



Minutes of AGM held on November 23rd 2025 at Royal Russell School (Conference Room within the Performing Arts Building) at 16:00

1. Welcome in attendance

Richard Deering (Chair and Minutes) Arun Chatterjee (Vice Chair) Chris Hutchinson (Minutes) Joyce Goodman, Judith Dunworth, Trixie Muirhead, Vamshikrishna Vishnudas, Ophelia Gordon, Barry Nicholson

2. Apologies

Apologies received from Lucy Rodgers and Debjani Datta

3. Chris Harman

Chair paid respects to Chris Harman who passed earlier this year. He was described as a private but professional volunteer, involved in many organisations. He was a perfect CPAF volunteer, happy to take on any role and with delightful enthusiasm as demonstrated in a few memories shared by Chair. He was a valuable volunteer and all present expressed gratitude to his contributions to CPAF.

4. Barry proposes the **2024 AGM Minutes**, seconded by Chris

5. Matters Arising

- A) Chris will ask Annabel (commercial manager at Royal Russell) how many trophies we have and if she has been able to sell the unused trophies. Rachele and Richard will also investigate in their upcoming meeting with Annabel.
- B) Chair expressed interest in rekindling a previous idea from a few years ago: CPAF was approached by Neil Chandler who was interested in starting a concerto competition to mirror the Hastings piano competition. Judith let us know that Chrissy Kinsella has replaced Flynn Le Brocq who has resigned as Chief of LMP. The possibility of looking into forging a connection with the new chief to restart the competition was discussed. Judith will look into creating this connection.
- C) It was discussed that our social media can be used more advantageously and a plan of action needs to be made on making this possible. Although photos were taken at the last festival, they haven't been utilised in our social. Some ideas were shared: Vamshi suggested having a QR code and hiring someone to manage and help with social media page. Vamshi, Arun and Rachele are to work on website decluttering and organisation of social media.

4. Financial Report

Barry enquired: what is the financial direction of the festival? Is it our aim to break even? Chair explained that the festival can keep running at a loss. However, some ideas to boost finances were shared:

- A) An admission cost at Royal Russell Gala Concert was discussed, Chris and Ophelia agreed. In previous years, most of the losses of the festival is from Fairfield Halls Gala concert. Chris suggested ten pounds per ticket and Joyce suggested charging less for children. Vamshi suggested being sure to reflect the effort going into to event in the ticket price and pricing seating differently.
- B) Vamshi also suggested approaching sponsors to be included in our programme to boost finances. Chris said it would be possible to have a local business hold a stand at the festival in the school. Another suggestion from Vamshi was to reach out to Darbar festival and Midpar fest to support us.



- C) Vamshi bought up the subject of refreshments sales and Chris explains that we aren't able to break even. After some discussion it was decided we must advertise the cafe better and this will also be helped by the change of entry location.

Chair enquired Chris's progress in looking into his connection with NatWest bank to support us.

Chair expressed his concerns that Dance adjudicator has not yet sent her invoice for her work in May, despite many follow up requests.

Barry proposes the financial report, seconded by Chris.

4. **Matthews Hanton was approved by all** to continue to work as auditors. Proposed by Chris, seconded by Barry.

5. Trixie proposed the **chair report**, seconded by Ophelia.

6. Constitution modification

Chris explained that the current constitution states a Trustee cannot carry on after three, three-year terms with no involvement for 12 months afterwards. Chris felt this is unnecessary and could potentially leave CPAF in a difficult situation. Chris suggested holding a vote to reenter at the AGM, rather than requiring they leave. It's decided that clause 16, point 1 should be modified by removing the second sentence. Chris is to check for any further links in the constitution that may need editing as a result of this change. Everyone agrees with the proposed changes.

7. Trustees update

- A) Everyone acknowledged Flynn Le Brocq's resignation as Trustee.
B) Everyone acknowledged Louise Rodgers' resignation as Trustee.
C) Chris has come to end of his second term and stood for reelection. Vamshi proposed, seconded by Arun.
D) Everyone accepted the two new Trustees: Pushpa Nagarajan. Trixie proposed, seconded by Barry
E) Ophelia Gordon. Arun proposed, seconded by Vamshi. Ophelia will endeavour to make connections to local schools to help support the festival.
F) Richard to stay on as Chair. Chair shared the difficulty he had with this year's festival, which is outlined in his Chair Report. He shared he doesn't want to be in this position again during the next dance festival. Arun and Chris agreed it would be suitable not to allow this to happen again. Chris shared there has never been anything other than full support for Richard's position at Chair. All agreed there was a communication breakdown, and acknowledged Richard's feeling that the response from Trustees wasn't supportive. Chris emphasised the unequivocal support for Richard as Chair felt by all members and Trustees. He clarified that as one organisation we must have one process going forward. Chris proposed and it is seconded by everyone.

11. 2026 Festival and Gala Concert

- A) It was clarified by Chris that it will be possible for us to hold the piano section in the Great Hall due to a request from South Asian Dance section to move to the PAC.
B) The current numbers for the festival are looking sparse in many sections, but there is still a week left until the deadline. Everyone agreed to reach out to more potential applicants.
C) Ophelia suggested the addition of a singer-songwriter class to syllabus in 2027. The option to apply this year through a different class has been circulated. We could potentially provide a basic drum kit and three amps, provided by Royal Russel and Chris will look into this. Or we will hire them. Ophelia and Rachele to contact local schools to reach out about singer songwriter interests.



- D) The importance of crowd control for the festival was discussed. It was decided to use Wristbands to be received at sign in for parents and contributors and to use a map.

12. Presidents and Vice-Presidents

Everyone agreed that the Presidents can continue and Chris will approach the town hall to reaffirm the connection with the Mayor. Proposed by Chris, seconded by Arun.

13) Any other business

- A) The new design of the Syllabus was appreciated.
B) Vamshi mentioned a possible clash of South Asian Music (Carnatic and Hindustani) with an exam taking place on 31st January.

Meeting ended at 18:03 following thanks to Chris and his Royal Russell colleagues for the hospitality.

Post-meeting note:

Referring to point **9. Constitution amendment**

Please refer to “Amendment to the Constitution” document on the website