

## **Friends of Stirchley Library (FoSL) AGM - Sunday 13th April 2025**

Attendees:

Committee members: Theresa Summerfield, Mark Summerfield, Sarah Barton, Rebecca Shales, Daniel Shakespeare, Nicki Allen.

Sandra Cooper & Phil Banting also in attendance.

Apologies:

Jen Dixon, Jessie Cape, Kate Spencer-Bennett

### **TS - welcome & election of committee roles.**

- TS re-elected as chair
- NA has been filling in as secretary since last secretary stopped responding to contact - NA elected as secretary
- RS re-elected as PR / Marketing officer
- DS re-elected as Treasurer
- JD continues as Volunteer Coordinator (not a committee role)

### **DS - Treasurer's Report**

- DS presented the Treasurer's report, including:
- The previous FoSL funding received in 2023/4 was able to be extended to pay for the Volunteer Coordinator (VC) to continue with essential duties only into 2024, until a new National Lottery funding bid by SB was successful. Most of this new grant will be for the VC salary.
- The largest other expense is public liability insurance. We might be able to reduce this by looking for quotes from other providers.
- SC suggested that FoSL might be able to access insurance through BCC or through some other shared community organisation & will enquire at the Neighbourhood Forum. PB asked if all friends of libraries groups could share this expense, particularly as BLL has encouraged more of these groups to be established in Birmingham.

### **TS - Review of Activities and Volunteer Update**

- FoSL have been active this year campaigning alongside Birmingham Loves Libraries and participating in community activities such as Heritage Open Day, Love your Library day, the River Rea walk.
- FoSL continues to facilitate Lego Club & Jigsaw Club, Tuesday coffee mornings.
- FoSL volunteers allow the library to remain open during Tuesday and some Saturday lunchtimes, as well as all day Wednesday in collaboration with Stirchley Art Room.
- We are considering other activities for Saturdays - including a nature club which could make use of the library garden (in collaboration with/ permission from Fruit & Nut Village); TS is keen to start a sewing club which could also focus on repairing and making clothes.
- Regarding the development of the volunteer network - there was a period of relative inactivity whilst we were awaiting funding, during this time the VC focused mainly on the existing volunteers; currently we have 8-10 regular volunteers with more on the books but volunteering less often. We are looking to recruit more volunteers.
- JD has applied to be a member of Birmingham Voluntary Service Council (BVSC)
- *See attached notes from JD for further information volunteer updates - thanks to Jen for providing these.*

- SC spoke about this year's Heritage Week in September: Stirchley History Group are likely to be coordinating from Stirchley Baths or SCC (TBC). The theme this year is architecture - so SHG are interested in organising tours of the upstairs spaces of Stirchley Library, alongside other events.
- The break out sessions planned for this AGM will be re-organised for another date - possibly a Saturday to attract more attendees.
- TS shared an email received from Liz Parkes stating she was unable to attend this AGM, and that updated opening hours will be confirmed soon. Discussed sending the FoSL consultation response to Liz to make the FoSL position clear - an updated version would be appropriate.

#### **SB - update on Birmingham Loves Libraries campaigning**

- *See also separate notes provided by SB*
- Unionised library staff are currently in dispute with BCC regarding the current proposals; Neighbourhood Office staff are not happy either: only 40% of working time will be dedicated to library duties for staff of the new proposed 'Connected Communities' service.
- BCC are already preparing for these changes even though they are in dispute.
- The proposals represent a complete change to the role of librarians and libraries within the community - even though libraries are a statutory service.
- We do not know yet if Stirchley will be open on Saturdays - if it is to be closed on this day it will have a huge impact on children and families - in fact the entire consultation process has been centre on an adult perspective.
- The current judicial review urgently needs legal aid candidates from specific libraries, BLL social media is trying to encourage candidates to come forward for each of these libraries (FoSL members to share this plea urgently)
- Richard Parker (Mayor) has been contacted but no response has been received

#### **NA/SB - update on Stirchley Art Room activities**

- *See separate notes provided by SB*
- Wednesday Art Club sessions are particularly successful -always very busy, and a good demonstration of how the FoSL/SAR partnership is good for the local community and for the library.

#### **AOB**

- TS to check subscribers / email list

#### **Action Items**

- ☐ All FoSL members to urgently share the BLL social media post aiming to recruit library users to assist with the judicial review
- ☐ An updated response to the current context faced by Stirchley Library will be written by FoSL committee members and forwarded to Liz Parkes, Margaret Locke and others.
- ☐ Organisation of public consultation meeting - using the prompts suggested by JD to gather ideas from the public about the development of FoSL community activities