



Friends of Ramsbottom Civic Hall

Special General Meeting at the Civic Hall on 1st August 2024 at 7pm Minutes

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1.	Attendance – 22, Apologies – 7	
2.	<p>Introduction - by FORCH Chair, Eddie Jones</p> <p>This Special General Meeting, had been set up following a review group meeting request in order to present the available options for the way ahead for FORCH.</p> <p>Eddie offered the opportunity for David Catterall, Bury Council’s Head of Commercial Services, to present his paper, which included options/possibilities for the future of FORCH.</p>	
3.	<p>Options for FORCH</p> <p>David presented his paper, with a statement of Bury Council’s position re Ramsbottom Civic Hall. It also included the future options for FORCH, a Hall organisational structure proposal from Mark Griffiths and other suggestions from FORCH Review Group members.</p> <p>The presentation via <i>Powerpoint</i> overheads was based on David’s detailed briefing notes, which had been circulated to the FORCH committee prior to the meeting. The briefing notes had also been printed out and were available to the meeting. A digital copy of the notes would be emailed to the group.</p> <p>The Three Options re FORCH’s Plan for the Future:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to become the operator of Ramsbottom Civic Hall, 2. to operate as a volunteer organisation to support the Hall 3. to maintain its current position and work with the Council who retain responsibility for the Hall. <p>Bury Council, with a lack of funds available, was maintaining its position of seeking to find a community model for the operation of the hall. Meanwhile the Council will continue to be responsible for some operations listed in the proposed organisational structure eg the maintenance of the building and running the booking system.</p> <p>Mark was able to see adjustments to the proposed structure being possible to make progress on the support for the venue.</p> <p>Discussion</p> <p>David’s presentation was discussed by the group although it was mentioned that two of the supporters of the operations of the Hall were not present.</p>	JS

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<p><u>Option 1</u> for FORCH to operate the hall was not favoured, the financial implications not being met.</p> <p><u>Option 2</u> for FORCH to develop as a volunteer organisation would involve changes to the structure of FORCH which would need to be worked through.</p> <p><u>Option 3</u> to maintain FORCH in its current format was effectively to maintain the status quo, the preferred option for the officers of FORCH.</p>	
<p>4. FORCH’s Plan for the Foreseeable Future</p> <p>A vote was taken and the decision was made to maintain FORCH in its current format (option 3).</p> <p>Options 1 and 2 remain as ambitions to consider for the development of FORCH. Discussion around them was brief and without much enthusiasm.</p> <p>Further discussion followed on the means to enlarge and progress the interests of FORCH in Ramsbottom:</p> <p>Suggestions included</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulation of a letter/document to better inform the many volunteer organisations in the community and to seek to engage them, involving all community groups and the many other interested parties. • Helen Tomlinson, Bury VCFA’s Chief Officer, offered to use her database to offer the means to ensure this, including a “Connection” meeting which could promote a larger involvement for the benefit of FORCH and the Hall. <p>A draft of the letter/document would be circulated to those present. This was welcomed as an opportunity to allow wider input before its circulation to the wider community.</p> <p>No dates were specified other than a desire that the document should not be delayed. There were welcome offers of help with hand-distributing the letter/document in parts of the town centre.</p>	<p>EJ, JS</p>

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