

Background Information

On (or about) the 8th of January, 2018 Mr Geoff Hastwell received correspondence drafted by Mr Nigel Ford, Ms Sue Reece and Mr Paul Wilkins which notified him that the Committee of Management was to consider the following motion at its meeting of January 23rd, 2018:

That Mr Geoff Hastwell member of the Committee of Management is declared incapable and unfit for performing the duties of office and that he vacate the office of member of the Committee of Management.

The letter cited the rationale behind the motion indicating that the individuals putting the motion believed, in good faith, that Mr Hastwell had demonstrated an inability to accept the democratic and collective decision making of the Committee. The letter indicated that the signatories believed that Mr Hastwell had attempted to compel the Management Committee to revisit its decision about the number of face to face meetings by having his concerns about the frequency of meetings raised by another member.

Mr Hastwell has on FOUR occasions in the last TWO years moved or seconded a motion or item of business pertaining to the frequency of Committee meetings. Mr Hastwell has made demands of the Committee that it change the meeting frequency to be more regular than the current quarterly arrangements. Each time the Management Committee has resolved to continue meetings at the current frequency, which is its right under the association's constitution. The minutes of these meetings record these matters, and details are provided herewith:

Meeting Date	Summary of the motion	Votes for	Votes against	Motion outcome
15/8/17	That the Committee meet monthly	Murray Alfredson, Geoff Hastwell (proxy)	Nigel Ford Sue Reece Edie Eicas Paul Wilkins (proxy)	defeated
25/8/16	That the Committee meet monthly	Geoff Hastwell Murray Alfredson	Paul Wilkins Sue Reece David Harris Edie Eicas	defeated
24/5/16	That the Committee meet monthly	Geoff Hastwell	Paul Wilkins Sue Reece David Harris Edie Eicas	defeated
18/11/15	That the Committee meet monthly	Geoff Hastwell Murray Alfredson	Paul Wilkins Sue Reece Ian Gibbins Pat Lee David Harris	defeated

The next Committee meeting of 17/11/17 does not show a motion for monthly Committee meetings to be debated as Geoff Hastwell requested via email, as the secretary, Ms Sue Reece, refused to put it on that month's agenda, the Committee having debated it at the previous meeting. When Mr Geoff Hastwell arrived (late) for the meeting, he attempted to have it put on the agenda under 'any other business, but the rest of the Committee declined to discuss it.

Some days subsequent to the 17/11/17 Committee meeting, Mr Geoff Hastwell handed to Mr Nigel Ford a type written document entitled , “Regular Face-to-Face Meetings Compared with Spasmodic Electronic Messages,” which he requested be referred to the Committee for discussion. Mr Geoff Hastwell claimed anonymity for the author. A copy of this document, along with a cover letter from Mr Nigel Dey, dated 7/1/18 was posted to the Friendly St Post Box, where Mr Nigel Dey claimed authorship of the document.

The signatories to the letter believed in good faith that it was reasonably likely that Mr Hastwell had either written the attached document or had been instrumental in its drafting. They note that the language in the document, and the descriptions of issues reflect the same style with which Mr Hastwell has raised and discussed these issues in the past.

The signatories to the correspondence to Mr Hastwell felt that he had demonstrated an inability to accept the democratic decision of the Committee of Management in regard to meeting frequency. Further, they considered his involvement of other members in order to have the democratic decision of the Committee reviewed again or changed was not appropriate behaviour.

It is a generally accepted principle of governance in non-profit associations that individuals on a Management Committee or board are bound by the collective decision of the board. That is in that while each member should put the point of view of their constituency, and each member has the right to argue for their own point of view and to vote for that position, once a collective decision has been taken Board members are required to support that decision.

In this matter, Mr Hastwell has demonstrated an inability to adhere to the norms associated with good governance and to respect the collective decisions of the Management Committee. Given that each of them has spoken with Mr Hastwell on more than one occasion about this behaviour the signatories felt that they had little recourse but to take steps to have Mr Hastwell vacate his position on the Management Committee.

The letter to Mr Hastwell also carried the concerns of the signatories that Mr Hastwell has been misrepresenting the Committee to the membership of Friendly St Poets

In the correspondence to Mr Hastwell it was noted by the signatories that he has the right to respond to the concerns they raised and the motion they intended to put before the meeting. They provided Mr Hastwell with notice as would be required should an allegation of misconduct warranting expulsion from the association be made against a member. Their motion however did not seek Mr Hastwell’s expulsion from the association, but rather that he vacate his office as a consequence of losing the confidence of his fellow Committee members.

Mr Hastwell attended the meeting on January 23rd but failed to present a factual response to allegations. Instead he handed the Committee copies the requisition for a special general meeting and then subsequently left.

After Mr Hastwell had left the meeting, the remaining Committee members voted on a motion that he be removed from the Committee. The vote was carried unanimously. This is in accordance with 7.8 of the constitution.

The Special General Meeting presented to the Committee on 23/1/18 lapsed when the mover of the motion withdrew his support.

Mr Hastwell then organised a request for a second Special General Meeting which he presented to Ms Edie Eicas on 5/2/18 at the Box Factory.

According to the rules of the association the Management Committee has called a special general meeting.