

# Worcester Arts Council

## Minutes of the Special General Meeting

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020 at 19.30hrs – Via Zoom video call



Note: unless otherwise stated, 'Council' shall refer to the Worcester Arts Council.

### **1. Apologies**

Marjorie Bassett, David Smith

### **Present:**

George Squires - Chair and individual member

Geoffrey Simmons – Treasurer and representing Worcester Philharmonic

Martin Boniface – Deputy Chair and representing Worcester Operatic & Dramatic Society

Stephen Hodgson – Worcester City Council

Paul Ellis - Opera Worcester

Michael Blackmore - Worcester Concert Club

Rosemary Adams - Worcester Gilbert & Sullivan

Stuart Freed - The Elgar Festival

Dick Saunders - Worcester Musical Theatre Company

### **2. Agenda**

- a. Special resolution regarding postponing the 2020 AGM.
- b. The future of the Council in light of the changes to the grant awards process by WCC.

### **3. Special Resolution**

George explained a Special General Meeting had been called to discuss and vote on a resolution to postpone to the AGM for up to 12 months in view of the issues connected with the Covid19 pandemic. The resolution proposed is as follows:

“Due to the effects of COVID19 making face-to-face interaction difficult, it is proposed to delay the Annual General Meeting by up to twelve months”.

The Resolution was discussed and then voted on. A vote was called, and the resolution was passed unanimously which will mean the next AGM will take place at some point over the next 12 months and when practicable to meet face to face.

### **4. The future of the Council**

George explained that a new process for grant applications had been introduced by Worcester City Council (WCC) with effect from April 2020 and went on to outline how he thought the process may impact on the Council. The new process had a particular focus on the number and diversity of “participants” (paid people involved

in the project) and “volunteers” (unpaid people involved in the project including audience). 1/4ly reports would need to be produced which demonstrated this and other factors outlined in the process.

The Council would fall into the category of medium grants (£2,000 to £15,000). Members and others could apply directly to WCC for grants without applying through the Council. There is also a requirement for future “match funding” by grant applicants but the rules and process for how would operate were not clear.

A discussion took place as to whether there was a future for the Council if members could apply directly to WCC for a grant. It was agreed that the process raised a number of questions regarding how it might impact on the Council’s ability to offer and approve grants for its members. In view of this a number of actions were agreed as follows:

- a. Stephen Hodgson is on the Communities Committee which is responsible for grants. He will attend the next Communities Committee meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2020 and seek clarification regarding the future role of the Council.
- b. There is a Communities Committee meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2020 and members of the public may attend and make representations. George Squires suggested that members of the Council attend the October meeting and put our case forward.
- c. George Squires will submit an application for a grant online to WCC using the new process to the response and see what happens. An amount of £3,305 has been set aside for the Council by WCC during 2020/21 and George will apply for this amount.

#### 5. **Other business**

- a. Finances - Geoffrey Simmons explained the Council still had around £5,000 in the bank which could be used to satisfy grant applications from members during 2020/21. An amount of £1,800 had been provisionally set aside for grants from existing members.
- b. Grant applications – The next Executive Committee meetings are on 15<sup>th</sup> September and 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and it is anticipated that new grant applications from members may be considered at these meetings.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20.15hrs.