



Civic Voice, The Coffin Works, 13-15 Fleet Street, Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham, B3 1JPE  
[www.civicvoice.org.uk](http://www.civicvoice.org.uk)

## **CIVIC VOICE BOARD MEETING NUMBER 38**

29<sup>th</sup> March 2017, 1pm 4pm

The Coffin Works, 13-15 Fleet St, Birmingham B3 1JP

### **Attendees**

Mary Ash  
Paul Bedwell  
Phil Douce  
David Evans  
Martin Gunson (Treasurer)  
Joan Humble (Chair)  
Chris Winter

### **In attendance:**

Ian Harvey (Executive Director)

Introducing the meeting the Chair formally thanked Gavin Orton, the Chair of Birmingham Civic Society for giving a presentation on the work of the civic society with specific reference to the +2020-strategy process for the society.

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Roger Sutton

### **2. MATTERS ARISING**

The Chair welcomed the letter that we had received from HRH Prince of Wales in support of Civic Voice's Big Conservation Conversation. A short discussion followed and it was requested that an update on the Right to Beauty campaign be provided to a future board meeting.

Action:

- a) The Executive Director to present a report on the role civic societies are playing in this campaign

### **3. MINUTES FROM JANUARY 2017**

The board agreed the minutes from the January 27<sup>th</sup> board meeting.

### **4. ACTIONS FROM JANUARY 2017**

Actions from the January 27<sup>th</sup> board meeting were updated to the board with specific reference to

- b) The Chair attended John Kershaw's funeral where she spoke to the new Chair of Manchester Civic Society and offered him help from Civic Voice on any **support** they may require during this difficult time.
- c) The Chair, David Evans and Ian Harvey all attended the latest meeting of NWacts as an expression of support for them since the death of John. It was noted at the meeting that Civic Voice board requested that it be noted that we appreciated the work of John Kershaw in contributing to the wider movement.

### **5. BUDGET AND STAFFING**

**Update 5a: Historic England**

Private Item (when published to the website).

The Executive Director presented a paper setting out a budget for 2017-2018 showing

- ☛ An outline budget for 2017/18 looking forward to 2018/19
- ☛ Staffing structure for 2017-2018 and new job descriptions

It was explained that the expected scenario budget, has income at c£208,000k against expected expenditure (with contingency) of £230,000.

- d) It was agreed to restructure Civic Voice and to move the Head Office from Liverpool to Birmingham to make a financial saving on office space
- e) Agreed to make the Coffin Works in Birmingham our new registered address, unless more appropriate financial arrangement can be made.
- f) To consider the costs of a central London desk to give us a more physical London presence.
- g) Agree not to renew current staff contracts *but* to consider temporarily extending current contracts where needed
- h) Subject to professional advice to restructure the remaining members of the team **currently** in Liverpool
- i) Recognised that even with the changes in personnel, the team is still stretched to deliver everything set down in the Strategic Plan

**Action:**

- j) To **agree** the restructure of Civic Voice to include a CEO, Admin Assistant, Office Manager, Membership Development Manager and War Memorial Officer.
- k) Agreed for the Chair, Deputy Chair and Paul Bedwell to be on any interview panel
- l) To appoint a new CEO and then plan other interviews after that appointment **to include them in the interview panel**
- m) To advertise that the posts will be based in Birmingham
- n) To implement the process so that we have all staff in place and new office structure in place for July 1st

## **6. FUNDING UPDATES**

### **a. Historic England**

The Executive Director introduced the terms and conditions in relation to the Historic England funding.

Action

- o) It was agreed to accept the funding from Historic England and accept the terms and conditions set down in the submitted paper, which may include Historic England having a representative on any appropriate interviews.

### **b. Heritage Lottery Fund**

The Executive Director updated the board to say that we have not been able to submit the HLF bid, whilst we awaited the outcome of the Historic England bid. This was due to HLF stating we could use HE funding as match funding.

A discussion followed on the outlines submission of funding proposals to HLF based on the strategy.

Action

- p) It was agreed to progress with a funding proposals to HLF based on the Civic Voice strategy and for it to be finalised with the Chair now that the HE funding is confirmed.

### **c. Future of War Memorial Programme**

The Executive Director introduced a paper setting out the history of the war memorial programme and explained that we have approximately 18 months remaining until this comes to an end. It was proposed that we start considering the future of the war memorial programme.

Action

- q) It was agreed to start conversations with our partner organisations on the future of the war memorials programme.

### **d. Consultancy**

The Executive Director presented a discussion paper to the board in line with Strategic Objective 1 *“To diversify our short and long term income streams to ensure long term financial viability within a three-year timeframe*

Action:

- r) It was agreed to explore the possibility about a consultancy business and to work with interested trustees on what this could look like.

## **7. UPDATES**

### **a. 7a Chair Update**

Joan Humble explained that she had been busy with Civic Voice attending visits, speaking at events and working with the **Executive Director** on getting everything in place for May 1<sup>st</sup>. She then explained she has been approached to speak at a RIBA conference on Civic Voice and the Big Conservation Conversation:

The board formally thanked Joan for the time and effort she is putting into Civic Voice

Action

- s) To provide the Chair with a presentation on the Big Conservation Conversation
- t) To consider how we can make this a policy announcement

### **b. 7b Executive Director Report**

Although the Executive Director explained that the key risks continue to be funding, cash flow and staff changes, it was noted that no formal risk **register** was presented.

- u) Agreed to establish the first committee meetings of all the relevant committees before the start of the new strategy.
- v) To ensure the Risk Register is presented to the Governance Committee and next board meeting

## **8. CIVIC VOICE REVIEW**

To discuss and to agree the review recommendations for 2017-2018

It was agreed to accept the recommendations from the membership committee and for the appropriate committees to consider other points when they meet

Action

- w) To circulate the tabled document in another format to make it easier to see what recommendations are being progressed.

## **9. MEMBERSHIP REPORT – Membership committee & Minutes**

Phil Douce presented a paper on behalf of the membership subcommittee following its first meeting.

The board agreed to approve updated classifications of support/membership:

- Individual (£10 per head)
- Associate Membership (£50 per annum)
- Full Civic and Amenity Membership (£1.50 **per member up to a maximum of £500**)

The discussion moved on to other types of benefits that could be provided to civic societies.

It was agreed

- x) To look at guidance that would be best promoted to civic societies on planning, historic environment and the built environment and **consider if any approach should be made to government on the matter**
- y) To make a direct appeal to the membership to ask what expertise exists amongst the members about what they would be prepared to share across the movement.
- z) Agreed to colour code the Draft Membership matrix and circulate for further comment

## **10. STRENGTHENING CIVIC SOCIETIES 2017-2020.**

The Executive Director presented a paper on how we can help tailor support to civic societies across England. It was explained that on our central database we have 514 known civic societies which gives us a membership of 52% but recognised the challenges some smaller groups face in becoming members. It was noted that from the 52 largest societies in the country, 42 of them are members of Civic Voice.

The board agreed to keep the paper and its items on the agenda as strengthening the movement is a key aim if we are to achieve long term sustainability.

## **11. CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Chair introduced the item explaining that a series of papers had been developed setting out Terms of Reference for four sub-committees and six working groups. These papers were being proposed as another way to improve the Governance of the organisation.

The Chair explained that this was in line with Civic Voice Review recommendation

*Recommendation 24 We recommend that the Board should review whether or not the Finance Board, the Funding Meeting and Regional Forum meetings remain appropriate or needed following the agreement of the strategic options and actions arising from this review (paragraph 4.31).*

It was agreed:

- aa) To create working groups for the Smaller Societies Forum, Coastal Societies, Core Cities and to approve a working group for the Alliance of Cathedral Towns and Cities
- bb) To include the terms of reference for each sub-committee in the updated trustee induction pack
- cc) To review all subcommittee terms of references in November 2017 to ensure they are still fit for purpose

## **12. BIG CONSERVATION CONVERSATION**

Executive Director presented a short paper setting out the highlights of the recent Civic Voice/IHBC/Historic England survey.

The Executive Director also shared copies of the latest IHBC publication Context which has a specific focus on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Conservation Areas.

Action

- dd) To speak with IHBC to see if this could become a regular membership benefit for our members
- ee) To thank the IHBC for supporting the Big Conservation Conversation and for providing funding to civic societies on Civic Day

### **13. AGM, BOARD ELECTIONS AND NEW TRUSTEES**

The Chair explained that Christine Furminger had confirmed she is stepping down from the board.

The Chair then asked the board to consider the process and timeframe we pursue to recruit several new trustees to take up office from the October AGM. The board needed to consider:

1. How many trustees do we want to bring onto the board in October?
2. Timetable for recruitment and process
3. The skillset, gender balance and regional balance

After a discussion, the board agreed:

- ff) To formally thank Christine Furminger for her contributions to Civic Voice.
- gg) To proceed with an election to recruit three elected trustees in October and
- hh) To present to the May board meeting the timetable for implementing the Trustee elections for 2017

### **14. TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS**

A paper was tabled providing more information for trustees on various issues within Civic Voice, including information on Trustee Insurance cover, banking arrangement. The board also discussed future meeting arrangements and agreed to keep the current schedule in place until October and a review will again take place from November onwards.

- ii) It was agreed to review our insurance cover to ensure we are getting the best price possible
- jj) To circulate the latest contact list of Civic Voice trustees
- kk) To circulate the Insurance cover that Trustees are offered under public liability insurance
- ll) To circulate the constitution review 2013 changes to the board to consider what changes would be required.

### **15. WORKPLAN FOR 2017**

The Executive Director presented a draft workplan for 2017 setting out the areas of work and activities to help us deliver the first part of the Strategic Plan during 2017-2018.

Action

- mm) All to feedback to the Executive Director thoughts and contributions to help turn the strategic plan into a practical operational plan from May 1st

### **16. END OF MEETING REVIEW**

In line with Civic Voice Review (Recommendation 16 “Decision making should be part of a recommended ‘end of meeting review’”)

- a) The Chair asked the board to consider if they had been able to make decisions? All in agreement.
- b) Were they happy that the items discussed were the key issues facing the organisation? All in agreement.
- c) Did they receive all the documentation they wanted? All in agreement.
- d) If everyone had behaved appropriately and in a respectable manner to each other? All in agreement.

**Future meetings dates in Birmingham**

1. May 24 2017 (day after Civic Voice Design Award ceremony)
2. July 26 2017
3. Sep 13 2017
4. AGM in October Wakefield (provisionally 20/21)
5. December 13 2017

*No awayday yet planned or scheduled.*