

Minutes
2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF
DUNCAN MACKINNON MUSIC AND ARTS TRUST LIMITED
[MAC ARTS]

ON 3 AUGUST 2020, 7PM BY VIRTUAL CONFERENCING*

Chair: Iain Coltman

Minutes: Laurence Reid

Present: David Coyle, David Little, Mike Jeffrey, Gary Husband, Chris Wemyss, Dave Angus (for part), Jenny Coltman, Finn Mackenzie, Maria Coltman, Alan Turpie.

1. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2020

The Chair welcomed members to the AGM and provided an update on key activities in 2019/20, a summary of the current position and future plans. Report at ANNEX A.

2. THE ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

Under the company articles, a third of directors must resign, and members can be nominated for and appointed to the role.

- 2.a Alan Turpie has retired from the Board permanently. Members thanked him for his contribution since being appointed.
- 2.b. Laurence Reid was reappointed director.
- 2.c. Mike Jeffrey was appointed director.
- 2.d Gary Husband was appointed director.

3. FIXING OF ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Members did not move to introduce annual membership subscriptions.

4. REPORT OF THE AUDITOR

Members reviewed the report of the independent examiner of the 2018/19 accounts.

5. APPROVAL OF THE ACCOUNTS 2018/19

Members formally approved the accounts of the company for 2018/19

<https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/company/SC412818>

6. APPOINTMENT OF THE AUDITOR

Accounts will continue to be independently examined, with members able to seek to appoint an auditor if recommended.

No other business

[end]

ANNEX A – CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

3 August 2020

Introduction

1. Welcome to the 2020 Annual General Meeting of the Duncan Mackinnon Music and Arts Trust Limited, usually referred to as Mac Arts. I am pleased you have made the effort to join the meeting - it is unfortunate that we are unable to meet together in person in the current circumstances, which I will refer to later.
2. Elected members of the Board are present. In addition, we are joined by co-opted board members Gary Husband and Mike Jeffrey.
3. The agenda has been circulated beforehand, and is determined by the company articles, which set out the format of the annual general meeting. This is an opportunity for Board and members to hear and discuss charity governance and accountability.
4. The first item on the agenda is the report of the Chair, and I plan to provide members with a short, high-level update of the charity’s activities in 2019/20 and importantly, our current status and response to COVID-19 pandemic.

2019/20 Key events

5. Successive years of grants from Scottish Government’s *Strengthening Communities Programme* came to an end in 2018/19. Over a three-year period we had received in excess of £90,000 from the programme, a substantial proportion of incoming resources.
6. However, the Board was successful in securing a £15k grant from the Weir Trust towards employee wages, allowing Mac Arts to permanently employ two part time staff -Venue manager Chris Wemyss and Kate Moss Jones both of whom are real assets to the organisation. In the end, the Weir Trust grant covered around 40% of staffing costs, amounting to an extremely valuable contribution to running costs which we have acknowledged to the grant makers. In employing the Board received advice from Hogg and Thorburn, a Galashiels-based chartered accountant firm that provides reliable payroll services to the Board.
7. Mac Arts is a non-profit making charity. Incoming resources have continued to increase year on year, from £73k year ending March 2018 to £106k year ending March 2019. Financial activities for the year end to March 2020 will be independently examined and lodged at Companies House later in the year as normal but a significant further increase is expected. Expenditure continues to broadly correlate with income.
8. Event programming in 19/20 has been a success, with sell out comedy nights, including the likes of Jim Smith and Jack Dee, and well attended music concerts. When offering as varied a programme as Mac Arts does, the programming can still occasionally be hit or miss, with some nights not as successful as others. This is clearly something we’ll have to give careful thought to as we plan the short to medium term.

9. Regular bookings for hall hire for use by local community groups continues. Community outreach works continues as well, with a number of regular volunteers, and Mac Arts offering to host educational courses provided through Borders College.

10. Our involvement with the Music Venues Trust has been a success, raising our profile significantly with participation in independent music venues week. We also have an increased presence on social media, our weekly newsletters reaching a wider audience and features in local and national press, TV and radio. We continue to receive voluntary support for marketing from Johnston Montgomery, for which we are extremely grateful.

11. We have continued to engage with our landlord, Scottish Borders Council, on their long-term plans for the so-called cultural quarter in Galashiels, which will also host the new tapestry building. We had a series of meetings in early 19/20 following which we awaited further engagement. There have been delays in this work, and COVID-19 will undoubtedly have set the timetable back further.

Current Position

12. Now to our more pressing concern. The doors to Mac Arts closed with the start of lockdown in mid-March, which was of course necessary. We acknowledge the impact this has had on the local community including supporters, audience, members and directors, and also the wider arts, venue and performing community.

13. With lockdown, all income streams ceased immediately. We made claims to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme for employee wages. In March we launched a Crowdfunder, aiming for £5k. We were overwhelmed by the response we received from our supporters, with the target being hit in a matter of days, and rising to almost £6k by the end. We later applied for and received £25k from the Coronavirus Business Support fund. In July we also belatedly received £25k from Pivotal Enterprise Resilience Fund in order to assist in the transitional phase where we aspire to reopening fully.

14. Members of the Board have been managing routine business since March, whilst our employees have been furloughed. At the end of July, Chris began flexible working for 5 hours a week to allow him to start planning for reopening, including managing and rearranging bookings and plans for how the building might need to be adapted.

Looking ahead

15. There is and will continue to be a great deal of uncertainty for Mac Arts and the rest of the arts, entertainment and charity sectors. We recognize there is a great deal of uncertainty for individuals involved in Mac Arts and the local community. However, as an organization our modest size and business model might give ground for optimism, with some caveats.

16. The building, needless to say, requires some emergency maintenance, including dry rot in a couple of areas, as well as improvements to the toilet facilities. We will need some careful planning for the building's interior, including a deep clean, hand cleansing points and hygiene routines, social distancing measures, audience management and appropriate screening. Work is underway to increase capacity in the main hall, and we will aim to find suitable seating to restore the upstairs balcony to the required specification.

17. We remain some way from re-opening, although there will be some scope for limited hall hire, rehearsal or studio recording soon. Gigs remain some way down the line. We are likely to continue to need to use the CJRS until suitable income streams can resume, with the Board supporting Chris in his limited hours.

18. The main target for the coming year is quite simply our survival as a viable arts venue. We will need community support to do this, and we will need think about how best to reach out to the community in the coming months. In particular, we would welcome better engagement with members and a more diverse membership of the Board of Directors. We will also pursue engagement with Scottish Borders Council on its Galashiels town centre regeneration plans and get some absolute clarity on what it might mean for Mac Arts. Potential funding streams for various areas of our activities are being explored.

19. I am particularly pleased to be able to close the report on this/ positive note. We have been approached in connection with the late Duncan Mackinnon whose work in promoting Border Dances in the 1960s and early 1970s was an inspiration behind the Mac Arts project when Dave Angus set the wheels in motion 10 years ago. I think I can say we are proud to maintain that tradition. We are partnering with Duncan's family to secure funding for the creation of a permanent exhibition at Mac Arts of the legacy of the Border Dances and Duncan Mackinnon. We will keep members and volunteers informed of this as things progress. In the meantime, and on behalf of the Board, we are grateful for your continued support.

I Coltman, Mac Arts