

AEV AGM – 20 September, Manchester Central
AEV Chairman's Report - Delivered by Shaun Hinds, AEV Chair

Welcome to the AEV's annual AGM.

Thank you all for coming to Manchester Central today, I am delighted to welcome so many of you to our venue.

I am pleased to report that the association has had another successful year responding to the demands and supporting its members throughout this time. We continue to manage our finances responsibly which you will hear more about from Jeremy shortly and membership interaction and engagement continue to thrive.

As a board we spent some time reviewing the strategy for the association following feedback from my letter to all members at the back end of last year. It was discussed that there are some topical overriding factors that are worthy of consideration when evaluating the strategy which included:

The work of the EIA in commissioning Cavendish to oversee the government relations efforts of the wider group, the income and reserves of the association in as much as they facilitate the work it's able to do and finally, but most importantly, the resources within the association available to pursue the different activities and projects undertaken each year.

Some recurring themes are also important markers in guiding the direction of the Association. The Working Groups continue to be one of the most valued services and communities facilitated by the association. Currently running 15 groups of which 48 meetings have been held in the past year, they were an essential resource during the pandemic, and have continued to flourish with participation and activities at record levels. The administrative resource required to manage the groups is significant and represents a considerable portion of the team's time. You will hear more about the groups and their outputs shortly.

I am pleased to say that membership is currently sitting at 48 having seen a couple of losses earlier in the year, but the return of Celtic Manor and new member Roundhouse have been positive additions.

Membership numbers and membership categories remain a valid topic of conversation. The question of whether growing the volume of members would enhance the association was considered and discussed. The consensus was that the current volume and composition of the association, approximately 50, is generally regarded as a meaningful constituency especially given the identity and prominence of many of our key member venues.

It was agreed that simply growing the quantity, whilst acknowledging the increase in revenue, might have the unintended consequence of creating a greater demand on resources which could reduce the effectiveness of or increase the secretariat cost. We are however looking more closely at membership categories, why we have one member from a particular genre of venue and no others is an interesting albeit small feature of the association but one which

opens the prospect of recruiting lookalike organisations to bolster members of a particular genre.

One final area universally agreed as a positive development for the association is that of educational institution collaboration. The foundation established with the university of Greenwich should be built upon and presented as an exemplar for other universities to pursue. With skills and talent identified as an ongoing priority, this partnership approach is an ideal way of developing this capability whilst enhancing the credibility of the industry in the academic environment. Again you will hear more about this after the AGM formalities.

We have continued investing time to create partnerships with professional organisations that individually help provide further expert advice for our members. A new technology partnership was signed with Momentus Technologies early this year and we are delighted to continue our relationships with both CHC Global and NQ Legal who both provide invaluable advice and insight into Martyns Law - probably the biggest piece of legislation that will have profound effects on our venue community.

My final point is to mention our event calendar and in particular the annual AEV conference which has become a bookmark in the diary for the venue community to attend. Last year saw over 180 of us travel to Harrogate for a night and day of great, stimulating and educational content and of course some good old fashioned networking over a beer or two. We hope to see many of you at our next event at the QEII Centre on 17 November.

As mentioned before, it is a small team within the AEV and I am proud and delighted of the continued progress they make each year and would like to thank Alden, Dani, Margery, Kimmie and Rachel for all their hard work.

I hope you enjoy the day and lunch and thank you all for coming.