

STRINGS ATTACHED

Minutes of the 13th Annual General Meeting held on 14 April 2024 at 1400 in the Founders Room at Brighton Dome

Present: John Bosowski, David Botibol, Sandie Botibol, Chris Darwin, Kate Darwin, Christine Moon, Margaret Polmear, Guy Richardson, Helen Simpson (Chair), Betty Skolnick

Apologies: Apologies for absence were received from Jill Bourne, Alison Minns and Paul Moore.

1 Chair's welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 To receive the minutes of the twelfth Annual General Meeting held on 28 February 2023

The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

*Proposed: Betty Skolnick
Seconded: Guy Richardson*

3 To receive the Annual Report of the Committee of Strings Attached

The report was received.

The Chair drew attention to the pleasing number of people attending the concerts since their return to the Corn Exchange and gave an update on the last three concerts in the current season:

Lumas Winds	217 including 15 Cavatinas
Northern Chords	236 including 7 Cavatinas
Kleio Quartet	290 including 11 Cavatinas plus walkups

It was thought that the comparatively small number attending the Lumas Winds concert could be attributed to its being held on a date out of sequence with other concerts as a result of the season's start being delayed from October 2023 to November 2023.

In order to encourage more young people to attend the coffee concerts, it was reported that links have been established with both Springboard and Create Music.

It was noted that there were 66 members of Strings Attached on 31 December 2023, well below pre- pandemic levels, though the number has since increased. It was thought that a number of factors were at play including a sense that the coffee concerts are now secure and that, therefore, a membership organisation is less relevant, and the fact that free interval sherry and fruit juice is no longer available. It was agreed that the committee would consider how best to present the benefits of belonging to Strings Attached before advertising the 2024/25 season. A subscription holiday was one idea put forward.

Thanks were extended to David Botibol and Chris Darwin for their work for Strings Attached outside the committee during the past year and in particular to David for overseeing the creation of the new look website.

Thanks were also extended to Andrew Comben, Chief Executive of Brighton Dome and Brighton Festival, and his team for the smooth running of the concerts.

4 To receive the financial accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023

The audited financial accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023 were received.

It was noted that Strings Attached enjoys a healthy bank balance, thanks to members' generous donations and resulting Gift Aid claim, and that income continues to exceed expenditure. It was further noted that the current bank balance is in the order of £8,500 as a result of the sponsorship by Strings Attached of the concert earlier in the day and would likely be further depleted as a result of the decision to sponsor a seventh concert in the 2024/25 season. Website expenses have increased because of the overhaul of the website and for the first time we are having to pay a Mailchimp subscription having previously piggybacked on another subscription.

A member pointed out that it is possible to use Mailchimp without taking out a subscription and this will be investigated by the committee.

It was suggested that some of Strings Attached reserves could be used to sponsor a relevant Springboard event and this too will be investigated by the committee.

5 To agree the annual subscription rate for 2024/25

It was proposed that the annual subscription for the year 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025 should remain unchanged at £10 (free for students).

Proposed: Betty Skolnick
Seconded: Kate Darwin

6 General Data Protection Regulation: data protection policy and register of systems

It was explained that Strings Attached is required to present its data protection policy and register of systems for examination at each Annual General Meeting, the documents having been reviewed by the committee at its meeting prior to the AGM. The committee, it was reported, felt no changes were necessary to the data protection policy but that it is recommended that the following be added to the Sharing the data section of the register of systems:

Elements of the personal data of individual members (name and email address) are also shared with the editor of the Strings Attached newsletter to enable the newsletter to be sent to them.

This change was unanimously agreed.

7 To appoint members to the committee

It was reported that nobody had come forward to join the committee but that all members of the outgoing committee are willing to serve for a further year. All were duly appointed.

Proposed: David Botibol

Seconded: Kate Darwin

8 Any further issues for consideration

There being no further issues for consideration, the Chair noted that Andrew Comben would be leaving Brighton in September after sixteen years at the helm of Brighton Dome and Brighton Festival to take up the role of Chief Executive of Britten Pears Arts. She wished him well in his new role and noted with pleasure that he is not leaving Brighton without ensuring the 2024/25 coffee concert season is in place.

It was agreed that a note of thanks to Andrew would be posted on the Strings Attached website.

MP/14.04.24