

Unlock Democracy Council Meeting Minutes

15 May 2021 at 2pm

Held on Zoom

Present: Jessica Metheringham (Chair), Catherine Bearder, Marcus Cain, Stephen Carter, Helen Close, Ian Driver, John Franglen, Stephen Gosling, Stuart Hill, Peter Hirst, Tom Pratt, Vicky Seddon, Sean Shore, Jacob Webb, Luke Williams

Staff: Tom Brake, Grace Barnett, Shaun Roberts

Apologies: None

Minutes, matters arising, dates

Minutes

Some amendments to the draft Council Minutes 23 January 2021 were noted: spelling of Peter Hirst's surname, Tom Pratt was present and the meeting was held on Zoom.

The draft minutes will be amended and the minutes circulated.

The Management Board meetings were all noted and the draft minutes of the 7th April 2021 were confirmed. These will be circulated to the Management Board.

Matters arising

Under matters arising relating to the Draft Management Board Minutes for the 7th April, Catherine confirmed little progress had been made on looking at Unlock Democracy's constitution. The intention is for this work to be complete in time for the AGM in November. Catherine will push the matter on Loomio.

Dates

The dates of the next Council meetings have been set as the 4 September 2021, AGM on 20 November 2021 and 22 January 2022.

Finance Update

TB highlighted that income for 20/21 was slightly up on the budget and expenditure for 20/21 was slightly down on the budget in the Profit and Loss statement from year end March 2021.

TB flagged that a conscious decision had been taken to run Unlock Democracy at a deficit for the next 3 years. This is financially appropriate providing the Grays Inn Road (GIR) project is completed within the next 3 years.

TB to clarify whether figures now in the accounts package are those in the budget 21/22 to ensure P+L, Balance Sheet tally with original budget. TB to action.

In future the most recent P+L and Balance sheet and three year rolling budget will be provided for consideration at each Council meeting (plus any other ad-hoc papers specifically requested). TB to action.

The Profit and Loss and Balance Sheet for February and March, Q4 Management Accounts and the current 3 year budget were presented.

Rodell Update

The Rodell AGM minutes were circulated during the meeting.

The GIR project is now progressing after initial concerns about securing the loan.

A Lessons Learned document was produced covering the GIR and Cynthia Street projects. This document is for Rodell Board members. However SC welcomes any comments from Council members.

Updates from staff

Director's report

During the discussion about TB's report a number of points/actions were raised:

Market spare office space in the Corsham Street offices from July. TB to action.

Check whether Unlock Democracy can advertise on facebook through Justgiving/Virginmoney. TB to action.

A process for deciding whether a speaker should be invited to speak at an Unlock Democracy event should be drawn up. This will be completed before a decision is taken to host any controversial speakers. TB to draft.

It was agreed that training for Management Board that was staff-related will be provided for management board members but that equality and diversity training will be provided for all council members (in the most efficient and cost-effective way). TB to action.

It was agreed that where relevant, Northern Ireland parties such as the Alliance would be involved in Unlock Democracy activities/campaigns etc. TB to action.

Membership Update

GB gave an update on events, postal mailings, membership-related matters (reactivations, members' upgrades etc.), financial reporting and financial reconciliation processes.

Campaigns Update

SR first updated Council members on the largest current project which has been replacing our old campaign system/Customer Relationship Management system with Engaging Networks. He then gave a campaigns update on current campaigns, supporter numbers, the website, joint-campaigning, recent surveys and a local groups' pilot.

Delivering Unlock Democracy's Strategy

Some ideas about how Council members could help deliver Unlock Democracy's strategy were discussed.

Other ideas were put forward, these will be captured in a document by GB and SR.

AOB

There was none.