**ADEC (Babylon ARTS) EGM 10th February 2021 at 6.30pm**

**MINUTES**

The meeting was held remotely by zoom due to the Covid-19 Pandemic under an approval granted by the Charity Commission under section 105 of the Charities Act 2011 and began at 6.30pm

**Present**

**Trustees**

Linda McCord (In the Chair)

Ted Coney; lain Downey (Company Secretary); Stuart Green, Catherine Harvey; David Johnson; Teresa Veith.

**Members**

Gigi Downey; Simon Gilligan; Jacqueline Price, Elizabeth Sayers; and Sue Wilkins

**Staff**

Claire Somerville (Chief Executive); Alice Cramer & Liz Falconbridge

**Apologies were received from**

Diana Birley; Patricia Green; Linda Holland; Mike Macey; Allison Morris and Al Tyrrell.

**Introduction by Chair**

The Chair referred to the reasons for the calling of the EGM as detailed on the agenda. The primary purposes were to approve the accounts for 2019/20 which, due to the Covid pandemic, had not been available for the AGM and to consider changes to the constitution. An update on our work would also be given.

**Accounts for 2019/20**

TV referred to an income of £589000 as against £449000 from the previous year. This had been mainly due to the hard work of the staff in obtaining additional grant income and increasing turnover. There were also small surpluses both on unrestricted income and restricted income of approx £5000 and £74000 respectively. TV outlined the differences between restricted and unrestricted funds. The year 2019/20 had only been marginally impacted by the Covid pandemic and this would have much more of an impact on the 2020/21 accounts. She referred however to us having been able to access funding through the job retention scheme and emergency grant funds for the current year. She praised Mike Macey for his determination in successfully and finally resolving the long standing defined benefit

pensions matter with the LGSS and expressed her thanks to CS and the staff for their work and sound financial management. TV proposed formal approval of the 2019/20 accounts and also recommended the appointment of Lovewell Blake as the Independent Examiners of the accounts.

The Chair invited questions but no questions were raised. She supported TV’s remarks regarding the staff.

SG seconded the above proposal

**RESOLVED (1)** that the accounts for the financial year 2019/20 be formally approved and

 **(2)** that Lovewell Blake be appointed as independent Examining and Reporting Accountants for the 2020/21 accounts.

**Constitutional Changes**

ID outlined the proposed changes to the constitution which currently mainly dated from 1994 and which were aimed at bringing it up to date and removing the anomaly, which he believed had never been intended, that strictly trustees could not purchase anything from the charity. He outlined the other main proposed changes which generally followed the Charity Commission template save that it had also been decided to provide for a maximum term of service for trustees (9 years) and as Chair (six years). The members would, however retain the power to override such limits if they felt it desirable. The changes would, if approved, at this meeting, need to be submitted to the Charity Commission for approval.

In response to SG, ID and CS referred to the definition of member of the charity, which they confirmed was different from the paid membership and ID confirmed that a register showing the members of the charity was now being kept. CS referred to the intention to produce a simple form of application for membership. Proposed by the Chair and seconded by TC and

**RESOLVED** that the changes to the constitution be approved by the members and submitted to the Charity Commission.

**Appointment of New Trustee**

The Chair reported that the trustees recommended the appointment of Al Tyrrell as a trustee. In response to SG, CS referred to the trustees’ wish to broaden board membership, outlined Al’s connection with Babylon Arts and that they were a Theatre Maker, writer and teacher and, as a younger person, would bring a fresh viewpoint to the Board. The Chair confirmed that the Board kept its make-up continually under review.

Proposed by TC and seconded by SG and

**RESOLVED** that Al Tyrell be formally appointed a trustee of ADeC/Babylon Arts.

**Update on Areas of Work**

The Chair gave an overview of the work since the last AGM. She reported that we had been successful in gaining Culture Recovery Fund monies to support our work through the pandemic and beyond and that this would particularly go towards work

on Accessibility/Disability provision, Diversity and Inclusion and Audience Development and Engagement.

She also referred to projects/exhibitions such as All Together Now (work of a postcard exhibition created during the first lockdown); Somewhere in Ely (which included local people making clay models) led by local artist Louise Beale; The Dance We Made (Dancers creating a brand new dance in 2 hours, based on the experiences of people that they spoke to on the day); Window Wanderland, where 130 households took part and Alphabet of Ely window displays inspired by the animals, events and plants defining Ely. She also noted the Helen Murray exhibition ‘Settlement in Search of Home’ which unfortunately had to be curtailed in November. CS advised that the exhibition was still in place in the Gallery in case it became possible to open again and that there was a short video of it on the website. She also referred to the Arts Council funded Young Curators project and to the appointments of Sid White-Jones and Olu Taiwo to the posts and that they would be curating their own ideas in the Gallery (circumstances permitting). Sid’s project is ‘’No Frost at Night’’, inspired by Betty Mann’s Soham weather diaries and specifically her 1963 diary and that he had received 120 responses to his call for submissions, from which 5 artista would be chosen to exhibit hopefully from 16th April. Olu had titled his project ‘’I Matter’’ and had originally put forward the idea of a city wide festival which, although exciting, had unfortunately to be reined back and he now planned an exhibition in mid May. He had received 78 submissions and 15 relevant works would be exhibited, Covid permitting.

CS also advised that exhibitions would be scanned in high resolution to enable them to be viewed via a virtual online ‘tour’ and that it was additionally planned to hold outdoor theatre events in the summer; Shakespeare in the Jubilee Gardens in June and July and an event in the Cathedral grounds in September. She had also met with the new committee for Ely Arts Festival to explore possibilities during the Festival in late June/early July. MarketPlace team were putting together a new project to address loneliness, which had government support and would be putting out a call for commissions later in the year on an environmental theme; a theme which would also feature in future projects.

As regards the Cinema, it was the intention to reopen as soon as circumstances allow it to be opened safely and successfully. She reported that the Cinema had been rebranded as ‘Babylon Cinema’. CS was also looking into a second Drive In Cinema event.

TC referred to Somewhere in Ely and wondered about what was happening with the second artist Mike Hartley. CS confirmed that his steam apparatus built from recycled materials had been constructed and it was hoped to include it in the Arts Festival and build an event around it. LS asked whether there was a definition of ‘’West Anglia.’’ CS advised that there was no formal definition but that this was a neat and tidy way to refer to that part of our working area, inspired by the College of West Anglia’s use of the term. LS felt that it was important to get the right areas which hung and worked together and that it was important to note where communities looked to for identity. CS confirmed that MarketPlace took place in the formal Fenland DC and old Forest Heath DC areas.

The Chair thought that the consideration of communities would form part of the audience development work. LS also wondered how visitors to the Gallery were actually counted. CS confirmed that this was via a clicker system on the counter, which had replaced the previous unreliable door clicker system.

The Chair thanked all attendees and closed the meeting at 7.10pm