

**77th ISTD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2022, 11:00**

VIA ZOOM AND AT 22-26 PAUL STREET, LONDON EC2A 4QE

In attendance

Attended in person: Michael Elliott (Chair), Ginny Brown (CEO), Lynn Chandler, Juliet Diener, Tom Hobden, Jeremy Kean, Karen King, Gemma Matthews, Peter Meager, Nikki Stewart, Elisabeth Swan

Attended remotely online: Susan Garrard, Peter Hard, Susan James, Leanne Kirkham, Jill Knight, Keith-Derrick Randolph, Yvonne Taylor-Hill, Julia Watts,

Minute taker in attendance: Liam Mills

Apologies were received from: Nigel Kirk, Sho Shibata, Myra Tiffin

Welcome:

The Society's Chief Executive, Ginny Brown, welcomed those attending and informed them of some housekeeping points and of the voting process that would be followed during the meeting. Ms Brown then introduced the Society's Chair, Michel Elliott.

Item 1: Chair's welcome and address

Mr Elliott, on behalf of Board of Trustees, welcomed participants to the 2022 AGM and gave an address (see **Appendix 1** for a summary of Mr Elliott's address) before moving on to the agenda for the remainder of the meeting.

Item 2: Minutes of the last meeting held on 17 November 2021

The minutes of the previous AGM held on 17 November 2021 were received. There were no comments made. Mr Elliott approved the minutes.

Item 3: To vote on ordinary resolutions

Mr Elliott announced the resolutions to be voted on and the electronic ballot was opened and closed for each resolution in turn. For those attending the meeting in person, voting slips were distributed and collected. The resolutions were as follows:

- 3.1. To re-elect Lynn Chandler for a second term of office.
- 3.2. To re-elect Frederick Way for a second term of office.
- 3.3. To elect Juliet Diener.
- 3.4. To elect Peter Meager.

Item 4: Questions

No questions had been submitted in advance of the meeting. Attendees were invited to ask questions or make comments and were advised that a further invitation to ask questions or make comments would be made after Ms Brown had given the Chief Executive's address.

Item 5. Chief Executive address

Ms Brown delivered the Chief Executive Address (**Appendix 2**)

Item 6. 2021/22 Accounts presentation by Nikki Stewart, Director of Finance and Resources

Ms Stewart introduced herself and provided attendees with some information about herself, after which she presented the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 and the reports of the charity trustees and auditors. See **Appendix 3** for a summary of the presentation made by Ms Stewart.

Following the address and presentation, one question put forward at the meeting: **Yvonne Taylor-Hill** observed that in previous years, examiners and committee members that had passed away within the year were mentioned and recorded; and she asked why this had not been the case this year. In reply, Ms Brown apologised and said that this was not intentional, that the Society does make efforts to acknowledge those who pass away at the time, and that she would make a note in future that as a mark of respect they should also be acknowledged at the AGM. Ms Brown thanked Ms Taylor-Hill for raising the question.

Item 7. Voting results

Mr Elliott confirmed that the votes had been counted and announced the results as follows:

- 7.1. To re-appoint Lynn Chandler was elected for a second term of office.
- 7.2. To re-appoint Frederick Way was elected for a second term of office.
- 7.3. Juliet Diener was elected as trustee.
- 7.4. Peter Meager was elected as trustee.

Item 8. Any other business

No other business was brought to the meeting.

Meeting closed

Appendix 1: Summary of Chair's address given by Michael Elliott

Mr Elliott welcomed attendees to the ISTD's 77th Annual General Meeting and observed that it was the first hybrid AGM with attendees both in person at Paul Street and online.

Mr Elliott expressed admiration for the resilience, passion, commitment and achievement of the Society and its members, stressing the importance of heritage, belonging and respect.

Mr Elliott welcomed and thanked trustees, Ms Brown and her team, highlighting key activities which had been undertaken in the past year, which included:

- Emerging from pandemic.
- Support of ACE.
- Strategic Planning.
- Strengthening of our governance.

Mr Elliott highlighted key elements of the Strategic Plan as follows:

- Prioritization of Society's and Members' recovery.
- A drive to become more inclusive and to nurture the next generation.
- To continue to uphold the Society's commitment to excellence.

Mr Elliott described the key outcomes that were sought, as follows:

- More learners to benefit Members' recovery – the development of business guides, videos, and toolkits.
- To increase participation in training and examinations. Mr Elliott highlighted the introduction of Find your Dance Space.
- To grow a diverse and vibrant membership; evidence of which could be seen in, for example, the year's graduations.

Mr Elliott informed the meeting that pre-pandemic levels of activity had yet to return for Members and for the Society, and he referred to the significant economic challenges that were being faced by all businesses, communities, families, and individuals as the economy entered a possible long-term recession.

Mr Elliott confirmed the Society's continuing commitment to:

- Support Members' businesses.
- Build the Society's advocacy for dance education.
- Improve the Society's exam offer and its competitive delivery.
- Extend the Society's commercial activity through ISTD Enterprises.
- Expand the Society's ability to deliver training through ISTD Academy.
- Consolidate the Society's financial position and prepare for future growth.

Mr Elliott said the Society would continue to listen to its Members and find new ways of engaging with them to the mutual benefit of all, during challenging times. Mr Elliott concluded his address by saying that he looked forward to getting to know more members in the months and years to come.

Appendix 2: Chief Executive address given by Ginny Brown.

The 2021/22 year was another challenging period for the Society and our members as we continued to navigate the impact of the pandemic.

- The Society worked hard to help our members cope in extremely challenging circumstances as well as managing change in our own planning, finance and operations.
- We were greatly assisted in doing so by the receipt of a Cultural Recovery Fund grant of £426,000, for the period April-June 2021. This enabled the Society to
 - undertake a strategic review.
 - offer an intensive training programme to upskill teachers to reach new audiences.
 - convene an industry-wide racial diversity symposium.
 - and rebuild the Society's reserves.

The effect on our members' livelihoods has remained at the front of our minds and we responded by:

- Continuing to provide free member activities during 2021/22 and
- Granting bursaries to support teachers with gaining their initial and higher teaching qualifications.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, we were pleased to:

- Maintain 90% retention across all paying membership grades
- And to experience our highest recruitment and reinstatement rate since 2017
- Resulting in a total membership of 5,740 on 31st March 2022.

In early 2021, we launched the 'Inspirational Spaces to Dance' Challenge to support teachers with keeping their students engaged online, whilst face-face dance classes were not permissible. This resulted in 484 entries from 6 countries.

We delivered digital, remote examinations whilst travel and social distancing measures were in place, returning to 'live' examinations in the UK from summer 2021 onwards.

- In total we conducted 68,542 examinations during 2021.
- Additionally, over 1700 students participated in an online competition and
- 300 dancers took part in our first Ballroom and Latin medalist competition.

Teachers clearly utilized lockdown periods to continue their professional development.

- 667 teachers completed an initial or higher teaching qualification during 2021/22
- a further 6,466 delegates attended CPD courses.

Whilst responding to the short-term challenges was a clear priority, we also continued to invest in future development to ensure that we emerge from the pandemic posed to make a

significant contribution to cultural education. We supported members to apply the Department of Education's Code of Conduct for Out of School Settings with:

- a series of free webinars, plus advice and guidance in our Raising Standards website hub and
- the introduction of compulsory DBS checks (or country equivalent).

We also established several Think Tanks to support us with improving Equity, Diversity and Inclusion across the Society.

- These provide vital opportunities to promote diversity and inclusion, overcome roadblocks, and enhance openness, dialogue and deconstruction.
- The key outcomes included training for staff, resource materials housed in the Diversity and Inclusion hub on our website, and a 'Talking Dance – Improving Racial Equity' symposium.

We also granted £89K in bursaries to support teachers with gaining their initial and higher teaching qualifications.

And we were delighted to complete the refurbishment of the Society's headquarters in Shoreditch, London.

- This has enhanced the safety, aesthetic, functionality, energy efficiency and value of our premises.
- The building now boasts a dance studio with adjoining refreshment and rest area, a member lounge and several new meeting spaces.
- The refurbished building is also more space efficient, releasing two floors for rental – thus generating additional income with which to enhance our charitable work to support dance and our members.

We are delighted to welcome members and students into our newly refurbished headquarters in Paul Street, London

- today for the AGM
- earlier in the year for Grand Council, Patron and Examiner receptions
- for Summer Programme courses in July and August
- and for centre exams

None of this would have been possible without a huge amount of hard work and support from everyone who works with the Society.

So, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to:

- My Leadership Team and their staff
- Our Faculty Committee Members
- Examiners and Lecturers

I am also hugely grateful for the on-going support and dedication of the Board of Trustees, who have steered the Society skillfully through these turbulent times.

During 2022/23 we are continuing to support our members to re-build financially sustainable businesses through:

- Our recently launched advocacy campaign – ***Find Your Dance Space***
- With inspiring **testimonials** about the value of dancing
- Backed up by a series of **business guides and resources** to help you to promote your classes to a broader range of learners
- And our newly designed searchable database – **danceteachers.org** – where you can advertise your services

Progressing our work to improve Equity, Diversity and Inclusion we have:

- Introduced the new Application for Reasonable Adjustments policy
 - to ensure our qualifications are as accessible as possible for learners with additional needs
- Moved to gender-neutral syllabus options
- And introduced three new bursary awards designed to address barriers to access:
- The Sue Passmore Award
- The Broadening Access Award and
- An Examination Access Bursary

A highlight of this year has been returning to 'live' student and teacher events

And we were particularly delighted to celebrate the achievements of those who have gained our teaching qualifications at a recent Graduation ceremony. In total:

- 913 graduates gained an astounding 1364 teaching qualifications over the past two years
- It was really wonderful to be together to mark their achievements, which were all the more remarkable for being accomplished during the pandemic restrictions.

Facing into the on-going economic uncertainty is daunting for every business.

These challenges have been exacerbated by staff changes in the Finance Department

- But we are confident that we now have the skills needed to steer us through the economic uncertainty under the expert leadership of Nikki Stewart - our new, permanent Director of Finance and Resources.

Together, the Leadership Team is working hard to support our members in every way possible

- Helping you to promote your businesses and
- Carefully managing the efficiency of our operations so that we can pass cost savings onto you wherever possible

And, as part of our strategy to build a financially sustainable business model for future growth we have

- Established two subsidiary companies:
 - ISTD Enterprises – which will undertake commercial trading and pass up profits to the charity
 - ISTD Academy – which will establish a clear division between delivery and award of qualifications – thus meeting regulatory requirements and expanding our ability to train future teachers.

To conclude, I would like to say a very sincere ‘thank you’ to our Chair, Michael Elliott, for generously utilising his extensive professional knowledge to guide the future development of the Society, and to the Board of Trustees for their continued support and invaluable contributions.

Appendix 3: Summary of presentation of the Annual Accounts given by Nikki Stewart, Director of Finance and Resources:

Ms Stewart introduced herself and informed attendees that alongside her career in Finance she has continued to pursue her passion for dance. She completed her DDE in Imperial Classical Ballet with ISTD in 2014 and built a successful dance school. This enabled her to gain a good understanding of the organisation's purpose and what it delivered, and she hoped that she would be able to contribute to improvements in the society's functioning.

Ms Stewart's presentation is summarised as follows:

Financial statements and audit

The financial statements were approved by Council in September following the statutory audit and are available to view on the web site.

Following a review of the ISTD's existing digital infrastructure and current processes, there is opportunity for significant improvement. The integration of finance and examinations systems will reduce manual intervention and the risk of human error and allow the finance team to focus on value-adding activities. This development will be beneficial to the Society as a whole, particularly to the finance and examinations functions.

Financial performance

- **Income and gains:** whilst keeping in mind that the comparative figures are based on a 15-month period, the increase in income over the two most recent periods is driven by a £1.3 million increase in examinations income. The Society conducted over 68,000 exams in the year, and we saw a reduction in remote examinations as our candidates and examiners returned to in-person sessions.
- **Expenditure:** The comparative figures include nearly £2.5 million capital expenditure on the refurbishment of the office building, which resulted in a small deficit at year-end.

Funding position

The total funds carried forward as of March 2022 were £15.3 million. Restricted funds of £7k were received and spent in the year. The Society is actively seeking a tenant for the fourth floor, and has most recently started advertising its dance studio for external hire.

Emerging issues

The key emerging issue is the creation of the training and trading subsidiaries (and the interaction between the subsidiaries and the charity) and the need to ensure we continue to operate within charity law and other regulations.