



## 2016 Annual General Meeting

The seventh AGM was hosted by the Chester Civic Trust at Chester Racecourse  
October 22nd 2016

### MINUTES

The AGM was attended by 60 people and 32 civic societies

#### 1. Welcome

Freddie Gick, Chair of Civic Voice welcomed everyone to Chester.

Freddie welcomed delegates and thanked Chester Civic Trust for the generosity everyone had provided in welcoming civic society delegates and for the fantastic tours of Chester experienced during the previous day. He said he hoped the second day would be as equally as successful.

#### 2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Doncaster Civic Trust, Hartlepool Civic Society, The Chelsea Society, London Forum of Amenity Civic Societies, Wimborne Civic Society, Scarborough Civic Society, Tynemouth Village Association. Laura Sandys, Baroness Andrews and Sir Terry Farrell

#### 3. Minutes of 2015 AGM, Bristol at St James Priory, Bristol, BS1 3NZ

The minutes were proposed by the **Marple Civic Society** and seconded by **Oxford Civic Society**.

#### 4. Chair's report

Freddie Gick introduced the trustees' report and accounts and reflected on the increasing impact of Civic Voice and the successful work undertaken by civic societies during the previous year.

This was Freddie's final as chair of Civic Voice and he reflected on the changes in the organisation that he had introduced since he came on board but thanked everyone involved in Civic Voice since the start for giving the organisation such a strong base.

Civic Voice's membership now numbers 240 civic societies with over 68,000 members supported by a small staff team. Freddie paid particular thanks to the trustees and staff for the support they have offered during his time as chair of Civic Voice. Freddie made specific reference to Griff Rhys Jones who, Freddie said is an unstinting advocate for Civic Voice and the civic movement.

Finally, Freddie said that, above all, it was the commitment of the membership, of civic societies across the country that have brought the civic movement and Civic Voice to its present successful state and optimistic future and placed on record his thanks to all civic societies for their efforts and commitment.



Freddie explained he felt he was passing the organisation on in a stronger position than he found it and wished everyone well and he looked forward to seeing the Civic Voice story continue to develop.

## **5. Treasurer report - Martin Meredith – financial report**

Martin Meredith introduced the 2015-2016 financial accounts by stating that Civic Voice does not just rely on the AGM to share financial results and that he often has questions from members throughout the year. He said he would welcome this from any member at any time.

Martin reviewed the accounts against budget and provided a breakdown of the main income and expenditure lines. Martin also presented a summary forecast for the next three years which showed the clear role that project funding will play in the growth of Civic Voice. He emphasised the importance of civic societies to continue to support Civic Voice if the members wanted a national organisation campaigning on its behalf.

Martin finished by saying that he wanted to share his thoughts on his experience of being Treasurer with this being his last report. He said it was clear that some civic societies were quite happy “to get something for free” and not pay for Civic Voice. He raised the issue of one society cancelling membership and the entire Executive Committee joining as individuals the following week. He posed the point that civic societies want an independent fully resourced national body, but don’t want to pay for it so called on the movement to support Civic Voice going forward by telling civic societies who are not members to join up.

Martin explained that for the sake of time he would be happy to discuss any detailed question after the meeting but that he would be happy to take questions of a general nature,

**Guidford** queried whether the board had given consideration to reducing the membership fee and Martin responded by saying that this was an issue that the Civic Voice independent review had looked at earlier in the year and that the new board will no doubt give this consideration at the appropriate time, but his recommendation would be to keep the fee at its current level.

The **Cockermouth Civic Trust** asked that given that so many societies are finding that their membership is aging/dropping would the board give consideration to running a “join your civic society” campaign. Freddie Gick responded that this is exactly what we are doing, but groups have to participate in these campaigns. He explained that the most successful societies seem to be ones that don’t only engage in solely planning activities but that they get involved in “civic action” projects. He said a campaign about joining your civic society could be something that the new board could explore around Civic Day and conservation areas. He encouraged groups to be inspired by groups such as Sheffield Civic Trust who were recruiting new members.

## **6. Ratification of Annual report and accounts 2015-2016**

**Marple Civic Society** proposed and the **Manchester Society** seconded ratification of the trustees’ report and accounts for 2015-2016

## **7. Appointment of independent examiners**

Hargreaves and Woods were proposed by Martin Meredith and seconded by the **Oxford Civic Society**.



## **8. Board elections – announcement of results**

Freddie Gick announced the results of the ballot for trustees to join the Board and welcomed Mary Ash (Norwich Civic Society) David Evans (Chester Civic Trust), Chris Winter (Wells Civic Society) to the Board and thanked all those who had participated in the election.

## **9. Ratification of Chair and Treasurer**

Freddie Gick proposed the Chair of Civic Voice going forward as Joan Humble.

Joan said a few words emphasising that Freddie Gick as Chair had lead the movement through an exciting few years and the movement owed him a huge debt of gratitude for his clear commitment to the values of Civic Voice.

This was seconded by the **Canterbury Society**

Martin Gunson's ratification as Treasurer was proposed by Martin Meredith (outgoing treasurer) who explained that a sub-committee of the Civic Voice board had interviewed several candidates for the position and felt Martin's in depth experience of the movement and charities made him the best candidate.

This was seconded by **Marple Civic Society**

Martin Gunson said he was pleased to be joining the Civic Voice board

## **10. Any other business.**

There was no further AGM business.