The Chair thanked Cllr Young for chairing the meeting.