

AEV AGM – 14 September 2024

**AEV Chairman's Report - Delivered by Ian Taylor, AEV Chair**

Welcome to the AEV's Annual General Meeting.

Thank you for joining us at Silverstone today, I am delighted to welcome so many of you here.

Firstly, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Shaun Hinds, the outgoing AEV Chair who moved on from Manchester Central in May. Although he handed over the role earlier than expected, I am pleased to report that he left the association in excellent shape. Membership, engagement, interaction and financial standing are all strong. You'll hear more about these aspects shortly.

Last year, Shaun reported that the board had taken time to review the association's strategy based on member feedback. This summer, a small group from the Board conducted another review to ensure our strategy remains relevant. We considered several key factors in this review, including:

1. the work of the EIA in commissioning Cavendish to oversee the government relations efforts of the wider group.
2. the income and reserves of the association which impact our capacity to undertake various activities.
3. the resources within the association available to pursue our projects and initiatives each year.

Recurring themes have also played a significant role in guiding our direction. Our Working Groups remain one of the most valued services and communities we offer. Currently, we run 16 groups, which held 52 meetings over the past year. Their participation and activity levels are at a record high. As you might imagine, managing these groups requires substantial administrative resources. You will hear more about the groups and their outputs later.

I am pleased to say that membership currently stands at 48. Despite a couple of losses at the beginning of the year, we have welcomed Co-op Live and Messe Dusseldorf as new members.

The topic of membership numbers and categories will always be relevant. We discussed again whether increasing membership volume would enhance the association, and the consensus is that our current membership of approximately 50, with its strong identity and prominence of key venues is effective.

We also welcomed two new universities to our academic associate membership: University College Birmingham and University of West London, bringing our total to 8.

Following two years of development, we recently endorsed our first framework for event management degrees with the University of Greenwich. This partnership helps develop industry capabilities and boosts our credibility within the academic environment.

Our investment in partnerships with professional organisations continues to provide valuable expertise for members. This year we signed a new technology partnership with Momentus Technologies and maintain strong relationships with CHC Global and NQ Legal both offering critical advice on Martyn's Law - a significant piece of legislation affecting our venue community.

Our advocacy efforts have entered their third year with Cavendish under the EIA banner. We have met with ministers, chairs of select committees, opposition members, and hosted our second parliamentary reception for cross-party government ministers, shadow cabinet members and business events industry leaders, where we launched our new manifesto and key policy asks.

We have continued to invest in research with the 2023 SASIE Report and Economic Impact Study which highlight the industry's resilience and recovery. The annual AEV salary survey will be released soon.

Finally I want to highlight our event calendar and in particular the annual AEV conference which has become a key event for the venue community. Each year it gets bigger and better, and last year we saw over 260 attendees at the QEII Centre in London, thank you all for supporting this event. I look forward to welcoming you to the ICC Birmingham on 14 November for a day of engaging and educational content, as well as the chance to celebrate the AEV's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

I am proud of the continued progress made by our small but dedicated team. At the end of last year as recognition and reward for their continued input, both Dani and Alden were promoted to Senior Events & Membership Exec and Head of Commercial and Projects respectively. In addition, the Board agreed to the creation of a new role of Marketing and Admin Exec and we are delighted to welcome Kate to the team. On behalf of the entire membership, I'd like to thank the entire team – Rachel, Margery, Kimmie, Alden, Dani and Kate for all their continued hard work.

I believe the AEV is in excellent shape and does a much needed and important job representing both our industry and the interests of our businesses.

Finally, I'd like to thank you all for coming, I do hope you enjoy the day and lunch.