

Friends of Weaver Hall Museum

AGM

20th October 2022

John Glaister – Acting Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that Nora Dolphin was unable to attend that that he would be chairing the AGM on her behalf.

1. Apologies: Nora Dolphin (Chair), Kate Harland

2. Minutes of the previous meeting -

There were no previous minutes as there was no AGM in 2020/2021 due to the COVID situation.

3. Chairs Report –

John explained:

- That activities had been curtailed through 2020/2021 due to the COVID pandemic which included the last AGM.
- Film club members payments had been refunded – However, some members had not received a refund it was noted.
- Four trustees had to withdraw due to health/personal problems, which had left a significant gap in the Trustees.
- Members were consulted about winding up FOWHM in October 2021 and five members volunteered to step forward as trustees by end 2021 to enable the "Friends" to carry on.
- FOWHM reconvened in March 2022.

4. Treasurer's Report –

John as the Treasurer stated that his report was for the period 1st May 2021 to 30th April 2022. He said that little had happened regarding finances again predominately due to the COVID pandemic and that the assets at the end of this period was £3,883.75.

The accounts were approved - proposed by Carol Allen and seconded by Maureen Brown.

5. Election of Trustees for 2022/2023 -

CHAIR	Nora Dolphin
TREASURER	John Glaister
SECRETARY	Maureen Brown
MEMBERSHIPS	Martin Dignum
EVENTS	Deborah Dignum
FILMS	Carol Allen
COMMITTEE	Rita Lamb
	Vacancy
	Vacancy

John requested that all the nominees be appointed as a group. This was proposed by Martin Dignum and seconded by Hazel Cook.

John wished to thank the previous trustees – Elna Harrison, Lorraine and John Turner and Nigel Barrington-Smith for all their hard work and support on behalf of the Friends of Weaver Hall Museum.

A request was also made for anyone who would like to become a volunteer to speak to one of Trustees.

Museum Report –

John mentioned that Kate Harland was unable to attend this meeting and therefore he read our report – as follows:

Curating Change: Year 2 Review and Year 3 Priorities

West Cheshire Museums Development Plan and Action Priorities 2020 – 2025:

Last year was year 2 of an ambitious 5-year development programme across all museum sites called 'Curating Change'. The strategy is to enhance many aspects of people, facilities, operational systems, and marketing to improve efficiency, effectiveness and profitable engagement with the community and visitor economy.

Covid19 management:

Year 2 of Curating Change started mid-pandemic and over the year there have been enormous changes, challenges, and successes. We have spent the year in recovery, moving at the Speed Trust, as museums have re-opened. We have had to re-assess how we communicate, in a digital environment, to welcome visitors, deliver exhibitions and events, re-build audiences and community partners while curating collections and maintaining demanding buildings.

Marketing and Partnership Development

We meet regularly with Destination Cheshire Museums of Cheshire network on joint marketing Cheshire-wide initiatives.

Work with Happy Mondays has been ongoing - the most of our collections and putting community at the heart of what we do.

Staffing and Resource

Services and Learning staff returned from home to front-facing roles with the obvious inherent challenges while other colleagues worked from home throughout the pandemic, balancing work/home life. digital systems for meetings, conferencing, project development and procurement, payroll, and banking through Unit 4.

Staff review: re-allocated resource in the Curatorial, Learning and Visitor Services Teams. We trained new staff and supported them into the roles. Skills gaps are being addressed and looking at staff well-being.

Buildings

Annexe roof

Libraries

Learning Team

Digital learning platform

New staff for all sites and worked hard to gain consistency across the sessions.

Curatorial:

Stores move

MODES upgrade

Accreditation 2023

Exhibitions and Events

LGBT Month in partnership with Silver Rainbows exploring aspects of LGBT history across Cheshire;

Hope Streets – Festival of Hope exhibition on tour.

Family activities have been a useful insight into how audiences are returning to culture.

Clothes Swaps and Mending Cafes

West Cheshire Museums' Sustainability Festival: month-long, community-driven celebration of sustainability and climate change initiatives spanning all four museum sites.

7. AOB –

A question was raised about the charges made by the museum to the "Friends"?

John explained that following the COVID pandemic and return to "normal" the trustees were informed that the museum now needed to charge the "Friends" for use of the building, staffing and other facilities. The sent a copy of the charges which has been discussed at length by the Trustees who realised that prices for talks and films would need to reflect the costs we were incurring.

However, the Trustees also recognised that during the 2 years of the pandemic many members continued to pay the annual subscription, without receiving any talks or other services, so with this in mind it was agreed by the Trustees to start by charging a small fee for the talks and to re-evaluate the situation as we went along.

The Trustees also realised that they should be financially supporting the museum rather than the museum support them.

A final question was raised regarding the moving of Northwich library into the Museum?

John explained that this was a proposal to use the boardroom and possibly other space within the museum building, but that nothing had been finalised yet and that this would be a temporary arrangement, which could affect the talks and film showings.

Finally, John thanked everyone for attending and said that we would keep members informed as soon as we had any further information.

8. Date of next AGM: 19th October 2023