



Civic Voice 2019 Annual General Meeting
Senate House, London, WC1E 7HU
Thursday 21st January 2020 (adjourned from 4th December 2019)

In attendance

Alnwick Civic Society, Blackpool Civic Trust, Bewdley Civic Society, Brighton Society, Buckingham Society, Chelsea Society, City of Winchester Civic Trust, Chester Civic Trust, Chichester Society, Coventry Society, Deal Society, Epsom Civic Society, Friends of Orpington Priory, Guildford Society, Hunstanton and District Civic Society, Ilkley Civic Society, Kingston Upon Thames Civic Society, Leeds Civic Trust, Margate Society, Merseyside Civic Society, National Association of Local Councils, Peckham Society, Portsmouth Society, Ramsgate Society, Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society, Swindon Civic Voice, Southgate and District Civic Voice, St Albans Civic Society, Tewksbury Civic Society, The Highgate Society, and Civic Voice vice-president, Laura Sandys.

1. WELCOME – JOAN HUMBLE, CHAIR

Joan Humble, Chair of Civic Voice welcomed everyone to the AGM, including Civic Voice Vice-president, Laura Sandys. Joan made a special thanks to that societies that had travelled from the North West, North East and Yorkshire to be at the AGM.

The Chair said that with the number of societies attending, it represented more than the 5% of members needed for the AGM to take place.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Colchester Civic Society, Craig Mackinlay MP, Baroness Andrews and Sir Terry Farrell, Beverley & District Civic Trust. Cockermouth Civic Trust, Waltham Forest Civic Society, The Formby Society, Malvern Civic Society, The Oxton Society, The Sydenham Society, The Kew Society, The Reigate Society and Civic Voice President, Griff Rhys Jones.

3. MINUTES OF OCTOBER 21ST 2018 AGM IN BIRMINGHAM

The minutes were proposed by **Blackpool Civic Trust** and **seconded by Epsom Civic Society**.

4. CHAIR'S PRESENTATION – JOAN HUMBLE, CHAIR

Joan Humble introduced the trustees' report and said a full report was in the Charity Accounts. She explained that the Civic Voice Review (2016) meant that she had an action plan that set out what needed to improve in Civic Voice and the Civic Voice Board had spent the past three years working through that and being guided by a strategic plan. She said that this action plan had now been completed and the board would be working to create a new action plan. To ensure that any future strategy aligns with our members, the Civic Voice team have held an extensive 'conversation' with members throughout the past 12 months. This has involved meetings, workshops and surveys. This process gives us the confidence that our future strategy, to launch on May 1st, 2020 will enable us to continue to show national leadership for the civic movement.

The Chair referred to the strategic objectives and said when the board discharge their functions for the charity, all decisions are aligned with one of these strategic objectives. She

said that she appreciated that this sometimes meant we made unpopular decisions, but the long-term future of Civic Voice was always at the front of the board's mind.

- Financial independence: Ensure the long term financial viability of Civic Voice by diversifying our short and long-term income
- National mandate: Demonstrate through increased individual and society support that Civic Voice is the authoritative representative of the civic movement
- Using our voice: Cement the relationship with the APPG for Civic Societies to positively influence new government actions in this area
 - Increasing resilience: Secure sufficient resilient staff, member systems, processes and volunteer resources focused on our core function to support delivery of our longer-term mission

She said that this emphasis to work in a much more focused way and outline how that clear focus has now resulted in a much better relationship with a variety of statutory and non-statutory organisations.

She felt we had overcome a challenging 12 months with lots of change, in particular the impact of the general election on our plans – including the cancellation of several events. but that with the support of more civic societies joining Civic Voice we had the chance to make the civic movement's voice heard louder than ever.

She finished by saying that she looked forward to celebrating Civic Voice's 10th anniversary and that we had put together a programme that the membership should be excited by, including she said, a fantastic opportunity to spend the weekend in Blackpool, hosted by her own civic society.

5. FINANCIAL UPDATE – MARTIN GUNSON, TREASURER

Due to the Treasurer being unwell, the Executive Director presented a review of the past year's accounts for the attendees.

The Executive Director talked through the summary report (made available to all delegates) sharing Civic Voice thoughts and aims for the next three years. It showed the importance of external grant funding to the sustainability of Civic Voice.

The Executive Director explained that the funding challenge facing the organisation remains. He said significant financial savings had been made without a reduction in service to members and delivering our charitable objectives. He emphasised the importance of civic societies to continue to support Civic Voice and said it is now the exception for civic societies not to be members of Civic Voice. He queried why should other external organisations fund Civic Voice, if there still remain civic societies that do not want to join, yet benefit from other civic societies coming together, funding the central body. He called on civic societies to encourage their neighbouring societies to join Civic Voice.

The Executive Director thanked the board for their support and personally praised Civic Voice staff, whom he said, go above and beyond what should realistically be expected of them.

The Director said that the Treasurer would be happy to discuss any detailed question after the meeting as none were submitted ahead of the AGM.

The accounts were proposed by **Chester Civic Trust** and **seconded by the Guildford Society**.

6. BOARD ELECTIONS – ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS

Joan Humble announced the results of the ballot for trustees to join the Board and welcomed Martin Hamilton (Leeds Civic Trust), Peter Karpinski (Kingston upon Thames Society) and David Evans (Chester Civic Trust) to the Board and thanked all those who had participated in the election.

7. RATIFICATION OF CHAIR (JOAN HUMBLE) AND TREASURER (MARTIN GUNSON) – PROPOSED BY CIVIC VOICE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

David Evans explained that the Civic Voice board had met in September and were recommending to the Civic Voice AGM that the current Chair and Treasurer continue for the period 2020-2021.

This was seconded by the **City of Winchester Trust**

8. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS – PROPOSED BY MARTIN GUNSON, TREASURER

In the absence of the Treasurer Messrs McMillan and Company Chartered Accountants were proposed by Joan Humble (Blackpool Civic Trust) and seconded by the **City of Winchester Trust**.

All in agreement

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A short discussion followed on a variety of specific items on campaigns.

Joan Humble closed the meeting at 12.40 to allow guests time to prepare for the Sandys Lecture being delivered by Ivan Harbour.