

**FROME FESTIVAL LIMITED Minutes of The Annual General Meeting held on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024 at The Assembly Rooms Frome at 7p.m.**

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1. **Minutes of 2023 AGM.** These had been circulated to Members with the notice of the AGM and were approved as a true record of last year's meeting.
2. **Matters Arising:** None
3. **Board's Annual Report:**
  - Rosie Eliot opened the meeting by welcoming vice presidents and members and the Mayor Philip Campagna and Karin Campagna.
  - She thanked retiring Board members Dara O Hare, Hugh Deed and Emma Reynolds for their contributions in many different areas.
  - Special thanks were due to Gavin Rea who had now stepped down both as Chair and a Board member. He had made an outstanding contribution over 17 years most notably as Chair following the departure of Bob Morris.
  - There had been significant changes in the office with the departure of Bev Jones and special thanks were due to her for her 12 years' service.
  - Margaret Perry was stepping down as finance manager and she was thanked for her years of service in this capacity
  - We were pleased to welcome Clare Lloyd as the new finance manager and Sarah Swales as the administrator.
  - There had been an emphasis this year on trying to organise fundraising events throughout the year. The regular monthly quiz had been notably successful as had the Ladies Lunch. More of this type of event were planned.
  - We were pleased to have secured significant sponsorship from Lilley's Cider for the annual Food Feast
  - We had made significant improvements to the festival website, and we are pleased with the way it has been developed as it will enable us to do much more
  - Thanks were due to Sara Morris who has taken on the role of overseeing stewarding.
  - Thanks were also due to Marjorie Morris who has done so much over the years as part of the sponsorship team and in many other capacities also. She will be sorely missed.
  - There are some uncertainties ahead. We were advised this year that the office premises were up for sale, we are fortunate to use these rent free due to the generosity of the building's current owners however we would not be able to guarantee this would continue if a new owner came along.
  - Funding has also proved to be challenging this year and we have to find ways to adapt to the changing climate where grants from local authorities are now much harder to come by
  - Notwithstanding these concerns we remain confident about the future
  - The meeting voted by general acclamation to adopt the Board's report.
4. **Financial Report**
  - Adam Laughton gave a general introduction to the finance report by explaining that we are in a situation where most of the money that comes into the Festival as ticket receipts goes back out again. Independent organisers pay a fee to have their

event included in the brochure but the Festival only makes money from the small number of core events that we put on. The Festival is run as efficiently as possible but we still have a need for funding for our core running costs

- The criteria for funding from Frome Town Council are changing. Larger funding for core events is no longer available but we can still secure smaller grants for specific projects
- We estimate that we need £30,000 per year to get by, which is a very modest amount for a Festival this size
- We are looking at applications for funding with organisations like the Arts Council and lottery and we think we can do more with sponsorship and fundraising
- Since the improvements to the website there has been an increase in hits and we have tried to raise our social media profile also
- We are trying to locate new businesses that might be able and willing to offer sponsorship.
- Andy Jones proposed that the financial report and accounts were accepted and this was carried unanimously

#### **5. Creative Director's Report**

- Rosie asked Adam Laughton to give a short report on last year's Festival and to look forward to the coming one.
- Adam said in his view the Festival was a reflection of Frome. We had spent much time trying to define what it was exactly and the best answer we could come up with is that it is a celebration of the town of Frome. By rights such a modest Festival should not be as varied and diverse as it is. The reason we can do this is down to the support of the local community. In our view the Festival is and should be all things to all people
- Looking forward to the year's event we will have no fewer than 218 events
- The annual Bob Morris lecture will be given by Paul Mason
- We have comedy from Jenny Eclair and Richard Herring
- We were very grateful To Frome Town Council for a grant that would enable us to put on a variety of free events
- In addition there would be the usual mix of music of all types, The Crysse Morrison Poetry competition, workshops and art events and of course Hidden Gardens

#### **6 Election of Directors**

Jeremy Towler, as Company Secretary said that it was required under the company's rules for a third of the board to stand for re- election each year. This year Richard Rycroft was due for rotational retirement and three new members had been co-opted during the year. They were Heloise Clough, Zoe Newing Moore and Lisa Hardstaff. All had indicated that they were willing to be formally elected as had Richard Rycroft. They were jointly proposed by Sarah Morris and seconded by Rosie Eliot. All were elected unanimously.

#### **7 Any Other Business:**

- Rosie proposed a vote of thanks to all the many volunteers who contributed so
- The evening concluded with special presentation to Gavin Rea in recognition of his contribution
- There being no further business the meeting concluded at 7.50 p.m.