



The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Company was held at 1pm on Thursday 9th February 2023 in The Print Room, New Road, Wigtown.

MINUTES

1. **Welcome and apologies**

Present: Cathy Agnew (CA); Shaun Bythell (SB); Philippa Cochrane (PC); Roger Davis (RD); Edward Hocknell (EH); Sandra McDowall (SM); Nick Walker (NW) (Trustees); Anne Barclay, Adrian Turpin (Staff); Malcolm Court, Nicole Court, George Moore (Members); Julie Willan (Observer).

Apologies: Beth Goodyear (Trustee); Kerry Irving (Finance Officer); Jenni Gray; Catriona Wilson; Carole Green; Martin Green (Members).

Sandra McDowall welcomed trustees, members, observers and staff to the meeting.

2. **Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 10th February 2022:**

These were circulated and approved.

3. **Chairman's Report: Wigtown Festival Company April 2021 – March 2022**

Despite the ongoing challenges of the pandemic, the staff continued to do an amazing job adapting events to accommodate the restrictions. The Writers Gathering was held online and saw 170 participants from across the UK and abroad taking part. Hooked was also held online and attracted the largest audience for the event so far, and the Big DoG children's festival was also streamed live with the 18 events attracting 785 live views and a further 825 views on catch-up.

There were some staff changes during the year with Claire Nash, Kenny Barr and Isla Rosser Owen all leaving the company. They are much missed, and we remain grateful for their many years of hard work and dedication. We also welcomed Jennifer Hendry and Rosie Littler-Davis to the staff team.

Our retail outlet at Number 11 re-opened at the end of April, albeit with far fewer volunteers, as many considered it too much of a risk to return after lock-down. This was part of the reason that a cautious approach was adopted for the 2021 Book Festival and a hybrid online and in person festival was delivered. The live venues were smaller, and great care was taken to ventilate and sanitise between events to keep audiences safe. The McGuffie gardens, where the large marquee can usually be found, was transformed into a community space complete with seating areas, picnic tables and a large screen capable of live streaming events to an outdoor audience. Given the challenges, we are very proud to have delivered a Covid-safe Festival, with 7,000 in person audience members attending 166 live events over the 13 days, and 7,136 viewing online either live or on catch-up. Our volunteer drivers covered 8,300 miles, nearly 300 audience surveys were returned and ticket sales of £38,700 was achieved. A very good result in the circumstances.

Grateful thanks are due to our regular funders including Creative Scotland, Event Scotland, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Baillie Gifford, Scottish Book Trust, Book Week Scotland, DG Unlimited, Wigtownshire Area Committee, The Holywood Trust as well as local sponsors, supporters, and volunteers. Thanks are also due to the Trustees and staff of WFC as their hard work, dedication and support is invaluable throughout the year and ensures the successful delivery of our funded programme.

Sadly, three of the company's most dedicated supporters, Ted Cowan, Jack Hunter, and Anne Brown died during the year and their contribution to our work will be greatly missed; Anne Brown was still a serving Board member when she died. Mike Smith, Nicola Wood, Simon Leslie, and Marjorie Lotfi all retired from the Board, and we recruited two new members, Cathy Agnew, and Gerry Hassan. The help and support given by the Board towards the success of the company is more than appreciated.

4. **Finance Officer's Report**

To the AGM on 9 February 2023

Financial Statements for the year to 31 March 2022

The draft Financial Statements for the year to 31 March 2022 have been prepared by Montpelier Professional (Galloway). Once the independent examination is complete, they will be approved by the Board of Trustees and submitted to OSCR and Companies House.

The principal features of these draft accounts are summarised as follows:

1. Total income has decreased from £529,465 to £483,495. This is not unexpected due to the pandemic and running a much smaller Wigtown Book Festival programme in 2021, with no charge for digital attendance.
2. Expenditure increased from £424,205 to £500,850. This was anticipated due to moving back from a purely online Festival in 2020 to a hybrid model in 2021.
3. The net result for the year is a deficit on the year of £17,355 which left a closing balance at 31 March 2022 of £165,790. This includes £30,000 of restricted funds for the delivery of the Scottish Book Festivals Network and Scotland's Year of Stories activity.
4. We are grateful for the ongoing support of funders, sponsors and donors.

Kerry Irving
January 2023

RESOLUTIONS

5. **To agree that the annual accounts for year to 31st March 2022, which are not yet finalised, may be formally approved by the Board once reviewed by the Auditor, Carson & Trotter, Chartered Accountants.**
This was approved.
6. **The following directors have resigned since the last AGM:**
Beth Cochrane, Gerry Hassan, Sarah Nyland – the resignations were noted alongside thanks to these directors for their support and dedication to the Company.
7. **The following directors have confirmed their resignations at this AGM:**
There were no resignations.
8. **To re-elect the following director who retires by rotation:**
Roger Davis, Sandra McDowall, Nicholas Walker – these re-elections were approved.
9. **To confirm the appointments of the following directors who have been co-opted by the Board during the year:**
Shaun Bythell, Beth Goodyear and Edward Hocknell – these appointments were approved.
10. **To confirm the appointment of Carson & Trotter, Chartered Accountants, of Castle Douglas as the auditors of the Company, and to authorise the directors to agree their remuneration.**
This was approved.
11. **AOCB**
None
12. **To fix the date of the next AGM**
Thursday 8 February 2024, later moved to 25 April 2024.