

## MINUTES

### 21<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 13 January 2022

4.30pm

AGM held on site at Sophia Garden, and via Zoom

#### 1 Welcome from the Chair

Hilary Garnham, Interim Chair, introduced herself, welcomed everybody to the AGM meeting. It had been another extraordinary year for the company in all areas of its work, but the company was thriving despite the challenges it had faced. Hilary thanked everybody who worked for the company, onstage, backstage, in the office and as volunteers and trustees.

Hilary took members through how this AGM would work.

The meeting was being held in the room, with some members participating via Zoom. Presenters would need to use the microphone when speaking, and the meeting was being recorded. Voting would take place in the room and via Zoom. Participants using Zoom were asked to ask questions through the chat function.

Only those members who had paid their annual membership fee could vote at the AGM.

#### 2 Present

Adrian Peters	Kate Parry
Alice Burnett	Lee Fisher
Alison Woods	Lee Tinnion
Angela Tillcock (Minutes)	Lis McLean
Anna Searle (via Zoom)	Lizzy Ferguson
Becca Davies	Louise Evans (Treasurer)
Chieh-Ju Yang	Matt Davies
Ed Priest	Olga Kaleta
Eva Trier	Olli Park (via Zoom)
Gavin Priestley	Rachel Walsh (via Zoom)
Hilary Garnham (Interim Chair)	Theresa Burrows (via Zoom)
Jo Richmond	Tom Kellett
Jo Taylor	Tom Rack

#### 3 Apologies

No apologies had been received for the meeting.

#### **4 Minutes of the Last AGM (28 January 2021)**

Hilary took members through the Minutes of the last AGM, held on 28 January 2021. The Minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

Proposed by Alison Woods

Seconded by Adrian Peters

Agreed by All members

#### **5 Presentation of Annual Report and Audited Accounts 2020/2021**

Members had been sent a link to the Company's Audited Accounts for 2020/2021. Louise took members through the accounts.

The accounts had been signed off formally by the company's Auditors and had been logged with Companies House and the Charity Commission. The first few pages of the Accounts contained the Report of the Trustees. It had been a difficult year for the company, with planned tours and its community programme cancelled. To ensure the company survived, Trustees had agreed to changes in order to ensure the company survived. This included putting the majority of staff on furlough. All of the work of the Trustees, working with Tom and Alison, had resulted in the company coming through the year.

The financial reports in the Accounts showed that the company had turned over £1.2 million and after depreciation, it ended the year with net current assets of £514,548.

At the point of signing off the Accounts, both Louise and the Auditors were happy that the company was a 'going concern' and that it would remain operating for the next 12 months. The company had adequate reserves to be able to trade for the next 12 months.

During the year, Trustees and staff had examined the impact of Covid on the company's programme of work and the future plans are outlined in the Accounts.

In terms of governance, the company needed to recruit new Trustees. Louise was stepping down today as the company's Treasurer.

Members were asked to approve the Audited Accounts 2020/2021.

Proposed by Alison Woods

Seconded by Lis McLean

Agreed by All members

#### **6 Appointment of Auditors for 2021/2022**

Louise Evans recommended to members that Watts Gregory be re-appointed as the Company's Auditors for 2021/2022.

Proposed by Louise Evans

Seconded by            Lee Fisher  
Agreed by             All members

## **7      Presentation of Company Activity 2021/2022**

### **Kate Parry – Community Programme**

Kate gave members an overview of the process of change the Community Programme had gone through during 2020/21. The Pandemic had highlighted the huge inequalities in our society and there was a huge desire for change. As a result, the company spent time rethinking its approach to Community Development and this had resulting in a new model being developed.

Previously, the company ran classes for three hundred people a week at 4 Elms, but there were few people in these classes from Adamsdown and Splott or from a range of cultures. It was clear that the company was out of touch with its communities. Change is uncomfortable and will take time, but we have been successful in gaining funding from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation to support this work. Our work started in August 2021 to co-create work with communities. It is about the process of engagement and not necessarily about the outputs. To support this work, we have appointed Jo, our Community Project Manager and two local Community Champions. We are learning and developing along the way to develop a more inclusive and accessible programme of community work.

### **Jo Taylor – Community Programme**

Jo had started work as the company's Community Project Manager and had been in post now for two months. Jo was new to circus, and had a background in community development, most recently working in Bristol. Jo had hit the ground running with work that currently included:

**Adamsdown Primary School** – building on past work, the company were delivering weekly circus workshops for children in the school. This had helped build resilience and confidence in pupils as they return to school post Covid. The project would end with an event for parents and carers in July 2022.

**Working with Oasis** – the company were delivering circus skills workshops for the children of Afghanistan refugees who were currently housed and isolating in a central Cardiff hotel. This was enabling them to integrate with the community.

**Community Engagement** – as a result of engagement work by the Community Champions a free Circus Club for children and young people from the local area would be starting at Four Elms.

### **Tom Rack – Performance Programme**

The company's planned tours for 2020/21 had not taken place because of Covid. Instead, the year had been a time of thinking about the type of company NFSC wanted to be and developing more socially accessible projects. Tom thanked company members for their commitment and resilience during the year.

**Circus Village** - since the last AGM, the Circus Village had been held over the summer of 2021 in Llandow, South Wales. The purpose of the Village was to provide free professional development for circus practitioners. Access to the Village was free for participants, removing barriers for those who could not afford traditional circus skills training.

Arts Council of Wales, Arts Council England, and Creative Scotland had funded the Village. The spirit developed through the Village had been inspirational, and new partnerships and professional relationships had been made as a result of the project. The company was currently planning for the next Circus Village to take place in spring 2023.

**Sabotage** – research and development for the company’s new show, Sabotage, had taken place alongside the Circus Village, including the initial castings. Sabotage would be opening in Easter 2022 in Wales and then go on tour to six sites across the UK. The company still had strong connections with European networks and partners, so there could also be a chance of Sabotage touring into Europe in 2023/2024.

#### **Olga Kaleta**

**Coventry UK City of Culture 2022** - looking ahead, Olga was invited to update members on the company’s partnership work with Coventry UK City of Culture 2022. NFSC were developing a show called Pirates of the Canal Basin, working in partnership with performers and local communities. The work would have originally taken place last year but was postponed because of the Pandemic. It would be taking place in late April 2022.

#### **Hilary Garnham**

**Reflective sessions with staff** - Hilary reported on the work she had completed in partnership with Trustee Adrian Peters. During October and November 2021, they had met individually with each member of the staff team. The meetings had created a chance for staff to feedback on the company’s work and talk through their ideas of how they wanted to be supported going forward. It had been a difficult time for staff during the Covid Pandemic, with staff either being furloughed or working from home. It had been important for Trustees to create time to say thank you individually to members of staff and check in on their well-being. The Board would discuss the resulting report and its recommendations.

### **7.1 External Forces**

In addition to the impact of Brexit and Covid on the company’s work, Tom reported that the legacy of Covid was resulting in potential partners being more risk averse and taking longer to commit to partnering. This could have an impact on the company’s future planning.

## **8 Election of Trustees and Officers**

Abdul Shayek had formally resigned as a Trustee and would not be standing for re-election. Louise Evans was standing down as the Company's Treasurer. Lee Fisher had served his 3-year term as a Trustee and was standing for re-election.

### **Election of Officers**

#### **Election of Treasurer**

Adrian Peters put himself forward for the role of Treasurer

Proposed by Alison Woods

Seconded by Alice Burnett

Agreed by All members

#### **Election of Trustees**

Lee Fisher put himself forward for re-election as a Trustee.

Proposed by Hilary Garnham

Seconded by Tom Rack

Agreed by All members

### **9 Any Other Business**

Nothing was raised under any other business.

### **10 Date of next AGM**

The next AGM would be held in 12 months' time.