



DRAFT 2017 Annual General Meeting

The seventh AGM was hosted by the Wakefield Civic Society at 9.30am at Cedar Court Hotel,
Wakefield
October 21st October 2017

DRAFT MINUTES

The AGM was attended by 88 people and 65 civic societies

1. Welcome

Joan Humble, Chair of Civic Voice welcomed everyone to Wakefield.

Joan welcomed delegates and thanked Wakefield Civic Society for the generosity everyone had provided in welcoming civic society delegates and for the fantastic tours of Wakefield experienced during the previous day. She said that although we were in a very different venue and the format would be different she hoped the second day would be as equally as successful.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Colchester Civic Society, Craig Mackinlay MP, Laura Sandys, Baroness Andrews and Sir Terry Farrell, Beverley & District Civic Trust. Cockermouth Civic Trust, Waltham Forest Civic Society, The Chelsea Society, The Formby Society, Malvern Civic Society, The Oxtou Society, The Coventry Society, Phil Douce, Deputy Chair of Civic Voice, The Sydenham Society, The Kew Society, The Reigate Society.

3. Ratification of Chair and Treasurer for 2016-2017

Paul Bedwell explained that due to an anomaly in the Constitution we had two items on the agenda regarding ratification of the Chair and Treasurer. He explained that the first item was about approving the decision made by the board in October 2016.

Paul Bedwell proposed the Chair of Civic Voice for 2016-2017 as Joan Humble.

Birmingham Civic Society seconded the decision. All in agreement.

Paul Bedwell proposed the Treasurer of Civic Voice for 2016-2017 as Martin Gunson.

Chester Civic Trust seconded the decision. All in agreement.

Paul explained that the ratification of Chair and Treasurer for 2017-2018 would be later in the agenda.

4. Minutes of 2016 AGM, Chester at Chester Race Course, Chester

The minutes were proposed as a true record of the meeting in Chester by the **Oxford Civic Society** and seconded by **Chester Civic Trust**.

5. Chair's report

Joan Humble introduced the trustees' report and said a full report was in the Charity Accounts and that she would be spending more time, looking to the future in her address to the full convention.

She explained that the Civic Voice Review meant that she had an action plan that said out what needed to change in Civic Voice which including getting in place as a matter or priority: -

- Full strategic plan and Risk Register in place
- Plan to diversify short and long-term income and secure core funding on an unrestricted basis.



- Implement 42 recommendations in Civic Voice review

http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/uploads/files/Green_Balance_Civic_Voice_Review_16Sep16.pdf

- Improving board meetings and overall governance
- Campaign activities effectively delivered and monitored more effectively. (Impact)
- Opportunities need to be investigated around additional membership benefits for groups and individual supporters

She said that the board agreed a full strategic plan in January 2017 as the first priority and shared the new vision, mission and strategic objectives with the AGM. The strategic plan is available on the Civic Voice website.

Our Vision:

A society where everyone says, “I care about where I live”

Our Mission:

To work with civic societies and local communities to make the places we live in more attractive, enjoyable and distinctive.

Strategic Objectives

- **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 explained that we had planned 4 APPG events during the year, but due to the General Election several of our plans were halted. She finished by saying that she felt we had overcome a challenging 12 months with lots of change 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.

Joan paid thanks to the trustees and staff for the support they have offered during the previous 12 months as chair of Civic Voice. She said all board members discuss and consider the strategic objectives at the start of each meetings and explained that all our decisions taken by Civic voice are focused on these four areas. She said that this has meant that other things, whilst important, may not have been a priority over the past 12 months. Joan finished by paying tribute to John Kershaw who died in November 2016. She said he was a stalwart of the civic movement after representing Manchester Civic Society and North-West Association of Civic Societies.

She finished by saying that she was pleased to finish on a positive note and to report that Civic Voice’s membership now numbers 252 civic societies which is an increase of 12 from 2016. She said she hoped to report a continued increase in 2018.

Questions:

Ian Green – Oxford Civic Society asked what the board were doing about being financially independent with Joan responding she wondered what “financially independent” meant. She stated that Civic Voice could be “finally independent” overnight and only run activities based on the income of civic societies, but wondered what organisation this truly could be. Would this achieve everything that civic societies want us to do? She said it wouldn’t. She said that the board are always considering the



balance between civic society aspirations and the resources available to Civic Voice. It was emphasised that the new board have made it clear that they are prepared to make the necessary decisions, in line with our strategic objectives to do what is right for to deliver our charitable objective in line with the requirements of the Charity Commission.

Joan stated that in her eyes having a diversified income model is the right way forward and that will continue to include corporate support from organisations such as British Land and Farrells. It will mean that unless more civic societies join Civic Voice, we will continue to diversify our income to help us deliver our strategic objectives, as agreed by all board members.

Joan explained that she still found it surprising that civic societies ask for Civic Voice to do more without being prepared to consider an increase in fees. She said this is at the root cause of the funding challenge Civic Voice faces and would hope others could find ways to encourage other societies to join.

Jan Pahl, Canterbury Society asked what Civic Voice would be doing about a manifesto in the future.

Joan explained that as part of her main talk to the Annual Convention she would be explaining that Civic Voice will be updating its manifesto in the next 12 months. Joan explained that anyone attending the workshops in the afternoon would get more insight into our plans and how we intend on using the full membership to help prepare Civic Voice policy. We would be writing to various Ministers based on discussions coming out of the Annual Convention.

Martin Stone from Altrincham Civic Society asked if the Civic Voice board had considered setting up a legacy programme of support. Joan said that with the appointment of Sarah James, as part of our diversified fundraising plan, we have indeed identified legacies. She said it was unlikely to be a quick win however, for obvious reasons.

6. Treasurer report - Martin Gunson – financial report

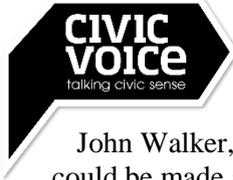
Martin Gunson introduced the 2016-2017 financial accounts by stating that Civic Voice does not just rely on the AGM to share financial results and that the staff often have questions about finances through the year.

Martin explained that the funding challenge facing the organisation remains and that Civic Voice has been spending its limited reserves and whilst the board had made some difficult decisions during the year, we still require funding to put us on a sustainable solution. He said significant financial savings had been made without a reduction in service to members and delivering our charitable objectives. He said that the board with to thank the staff for the effort who go above and beyond what should realistically be expected of them.

He emphasised the importance of civic societies to continue to support Civic Voice if the members wanted a national organisation campaigning on its behalf. He queried that why should other external organisations fund Civic Voice, if civic societies themselves are not prepared to.

Chester Civic Trust proposed and **Sheffield Civic Trust** seconded ratification of the trustees' report and accounts for 2016-2017

In response to a question from Tony Fooks, an individual supporter about why no copies of the full accounts had been printed, the Company Secretary, Ian Harvey explained that he did not feel it appropriate to print 100 copies of a 21-page document with resources being so stretched. It was explained that the draft accounts had been the main item on the Civic Voice website since the start of September and had been issued to the main contact of all civic societies direct, in line with constitution.



John Walker, Ramsgate Society said that perhaps in 2018, a one-page summary of the accounts could be made available when delegates arrive for registration at the AGM.

7. Board elections – announcement of results

Joan Humble announced the results of the ballot for trustees to join the Board and welcomed Gavin Orton (Birmingham, Civic Society) as a new trustee who was elected along with Joan Humble (Blackpool Civic Trust) and Paul Bedwell (Sheffield Civic Trust) and thanked all those who had participated in the election.

All three trustees would serve for a period from October 2017-October 2020.

8. Ratification of Chair and Treasurer 2017-2018

Paul Bedwell 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 2017-2018

Paul proposed Joan Humble as Chair of Civic Voice on behalf of the board.

This was seconded by the **Canterbury Society**

Paul proposed Martin Gunson as Treasurer of Civic Voice on behalf of the board.

This was seconded by the **Chester Civic Trust**

9. Appointment of Messrs Mcmillan and Co LLP Chartered Accountants as independent examiners

Messrs McMillan and Company Chartered Accountants were proposed by **Martin Gunson** and seconded by the **Chester Civic Trust**.

All in agreement

10. Any other business.

Helen Kidman, Chair of the Civic Voice Regional Forum gave a short presentation on the work of the forum and explained its role in advising and supporting Civic Voice on issues within the movement.

She explained that it was not a body that could “force” Civic Voice to do things, but was more a “forum” of ideas for Civic Voice to hear what is happening across the country and for them to seek feedback on issues they are also hearing.

Helen explained that the group had evolved over the year and the group had now agreed to hold all meetings in Birmingham at the Civic Voice Head Quarters

Tony Fooks proposed a formal thank you to Helen Kidman for her work as Regional Chair.

The AGM closed at 10.10am.