

Minutes of the 10th Annual General Meeting of Westway Trust (a company limited by guarantee) held at Maxilla Social Club, 2 Maxilla Walk, London W10 6NQ on Wednesday 20 December 2017 at 11am.

Present:

Trustees

Alan Brown (Chair) Karen Bendell, Fiona Ramsay, Cllr Monica Press, Howard Richards, Cllr Malcolm Spalding, Angela Spence.

In attendance (Executive team): Mark Lockhart (Company Secretary & Joint CEO), Alex Russell (Joint CEO), Graeme Thornes, Stephen Wren.

Representatives of Member Organisations

Age UK Kensington & Chelsea
Association for Cultural Advancement of Visual Art
Community Accountancy Self Help
Corner Nine Arts Project
Dadhiye Somali Development Organisation
Ebony Steel Band Trust
Echoes of Spain
Ethiopian Women's Empowerment Group
HELP Counselling & Support
Lancaster West Children's Community Network
MIND
NOVA New Opportunities
Open Age
St Helen's Residents Association
Swinbrook Residents Association
The Golborne Forum
Women's Pioneer Housing Residents' Association

Minute taker

Ruth Scott

1. Chair's welcome and introduction

The Chair welcomed representatives of Member Organisations, Trustees, staff and members of the community to Westway Trust's 2017 AGM. He thanked Maxilla Social Club for their permission to use the space.

The Chair referred attendees to the reports which had been pre-circulated and made one additional announcement: the Board, at its meeting preceding the AGM, had taken the decision to create a new Sub Committee to oversee the charitable purposes and social impact of the Trust which will be comprised of

local Trustees, co-optees and non-voting advisers. All members will be from the local community.

The Chair recorded that the Board and ET were content to be filmed by members of the community and asked if others objected. There were no objections to the filming.

As this was the first AGM since the Grenfell fire, a minute's silence was held to remember and reflect on the tragic events, the people who lost their lives and all those affected.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were reported from:

Trustees

- Cllr Anne Cyron
- Jeannette Davidson
- Sheraine Williams
- Chris Ward

Member Organisations

- The Dalgarno Trust
- Octavia Housing
- Westway Community Transport
- Latymer Community Church
- Catalyst Housing
- EPIC ELM C.I.C.
- West 11 Housing Co-operative
- Eritrean Cultural Support Group and African Refugee project
- Gloucester Court Reminiscence Group
- West London Bowling Club
- Harrow club W10
- NOVA New Opportunities
- Kensington & Chelsea Foundation

3. For Members to approve the minutes of the 2016 Annual General Meeting held on 14 December 2016

Members were asked to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, previously circulated, and at this point the following issues and queries were raised:

1. Constitutional issues

Robina Rose (of Echoes of Spain) challenged the minute stating that the constitutional issues are resolved. She agreed that everyone had moved on but requested a meeting to finally resolve the outstanding matters of contention.

ACTION:

- ML to host a meeting of the original task and finish group to resolve the outstanding matters.
- 2016 AGM Minutes to be amended to reflect Robina's point.

2. Membership

Isis Imlak (a non-Member) asked whether Angela McConville had held a meeting to resolve confusion about how an organisation becomes a member of the Trust. It was reported that a public forum had been held. ML reported that the Trust recently changed the application process to make it more transparent and to gain a more in-depth understanding of applicants. The new process will include face-to-face meetings and, potentially, working with applicants to help them meet the Trust's criteria for membership.

3. Accusations of institutional racism

Toby Laurent Belson (a trustee of Westway Community Transport) [subsequent to the meeting Toby asked us to clarify in the minutes that although he is a trustee of Westway Community Transport, he was not representing the organisation at this meeting and was speaking as a member of the North Kensington community] challenged the minute which recorded that Alan Brown had said 'no evidence has been forthcoming' with respect to accusations of racism. Toby and Eve Wedderburn (from Rap23) provided some examples of things they regard as evidence including:

- Roger Matland's behaviour and legacy
- The handling of the Flyover tenancy
- The absence of an African Caribbean community centre
- The absence of black people in the original Portobello scheme drawings
- The absence of an option to tick 'Black' on the ethnicity questions of the Equestrian survey

Following further discussion, AB confirmed that the Trustees are already enrolled on unconscious bias training and the following was agreed:

ACTION:

- ML, in agreement with the Board, to engage an external equalities expert body to review the accusations of institutional racism and advise on a course of action.
- 2016: at Henry Peterson's suggestion the 2016 AGM minutes be amended by deleting the phrase '*but none had been forthcoming*'.

The 2016 Minutes were approved, subject to the amendments above, and the voting was as follows:

For	20
Against	0
Abstentions	4

4. Ordinary Resolution

Tom Fitch (from CASH and Swinbrook Residents' Association) said he felt air pollution was not being taken seriously enough by the Trust and said the Trust should be doing more research to assess the health impacts of pollution from the A40: he would therefore vote against the adoption of the Annual Report & Accounts.

The following resolution was proposed by Mary Fotheringham of K&C Mind and seconded by Henry Peterson of St Helen's Residents' Association:

To receive the Trustees' Annual Report & Accounts and Auditors' Report for the year ended 31 March 2017.

The resolution was carried and the voting was as follows:

For	21
Against	2
Abstentions	1

5. Ordinary Resolution

The following resolution was proposed by Cllr Malcolm Spalding and seconded by Karen Bendell:

To re-appoint Kingston Smith LLP, Devonshire House, 60 Goswell Road, London, EC1M 7AD, as the Trusts' auditors and authorise the Trustees to fix their remuneration.

The resolution was carried and the voting was as follows:

For	21
Against	0
Abstentions	3

6. Any other business formally notified

The Chair reported that no other business had been formally notified and concluded the formal business.

7. Question and answer session

The Chair invited questions.

Tom Fitch began by raising the following issues:

- He wishes to revisit the Trust's constitution in 2018.

- He seeks to explore whether there is a need to provide supplementary school provision for white British working class children.
- He wanted to make the meeting aware of the Notting Hill Housing Trust merger and the potential impact on the make-up of the neighbourhood.
- He feels there is an ongoing need for an African Caribbean arts centre on the estate.

Other queries and issues raised by representatives of Member Organisations and other attendees divide into the following themes; the key points raised and discussed are summarised in the bullet points below:

a) Lantern procession

- The Chair reported that Corner Nine Arts Project had queried why children could not join the silent walks. One speaker said that the issue may be children singing. Others added that, following the walks, mingling and coming together as a community does take place so it may be appropriate for singing to take place at this stage.
- Phil Nichols of Westway Trust responded that the Festival Fund award decisions are made by external community panel; he reported that he was not aware of any reason children should not attend.
- It was suggested that Corner Nine Arts contact the organisers to confirm the arrangements.

b) Community development

- Lizzie Spring (LS), voicing her own views and not speaking on behalf of Women's Pioneer Residents' Association, said she would welcome a cultural shift in the way community development is approached: from a deficit based approach (i.e. asking: what is wrong?) to an asset based approach (drawing on the assets available). By way of example, she cited initiatives she had been involved in setting up during the 1970s including refuges, squats, and housing cooperatives.
- Other attendees endorsed these ideas including Robina Rose (RR) and Toby Laurent Belson (TLB). TLB said he has been working towards this approach in his dialogue with the Trust over the past few years.
- The Chair was also supportive of LS's words and suggested the Trust explore this approach when it reviews its strategy over the coming months.

c) Equestrian CIC

- Speakers from the Equestrian CIC said they needed confidence that the Trust would play its part in delivering the new riding facility. They mentioned that they had not been given access to the second part of the equestrian review, which relates to feasibility, and asked whether they could receive a copy.
- Stephen Wren of Westway Trust said the Trust stands ready to work with the CIC to finalise plans for the redeveloped riding facility and help deliver the project. It was agreed that the second part of the review should be shared with the CIC. [The report was issued to the Trust as a confidential document and further sharing needs to be agreed with the consultant.]

ACTION: SW to share feasibility work with the equestrian CIC.

- d) BBC Project in Bay 20
- Speakers including Isis Imlak (II), Niko Day (ND), Jacob Rety (JR), Joanna Beveridge (JB), Niles Hailstones (NH) and Dee Dainton (DD) expressed concerns about the DIY SOS project to take place in Bay 20.
 - Some were concerned that the Trust hasn't worked with community in conceptualising it and some felt the three-month timescale was too tight.
 - Others felt it was misguided to allow the BBC to undertake the project in a 'contentious space' and felt it could lead to divisions and disputes.
 - Several said they themselves had been asked to identify space by the BBC but had rejected the approach.
 - Some sought further details on the arrangements for the community space in the new development.
 - Alex Russell (AR) explained that the BBC had approached Westway Trust wanting to support local community organisations following the Grenfell fire. Dale Youth Amateur Boxing Club, which lost its venue in the fire, will be re-sited in Bay 20 alongside a community centre. The Trust wanted to explore the opportunity as there has been much demand for community space before Grenfell, this is even greater after. The BBC came with a commitment that the development is free so the Trust can ensure that the rent is minimal. The Trust has talked to many different groups, and held a community day. Feedback has largely been positive. The Trust has pushed back on the tight timescale. AR said the Trust doesn't want to lead, it wants to facilitate. EW said the Trust needs to clarify its role i.e. recipient, gatekeeper, or donor. AR reiterated that many local people welcome the idea and wish to pursue community determination and co-design of the internal design and operating model. She clarified that the space in Bay 20 will be split with approximately one third used for the boxing club and two thirds for the community centre and open space.
 - Alan Brown (AB) added that the BBC project is unusual, and not how the Trust usually works.
- e) Portobello scheme retail units and voluntary sector space
- Marion Gettleson (MG) a local trader, asked about the retail units in the Portobello scheme: she asked how much per square foot will rent be to break even; the impact on business rates; and whether these retail units are financially sustainable or if they will be subsidised. Mark Lockhart (ML) replied that not all these details are available as yet explaining that the emphasis will be on smaller local and independent businesses, and that the strategy will be to scale back rents and have a mix of businesses. The smaller ones will be business rate exempt; larger ones will pay normal commercial rates.
 - Mary Fotheringham (MF) from Mind asked about retaining voluntary sector space on the Portobello scheme. ML responded by saying that it was originally planned to offer alternate space at Maxilla, but the revised plans give us a challenge due to lack of office space in the Portobello scheme. At the last engagement, the Trust learnt there were strong views and the Trust will revisit the plans to the West of Portobello Road to ensure the voluntary sector has space.

- f) Christian Tilleray and Miriam Nelken's departure from the Trust
- Several speakers including TLB, ND, NH and JB questioned the circumstances under which Christian Tilleray and Miriam Nelken left Westway Trust.
 - Several expressed that CT and MN had been successful at community liaison and were respected and trusted by local people.
 - NH said Miriam was pushed out for giving him access to Bay 56. He said CT witnessed unchecked bias and discrimination and had become characterised as an internal activist. He quoted from an email to illustrate these points. Monica Press said she was familiar with the email and that the quotes were attributable to one person who has left the Trust and do not represent the views of the Executive team or the Board. NH said he feels the Trust exploits the local community and represents the same culture as the local council.
 - TLB said the external body which investigated their allegations should have spoken to CT and MN directly.
 - This conversation moved onto the perception that local people are not worked with as equal partners and that Trust management and Board members don't always trust their skills and expertise. Il said she and others have expert knowledge in North Kensington, are grounded in the community, and understand the needs.
 - AB said CT and MN were not "pushed out", but resigned due to differences of opinion about the direction in which the organisation was going. He strongly disagreed with NH's accusations about the Trust being exploitative. AB agreed with the principle that all have equal standing, albeit bringing different skills and knowledge.
- g) Maxilla Nursery
- Gemini asked about the closure of Maxilla Nursery, which she characterised as a Trust decision, and asked what discussions the Trust is in to reopen the nursery.
 - ML replied that the Trust did not want nursery to close, this was a Council decision and the Trust would have been delighted if it had stayed open.
 - Gemini said the Trust could have pressured the council to reduce rent. ML reiterated that the decision to close the nursery was entirely that of the Council.
- h) Role and voice of community trustees
- Bob Larkin (BL) and TLB asked whether community trustees, referring to those with a strong local presence and connections, are on a par with other trustees and whether they are represented on Committees. TLB noted that Cynthia Dize is no longer on the Property Committee and it was pointed out that Henry Peterson had recently joined the Property Committee. EW thanked the community trustees for their wonderful work in 2017 she also encouraged the Trust to appoint local people who are actively engaged with the Trust onto committees, and to train them up if skills are lacking, stating 'we are your fiercest friends'.

- It was confirmed that three Trustees are nominated by RBKC, three are elected by the Membership (that represents people who have a stake in the area by living or working locally), and six are recruited independently on a skills basis. Additional committee members are co-opted with specific skills.
 - Fiona Ramsay said the reason she joined was, as a local resident, she felt the Board was unrepresentative of local communities. It was important for her to know what's going on and to voice the opinions and thoughts of local people. She said her voice is equal to all the others around the table. She endorsed the idea of more co-production. She said that both she and Sheraine Williams are vocal trustees and are making a difference.
 - Henry Peterson said he used to come to AGMs and complain. He saw an advertisement for a vacancy and responded: now he is serving on the Property Committee. In response to LS's earlier points about co-production, he said there has to be responsibility on the community to organise itself through neighbourhood forums, CICs etc.
 - Cllr Monica Press introduced herself as the current Labour Group nominee. She said the role takes time and requires compromise. She described the resignations of CT and MN as a tipping point for the Trust. She also said the new charitable purposes committee is a positive development and one the community trustees have pushed for. She said her background is in community development and she endorsed LS's words about an asset based approach. She said Board diversity has improved greatly. She endorsed the idea of public meetings and said we've all got to take responsibility and move forward. She added that those on the Board welcome constructive input from the community.
- i) CEO succession planning
- Alan Brown spoke about CEO succession in the light of Angela McConville's departure. The interim arrangement is a joint CEO brief held by Alex Russell and Mark Lockhart. The Board will reflect on leadership structures. The reason for joint CEOs was to engender a partnership spirit which feeds into culture of the organisation.
 - Alan said further and wider soundings would need to be taken before any other arrangement was put in place.
 - In response to a criticism of executive and consultants' pay, AB said executive pay has in fact reduced due to the restructure, with a smaller top team. He also explained that with a relatively small staff team sometimes the Trust needs to buy in external expertise.
- ACTION: it was agreed to resume public meetings.**

Meeting ends