

Cromwell Association Council – notes on decisions taken due to Coronavirus situation

After consideration it was decided, and agreed by all, that the Council meeting on 17th March should not go ahead due to the developing Coronavirus crisis.

I had a telephone conversation with the Charity Commission on 13th March to advise that the Association was proposing to postpone the AGM and a potential re-arranged date of 5th September would be outside the provisions of our constitution. The response was re-assuring that it was perfectly acceptable and the Trustees had to do what was in the best interests of the charity and keep a record of all decisions made.

Council was contacted by email on 15th March outlining the position and asking for members opinions on several key issues:

- Decision to postpone the AGM with a possible re-arranged date on 5th September, the need to mail the whole membership, and to provisionally book a room in Cambridge for 5th September.
- To defer a decision on a memorial panel in a window at St Giles' Cripplegate
- To delegate decisions on membership leaflet to officers and to comment on drafts when received from Maxine and Simon
- To delegate decision on the Schools' Conference to Serrie
- Separately Geoffrey asked for members opinion on his recommendation to defer a decision on the re-investment of the Deposit Account.

Council agreed by responses by email to all of the recommendations made.

Subsequent actions taken:

- Members advised by both emails where possible, and in addition by hard copy mailing, of the decisions re the AGM. The cost of the hard copy mailing was approx. £450. A room at Cambridge Central Library has been provisionally booked for 5th September.
- St Giles' informed of decision to defer
- Maxine and Simon are progressing the leaflet with input from President and Chair
- Serrie has postponed the Schools event until 2021
- Deposit Account will not be re-invested until we have a better idea of our financial situation later in the year.

Should also note that the one member of Council not contactable by email, John Newland, was contacted by 'phone and was in agreement with all the recommendations made.

What the current situation does highlight is the need to adjust our constitution in two respects.

1. The section on Notice of meetings, para 10, should allow for members to be contacted by email, and therefore remove the need to mail them in hard copy. Wording needs to be carefully considered, and members re-assured that it is our intention to continue to use hard copy in our two planned mailings each year, but when circumstances require either a cancellation or an additional meeting, email would be used. The onus has to be on the member to ensure that they have provided us with their current email address.
2. We need to make provision for Trustees to be able, when circumstances require, to be able to make decisions by means other than a physical meeting (séance perhaps). Again needs careful consideration.

If possible, the changes to be made at the earliest opportunity.

John Goldsmith
Chair

29/03/2020