

Minutes of the Board of Trustees

Held in the Reading Room at 10:10 on 12th September 2018

Trustees present: Margaret Knight (MK), John Reeves (JR), Derek Knight (DK), Jeremy Lawford (JL), Lindsay Roderick LR), Robert Guyver (RG), Henry French (HF), Richard Templeton (RT), Sandra Bond (SB), Christopher Chanter (CC), Katharine Chant (KC), Emma Dunn (ED), Anne Howard (AH)

In attendance: Ian Watt

1. **Apologies:** Geoff Roberts
2. **Conflicts of Interest:** None recorded
3. **Minutes of the last meeting on 18th July 2018:** Agreed.
4. **Matters arising**

Item 7: JR clarified that any membership subscriptions received by cheque during June 2018 would be included in last year's accounts, whilst any received in July or thereafter would go into the new financial year's accounts.

Item 9: JL said that he had reconsidered the idea that new members be listed in the Newsletter. It had occurred to him that some new members may not wish to have their names listed, and on balance he felt this should not be done. It was agreed that new members names will not be listed in the Newsletter.
5. **Chair's Report: MK**

MK reported that whilst the reading rooms had been quiet over the summer, a great deal of activity had taken place, with books and furniture being reorganised

There have been recent visits from the Lord Mayor of Exeter, and from members of the Cathedral Chapter, viz the Dean, Precentor and Chancellor. The last three have all become members of the Institution. There had also been a very successful Business at Breakfast meeting, and the Institution will be open next Saturday for the Heritage Open Days.

MK announced that Paul Vincent has resigned as a Trustee. He is, however, willing to finalise the upcoming Newsletter.
6. **Hon Treasurer's Report: JR**

Budget Update: JR reported that on 3rd September the Institution's bank accounts stood as follows:

 - NatWest 2 account £44,656
 - COIF Equity Fund £208,049
 - COIF Cash account £6,960

The Equity Fund Investment account was paid 9.75% interest, the COIF Cash account 0.5%. There is no interest on the NatWest Account. £38,000 was moved from the COIF account to the NatWest account in 2016. After a discussion it was agreed to move £25,000 from the NatWest account and the entire balance of the COIF Cash account to the COIF Equity Fund.

CC asked if the COIF funds were the best place for the Institution's money because of tax advantages. JL said that COIF was a standard vehicle for charity

investments. JR said that the return over the last year was very competitive.

JR stated that the service received by National Westminster Bank is highly unsatisfactory. It is desirable that the Institution be able to use Internet banking, pay staff by bank transfer rather than cheque, and accept card payments from members. He proposed looking at the services provided by CAF Bank and the Co-Op Bank. This was agreed.

JR

JR reported that the Independent Inspection was underway, and Henry James of Haines Watts will be attending on 18th September, when he will speak to Lee Bingham, JR and MK. JR also invited RT to attend that meeting. The valuation of the book collection should be received this week, and that of the building next week. The valuer's and surveyor's fees will be allocated to last year's accounts, as the valuations given will be shown in that year's accounts.

Haines Watts have previously indicated that the Institution should change auditors. MK has identified possible alternatives. It was agreed that Haines Watts should be asked if they wish to continue as independent examiners and, depending on their response, either they and one other or two other firms, be asked to make presentations at the October board meeting. ED pointed out that the Independent Examiner needs approval at the AGM.

JL asked if it was confirmed that separate accounts are not needed for the unincorporated association, as the linking has not yet happened. JR will confirm with Haines Watts and JL will contact the Charity Commission to expedite the process.

JR
JL

JR summarised the current financial position. DK noted that the posting of some items of expenditure may need to be corrected.

JR
DK

Finance, HR & Membership Committee report

JR stated that the Communications, Publicity and Marketing document required further work. He and ED would work on this and present a draft to the October board meeting.

JR
ED

The Webcollect front end needs to be modified so that new or renewing members can make donations over and above their subscriptions and Gift Aid can be claimed on these donations. JL and DK are taking this forward.

JL
DK

DK noted that the Institution's telephone and Internet supplier was being changed to Numberrite, and this could result in savings of around £1,000 pa. The change would happen tomorrow, 13th September.

The Housekeeper's bathroom needs urgent work. It was agreed that a cap of £3,000 be placed on this work.

There was a discussion about relief cleaners when Mary Noon is unavailable. RT suggested the use of contract cleaners, but it was agreed to approach individuals in the first instance.

DK

7. Health & Safety: AH

AH reported that the smoke detectors had been checked last week by an engineer from Firewatch. She had discovered that the contract does not cover servicing of fire extinguishers and will get a quotation for this from Firewatch.

AH

AH noted that problems were being caused by members going into the kitchen when Mary was cooking. CC suggested a barrier be put up. It was agreed that this should be discussed at the next meeting of the Housekeeping Committee.

It was agreed that the Disaster Plan will be discussed at the next Board meeting, and AH will circulate a summary to trustees. AH

JR stated that the Risk Register also needs discussion, and possibly this could happen at the November Board meeting. DK stated that if trustees wanted to see policy documents they are all available in the office. He informed the meeting that Ian Watt will be administering the review process for policies and procedures, and that he will be contacting those with ownership of policies when they are due for renewal.

AH suggested that the code on the burglar alarm should be changed. This was agreed. AH

8. Membership Secretary's Report: JL

JL spoke to his written report, which had been circulated. He noted that the recruitment over the summer had been very slow, with most new members being former members who have re-joined. He stated that he had deactivated around 250 key fobs over the last few months for members whose membership had lapsed, though this did not represent 250 individuals, as some had multiple key fobs. JL drew attention to the fact that the numbers of resignations and deaths are now included on his report, and he circulated a table detailing when memberships expired.

It was noted that one of the best avenues for recruitment was members bringing friends in for lunch. JR said that Wednesday tour guides should encourage people to join. ED said that tour guide refresher training was due, and this would be included. LR asked if follow up information could be sent to people who expressed an interest in membership. SB noted that the Heritage Open Day and joint events with bodies like RAMM are important for recruitment.

JL noted that 9 junior members were lost at the end of July. ED stated that she would be getting in touch with them. ED

9. Hon. Secretary's Report: DK

DK stated that he had received an email from Tozers asking if we wish to enter the process to be nominated as their Charity of the Year. DK will apply. DK

He had also received a telephone call from Gabriel Jackson, Creative Director of the Toby Buckland Gardens. She is keen help upgrade the Institution's Garden. DK will invite her to a meeting. DK

AGM preparations & trustee appointments: DK stated that the Newsletter will go out in late September and early October, and it will contain a request for nominations for trustees. All the appointed trustees will have to be nominated for a three-year term and stand for election at the AGM. There will be a further 2 vacancies, both for a two-year term of office. MK and another trustee will meet any member who expresses an interest in standing, to discuss the role.

DK stated that the independently examined financial report will be presented to the next board meeting, and that meeting will also have to consider any resolutions it wishes to place before the AGM.

DK stated that the timing of committee meetings will be discussed at the Annual Meeting of Trustees which was provisionally set for 27th November 2018, subject to outcome of elections at the AGM. KC commented that there should be flexibility about the timing of Board meetings, as evening meetings would attract younger trustees. ED noted that many organisations alternated between daytime and evening meetings.

10. Librarian's Report: AH

She said that she will attempt to launch a poetry group on National Poetry Day (4th October).

A subscription is to be taken out to Ancestry Online.

AH said that the stock policy is to be updated. She also spoke about the upcoming Global Lives module at the University.

RG said that he had spoken to the Head of History at Exeter School, who was keen to bring a group to the DEI, and that in the 60s Sixth Form pupils had used the Institution. ED said that the Master at Exeter School should contact her and noted that some Sixth Form pupils from local schools do make use of the Institution

11. Standing Committee reports and recommendations

- 1.1 Housekeeping and Buildings Committee:** KC has discussed collaborative events at the Deanery with Pamela Greener, wife of the Dean of Exeter. KC, GR and RB are to take this forward.

KC
GR
RB

12. Partnerships and Programme Manager's report: ED

ED presented her report which had been circulated to trustees. She said that funding existed to keep things going as at present for the next two years, with around £80,000 in the NatWest 3 (Grants) account. A university programme is being set up for next year. Thursday and Friday mornings are to continue as times when school groups can visit, and there is increasing interest from groups such as the Scouts for evening visits. Bookworms will hopefully expand. The DEI will host three sessions for the Exeter Literary Festival. ED also noted that the Cathedral are very keen to work with the Institution.

KC said that a new Partnership and Programme Committee will be formed, with new terms of reference. It will hold its initial meeting at 2pm on 26th September.

13. AOB

MK said that on the day of the AGM the Institution will close at 1pm. Tea and biscuits will be served after the AGM.

The meeting concluded at 12:05.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 10th October 2018 at 10:00