

## **Folk Camps Council Meeting**

29 March 2020

Convened by video conference due to Coronavirus pandemic meaning face to face meeting prohibited by government advice.

Present:

- Marcus de Frettes – chair
- Patrick Self (Vice Chair)
- Judith Jenkins (Company Secretary)
- Rebecca Boram
- Anne Guthrie
- Mel Horton
- Anthony Keen
- Sue Malleson
- Paul Weir

Agenda:

- Minutes of 23 November 2019 Council meeting
- Minutes of 25 March 2020 meeting
- AGM minutes - verification
- Company Accounts - in lieu of EGM
- Matters arising to be deferred
- Contractors replacement contracts
- Folk Camps Party Band

### **1. Topic: Previous Meetings Minutes**

**Decision:** Approval of 23 November 2019 Council Meeting minutes: Marcus Proposed approval, Paul Seconded, unanimous approval.

**Action:** Marcus to print, sign, scan and send to Kerstin to store electronically.

Minutes of 25 March 2020 Meeting: Not all Council have seen or reviewed these. Approval postponed.

**Action:** Patrick to ensure all updates are made to minutes and re-circulate prior to next Council meeting.

AGM minutes from 23 Nov 2019. Paul proposed approval by Council, pending approval by membership at 2020 AGM. Agreed unanimously. However, post meeting, Kerstin Jewell (Admin Manager, not at this meeting) pointed out some changes to be made, and Council agreed these amendments need to be made and minutes then re-circulated.

**Action:** Patrick to ensure updates are made to minutes and re-circulate prior to next Council meeting.

## **2. Topic: Company Accounts**

The EGM intended to approve the updated accounts was postponed due to Coronavirus pandemic, therefore the membership cannot approve. However, submission to Companies House is required by law prior to any possible re-scheduling of the EGM for the governing members.

The accounts have already been circulated to the governing members. No comments have been received from the membership on the accounts. The proxy votes received clearly show approval for the revised accounts.

**Decision:** Paul Weir proposed that Council approves the revised FCS accounts for submission to Companies House pending approval by the membership. Judith Seconded, unanimous approval.

**Action:** Marcus to liaise with Kerstin and Accountant to submit accounts to Companies House.

## **3. Topic: FCS Contractors**

Discussion on best use of Folk Camps Society's reserves, reducing FCS outgoings as much as possible, while retaining our contractors, their goodwill and loyalty, and paying them in a way that is fair and just.

3 of the 4 contractors are on fixed term contracts with 3-month notice clauses in their contracts, Kerstin is now on a rolling 1-month contract. Therefore, during the notice period for each contractor FCS must pay the usual contractual rate.

Prior to the meeting, Paul had circulated a draft of a potential letter to be sent to Contractors regarding notice on current contract and information on new contract to be issued when current contract ends.

**Decision:** Marcus proposed resolution: To give three months' notice to contractors of termination on 30 June 2020, to be replaced with revised contracts which will include facility to vary the terms of payment by mutual agreement. This to include that if 2020 summer camps go ahead FCS commits to continuing on current basis of payment until 30 September 2020, but if camps are cancelled it goes on to hourly pay with no minimum income guarantee. Anthony seconded, Unanimous agreement.

**Action:** Patrick and Paul to work on how to give notice to the contractors and Patrick to carry it out. (This action was agreed after the meeting).

## **4. Topic: Folk Camps Party Band**

Discussion on level of Folk Camps Society's actual reserves.

**Action:** Marcus to bring the QuickBooks position up to date to show the exact financial position.

Discussion on Party Band – following the discussion paper circulated in advance of the meeting which posed fundamental questions:

**Would Folk Camps benefit from the continuation of the Party Band under its name?**

If the answer is **no** then the question is simply:

### **When should the Folk Camps Party Band project end?**

If the answer is **yes** then we need to answer the question (which applies to a post-covid world):

### **To what extent (if any) should the Band be funded from reserves in subsequent years?**

and in view of the current crisis:

### **To what extent (if any) should the Band be funded from reserves beyond the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 breakpoint?**

and in view of those answers the final question is:

### **How should we proceed with the project within these constraints and deal with any funding shortfall?**

Points raised in a wide-ranging discussion included:

- Membership is divided in opinion of the band: some would be very disappointed if the band ends, others think it was a bad idea for a number of reasons. We need to take these opposing views into account.
- Need more transparency of criteria for band membership.
- Need transparency of future funding.
- We need to minimise outgoings in this year due to the Covid-19 crisis
- Some existing bands would promote Folk Camps and we are not using them to full advantage.
- The members of the band have worked very hard, and we need to acknowledge this publicly.
- The band has achieved a phenomenal amount in the couple of years that it has been active.
- Festival bookers are excited by the band, want repeat bookings and to offer higher profile slots.
- The workshops at recent festivals run by the band provide an excellent taster of Folk Camps and are well received by attendees.
- There is a long-term opportunity from the band that we could leverage in a better way.
- The band has achieved high profile festival appearances; while many (potentially all) of these events have been postponed from 2020, most are expected to occur in 2021 with the same high-profile slots.
- Folk Camps can still own the band “brand” and the marketing opportunities if some level of funding continues.
- There was never an intention to continue to fund at the previous levels beyond the initial 3-year contract.
- There is a breakpoint in the contract of 31 March 2020, only intended to be used in the case of poor summer 2020 bookings and a difficult financial situation. However, this could be invoked due to the Covid-19 crisis.
- The scale of funding has caused resentment among some members.

- There is a perception to some members that it is an exclusive club – not open to all, despite the open recruitment process in Autumn 2019.
- Some members are unhappy that professional musicians in the band are paid, which goes against some views that Folk Camps is a completely voluntary organisation. (However, there are different views in the membership and in Council as to what people should or should not be financially rewarded for relating to Folk Camps).
- The party band's gigs compete with some Folk Camps events, though the extent of this is open to debate.
- Are there H+S issues? – e.g. band too big for some stages, too loud for children on stage. These factors can be addressed by H+S risk assessment.

**Decision:** Paul proposed the following resolution, seconded by Marcus: "In the light of our current financial crisis, Council to invoke the breakpoint in the Party Band contract. Situation to be reviewed later in the year. Council to signal commitment in principle to offer up to a maximum of £6,000 ad hoc to subsidise the scheduled and postponed Party Band festival gigs in 2020 and 2021." Agreed unanimously.

**Decision:** Marcus Proposed, Anthony Seconded following resolution: "That FCS makes no further commitment on investment funding for Party Band, but that it could be considered for low level seed funding from the development fund". Agreed unanimously.

**Action:** Marcus + Paul to prepare letter to send to Jenny re Council decision on party band, to be sent by end of 31 March.

End of video meeting.

#### **Subsequent Decisions, recorded here:**

NB resolutions / decisions were discussed by Council in the days after the meeting on Slack (messaging application):

**Decision:** Resolution 1. Proposed by Marcus, Seconded by Sue: "During the Covid-19 crisis, where it is prudent to do so, we should carry over deposits with regular suppliers rather than ask for immediate refunds for the sake of good supplier relations." Agreed unanimously.

**Decision:** Decision made to not advertise the Admin Manager contract during the Covid-19 crisis, but to delay this until a suitable time – we need continuity at the moment.

**Decision:** Resolution 2. Proposed by Patrick, Seconded by Marcus. "For Kerstin's contract (Interim Admin Manager), we give 1 month notice NOW to allow us to move to "hours worked" contract for Kerstin from start of May." Agreed unanimously.

**End of minutes.**