

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Date:		Tuesday 16 June 2026
Place:		Virtually via Teams
Times:		0915 - 1000
Attended:		Aida Esposito, Alex Welsh, Alison Dewey, Ally McConnell, Ann Wishart, Anne Fountain, Beth Goodman, Bobsie Robinson, Caroline O'Neill, Clare Hubery, Dan Buck, Diana Houghton, Donna Pentelow, Geoff Caine, Grant Taylor, Hagan Lewisman, Heidi Bellamy, Iain Varah, Jo Ireland, Joe Guiton, Jon Finch, Jonathan Cochrane, Julie Russell, Katie DeJoux, Karen McFarland, Leanne Buchan, Lisa Howarth, Lynne Minett, Maria Cotton, Mark Allman, Max May, Mel Brain, Paul Cowell, Paul McLoughlin, Paula Redway, Penny Greenwood-Pearsons, Polly Hamilton, Robert Campbell, Rosemary Pennington, Ryan Ansell, Salla Virman, Sarah Glynn, Shane Williams Sue Thiedeman, Tanya Wilcock, Thorsten Dreyer, Tim Bryan, Tom Alexander, Tom Gubbins, Tom Wong, Val Birchall, Vincent Paliczka, Zsuzsi Lindsay
Apologies Received		Matt Partridge, Jayne Knights, Ian Jones
Item No.	Item Description	Relevant business considered, facts noted, decisions taken and actions agreed
1.	Welcome and Minutes from AGM 2025	53 CLOA members participated in the AGM via Teams, which exceeded the quorate requirement for a minimum number of 25. Further delegates joined during the course of the conference, including speakers, showcase presenters and strategic partners bringing it to a total of 93 throughout the course of the event.
2.	Chair of CLOA Annual Report	Donna Pentelow reflected on her first year in office, the full report is available here and accompanying presentation here . Highlights included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reflection on a year characterised by uncertainty, including geopolitical instability, Local Government Reorganisation and rapid developments in AI. • CLOA has continued to support members through this context, articulating clear policy positions across libraries, sport and active wellbeing, LGR, museums and data, providing a coherent national voice. • The Executive delivered a wide programme of activity, including targeted peer networks and roundtables on Cultural Strategies Think Kit, Inclusive Culture, Martyn's Law, Local Cultural Renaissance, Visitor Levy, Pride in

		<p>Place, and the LGR & Devolution network. The Swim Alliance representation also continued.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLOA launched the new Aspiring Leaders Award and refreshed the fortnightly bulletin with a more accessible design. • National advocacy remained strong, with ministerial meetings, contributions to the LGA Culture, Sport & Tourism Board, the Arts Council England Review, and ongoing work on cultural and active wellbeing data systems. • CLOA’s influence grew through national networks, including the National Alliance for Cultural Services, the Active Wellbeing Leadership Network, and cross-border collaboration with Welsh partners. • The Chair thanked Executive Members, Vice Chairs, the EDI Champion, the Treasurer, outgoing Executive Member Mark Allman, and noted that this AGM marks Heidi Bellamy’s final meeting, recognising her significant contribution to CLOA’s smooth running. • Thanks were also extended to sponsors Playfootball, Blake Morgan and Bigwave for their continued support. • In closing, the Chair reflected on a challenging but rewarding first year, welcomed the findings of the Stephen King Membership Review, and looked ahead to another successful year. <p>The minutes of the AGM held on 18 June 2025 were agreed as a true and accurate record. (25 ‘Yes’ responses via the voting poll and Chat)</p>
3.	Honorary Treasurers Report and Budget for 26/27	<p>Honorary Treasurer Vince Paliczka gave a report; a full version is available on the website here.</p> <p>Key points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The accounts for the year ending 31 March 2025 were published on the CLOA website ahead of the meeting. • VP advised that the final accounts show a surplus of The final accounts show a surplus of £1,866, which is £3,871 higher than estimated when setting last year’s budget. <p>Key contributors included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increased sponsorship (+£4,760) ○ A decrease in membership income (–£1,127) ○ Additional administration payments linked to increased sponsorship and membership bonuses (–£1,596) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks were extended to sponsors, including Principal Sponsors XN Leisure and Playfootball and Associate Sponsors Big Wave Marketing and Blake Morgan.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenditure was tightly controlled, with only minor deviations from plan. The Building Capacity Project was completed and will be reviewed to assess impact. • Net assets now stand at £55,086, up from £53,220 the previous year. • Membership remains stable, with a continued shift toward corporate membership. This shift increases income and broadens officer access to CLOA activity. • The reserves policy remains in operation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 50% protected for administration ○ 50% available to further CLOA objectives ○ The Chair retains delegated authority to spend up to £2,000 on CLOA activities, though no separate budget line has been created for this. • The 2026/27 budget is prudent, adjusting for known risks. The most significant change is the loss of long term major sponsor XN Leisure, creating a structural deficit of just over £1,000. • There is no proposed increase in membership fees for next year. • VP thanked Heidi Bellamy and Anelli Bryant for their support. <p>VP proposed that members accept the final accounts for 2025/26 and agree the proposed budget for current financial year.</p> <p>The accounts were accepted by the members in attendance (38 'Yes' responses via the voting poll and Chat) and the budget for 26/27 was approved (42 'Yes' responses via the voting poll and Chat).</p>
4.	Update from the EDI Champion	Zsuzsi Lindsay, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champion, gave a report on progress against the EDI action plan which is available on the website here .
5.	Aspiring Leaders awards	<p>The award winners were announced and congratulated:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mehila Hussain-Marchbank – Winner, Culture, Creativity & Heritage <p>Recognised for transforming the Roman Baths into an inclusive, wellbeing-centred cultural institution through co-creation with under-represented communities and innovative heritage-for-health programmes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abul Kashim – Winner, Sustainability Award <p>Recognised for embedding sustainability across Camden’s library services, leading major decarbonisation projects and reimagining libraries as dynamic, community-centred Green Library Hubs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoe Loake – Winner, EDI Award

		<p>Recognised for expanding inclusive, community-centred cultural programmes across Buckinghamshire’s libraries and championing disability inclusion and representation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nathania Minard – Winner, Leisure & Physical Activity Award <p>Recognised for delivering inclusive play and physical activity programmes that strengthen wellbeing and social connection, shaped by her lived experience and commitment to accessible provision.</p> <p>The winners will receive one year complimentary membership of CLOA.</p> <p>Ryan Ansell and Tom Oliver were Highly Commended.</p> <p>All six will be invited to present cases studies at a roundtable in September 26.</p> <p>Action – Heidi Bellamy to set up membership for winners and liaise with Zsuzsi Lindsay regarding the outline for a roundtable.</p>
6.	Award of Honorary membership	<p>One person was awarded Honorary Membership, which seeks to recognise individuals who are making or who have made a significant contribution to the development of the cultural and leisure disciplines nationally and/or internationally.</p> <p>Mark Allman was nominated by Julie Russell.</p> <p>Action – Heidi Bellamy to formally advise of bestowment of this Honorary award.</p>
7.	Appointment of Executive Committee – Honorary Secretary	<p>Mark Allman confirmed the appointment of the CLOA Executive; as no more than the required number of people were nominated, all candidates were automatically appointed.</p> <p>New members of the Committee were warmly welcomed:- Clare Hubery, Polly Hamilton, Salla Virman, Diana Houghton, Aida Esposito and Paul Cowell.</p> <p>Full list of those appointed to the Executive Committee.</p> <p>He also advise that Iain Varah would be assuming responsibility for the role of Honorary Secretary.</p>
8.	AOB	<p>Donna Pentelow formally congratulated Iain Varah on being awarded an MBE in the King’s Birthday Honours 2026 for services to Public Libraries, Culture and Leisure.</p> <p>No other business was forthcoming.</p>