



MINUTES OF THE MONTAGU SQUARE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) 2021

Held at 6:30pm on Monday 1st March 2021 on zoom platform

ATTENDEES Peter Blott (Acting Chair), Anne Bristow, Julio Castro, Sarah Lang, Martin Bikhit, Sue Smith, Noella Hacquard, Chris Morris.

Oliver Sampson-Bancroft (WBM), Salvatore Giorgio (WBM).

Mary Hicks, John Hicks, Nicholas Posnansky, Joan Freeman, Julia Strauss, Suzan Sime, Christine Pitteloud, Emma Louise Bassett, Richard Bassett, Nigel Illingworth, Steve Moore, Alan Bristow, Sebastian....., Anna....., Judy Sanderson.

Peter Blott opened the meeting by introducing himself as the treasurer and acting chair of the AGM. He greeted and thanked all the attendees.

1. To consider and approve the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on 2nd March 2020 and formally approve minutes of previous year's AGM held on 25th February 2019.

Peter Blott explained that there were two sets of minutes to be approved as the 2019 minutes had not been properly circulated ahead of last year's AGM. He also said that comments and proposed corrections made on the 2019 minutes by John Hicks had been incorporated. Both sets of minutes were approved.

2. Matters Arising

No matters arising.

3. To receive the annual report of the Committee

The report of the Committee had already been circulated with the mailings and published on the garden website.

Sarah Lang outlined the play area project. She reported that some repairs were necessary around the south end building occupied by UK Power because of damage to the surrounding garden wall. It would be opportune to improve the play area at the same time.

She said we would ask for voluntary financial contributions towards this work. Requests would be incorporated alongside the annual garden rate demands. Should funds be insufficient to complete the improvement in one go, the project could be split into stages using the funds available in each stage.



4. To consider and if thought fit to accept the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31st December 2020

Peter Blott started his financial report by thanking Mr Nicholas Posnansky for pointing out one balance sheet line item that had been labelled incorrectly (although correct in substance) and Mr John Hicks for suggesting that the hanging basket contributions should be recorded as a separate reserve, rather than as a memorandum note. These will be incorporated into the financial statements in future years.

Mr Posnansky had also suggested that it would be good to incorporate some further independent review of the accounts. It was agreed that he would work with the Treasurer to do this in future years.

The accounts were approved.

5. To levy the garden rate for the year to 31st December 2021

It was proposed to retain the garden rate levy at the current level for 2021. The levy for 2021 will be set at 1.012 pence to the pound on the annual values taken as 8% of the 2005 building insurance values.

The garden rates were approved.

6. To elect the Committee for the year to December 2021

The Committee was re-confirmed.

7. Any other business

Miss Suzan Sime raised her concern that sometimes there are large gatherings in the garden, which she feels is rather worrying given the current Covid-19 lockdown. Peter Blott replied that throughout all the Covid-19 restrictions we have tried to balance enforcing the rules to keep everyone safe, while encouraging use of the garden during these difficult times. We also want to avoid being unnecessarily confrontational. He advised her to inform the Committee if she saw something wrong. Anne Bristow also mentioned that the police could be telephoned on 101 to help enforcement. The police will be given a key card to enter the garden, if needed.

Mr Steve Moore asked if it would be possible to plant some herbs in the garden. Sarah Lang replied that this was one of the things the Committee was discussing in relation to the project of improvement of the south side of the garden. The idea was, she explained, to create a community corner where an herb garden would fit perfectly.

Miss Joan Freeman asked if anything could be done in relation to proposed major alterations around the Oxford Street area, which would affect the Square. Peter Blott replied that the Committee could act as a conduit to provide support, but this was not a direct matter of affecting the Garden Trust. Chris Morris added that there are procedures in place to assess the plans, which all go through Westminster Council and he wasn't sure the Garden Trust could do much to stop or amend the planning process. Comments and objections could also be channeled through the Marylebone Association.



Mr Sebastian..... reported the presence of foxes in the garden. Foxes have been in the garden regularly for many years, although they seem to have been more noticeable

recently. The committee has taken steps to discourage them, such as fox proof bins, increased litter clearances and filling in holes, but to some extent we are likely to have to continue living with them in the garden.

The meeting closed at 7:30 pm with Peter Blott thanking all the attendees.