

MINUTES

Annual Meeting 2026

DATE: 16th September 2026
TIME: 4.30 - 5.00pm
LOCATION: Kingston First's office. Neville House, 55 Eden Street

ATTENDEES:

Vanessa Ross (VR)	arc
Robert O'Dowd (ROD)*	Rose Theatre
Frank Borkin (FB)	Kingston Escape Rooms
Paul Bhalla (PB)	Specsavers
Sankar Sivarajah (SS)	Kingston University
Peter Mayhew-Smith (PMS)	South Thames College Group
Simon Baille (SB)	Ex-cellar
Georgina Cox-Munn (GCM)	Rose Theatre
Simon Cuckow (SC)	Bentall Centre
Claire Haylor (CH)	Eden Walk Shopping Centre

*non voting member

9 members and 9 votes.

APOLOGIES:

Cllr Andreas Kirsch (AK)	Kingston Council
Cllr Andrew Wooldridge (AW)	Kingston Council

2 apologies and 0 proxy votes.

In attendance:

Kirsten Henly (KH)	Kingston First
Shareena Merzi (SM)	Kingston First
Scott Gamble (SG)	Kingston First
Hannah Blackwell (HB)	Kingston First

1. Welcome and apologies

VR welcomed all attendees to Kingston First's Annual Meeting. Introductions were made for the benefit of the incoming Board Directors. Apologies were noted as above.

2. Minutes and actions from the last meeting

- KH proposed the minutes be approved as an accurate record. All agreed.

3. Election of directors

- The Board formally elected the new Directors, with the nominations proposed and seconded. The Chair welcomed the new Directors to the Board:
 - Simon Baille, Owner and Director of Ex-cellar
 - Georgina Cox-Munn, Development Manager, Rose Theatre
 - Simon Cuckow, Centre Director, Bentall Centre
 - Claire Haylor, Centre Manager, Eden Walk Shopping Centre
 - Sankar Sivarajah, Head of Business School, Kingston University
 - Cllr Andrew Wooldridge, Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Economic Development and Planning Policy at RBK (welcomed in his absence).
- It was noted that ROD and PMS were standing down from the board.

4. Amendments to the Articles of Association

- The Board considered two proposed amendments to the Articles of Association. The first related to local authority representation, with the proposed amendment increasing the voting threshold from 20% to 21%. This would allow local authority representatives to form part of the quorum while ensuring they could not exercise a controlling influence over the Company.
- The second amendment proposed removing the reference to “strategic agency representatives” being entitled to a place on the Board, as the term was undefined. The Articles would continue to allow the Board to co-opt agencies or organisations where appropriate.
- It was noted that approval of the amendments required at least 75% of members present to vote in favour. The proposed amendments were approved by all voting attendees and would therefore be submitted to Companies House.

5. Annual Financial Report 2025-26

- ROD introduced the annual accounts, which had been reviewed by COG and presented to the Board. It was noted that the accounts had been prepared under the revised, lighter-touch audit process and were in line with the draft figures presented at the June Board meeting, with no material changes identified.
- The Board approved the annual accounts for submission to Companies House.

6. AOB

- VR asked if any attendees had any other comments. None were raised.