Theatre Forum CLG trading as Performing Arts Forum
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
Date: 25 September 2026
Time: 11:00 am, Online

Present:
Mary Boland, Clare Barrett, Sadhbh Barrett Coakley, Ollie Breslin, Brian Bowler, Eoghan Carrick, Elissavet Chatzinota, Helen Collins, Mona Considine, Louise Costelloe, Sara Cregan, Tom Creed, Joanna Cunningham, Janice de Bróithe, Aoife Demel, Eoghan Doyle, Orla Flanagan, Diego Fasciati, Marie Hegarty, Jessica Hilliard, Paul Johnson, Niamh Lawlor, Cliona Maher, Lisa Mahony, Fergal Mc Grath, Helen McGrath, Louise McGrath, Paul McGuinness, Lucy Medlycott, Orla Moloney, Clelia Murphy, Katherine Murphy, Annette Nugent, Clare O'Malley, Conor O'Malley, Dafe Pessu Orugbo, Kelly Phelan, Matt Rafter, Michelle Read, Alex Rosiak, Bee Sparks, Ashley Steed, Laurie Uprichard.

Proxies:
Lian Bell, Éadaoin Breathnach/Walsh, Conor Burnell, Maeve Butler, Anne Clarke, Ailish Claffey, Niall Cleary, Veronica Coburn, Susan Collins, Susan Coughlan, Jim Culleton, Tony Fegan, Gillian Grattan, Jo Mangan, Mary-Lou McCarthy, Dermot McLaughlin, Patricia McBride, Gertrude Montgomery, Olivia Morahan, Lisa Nally, Lí Ní Chearbhaill, Niamh O'Donnell, Cian O'Brien, Claire O'Neill, Christian O'Reilly, Dee Patton, Sile Penkert, Ultan Pringle, Carla Rogers, Liz Roche, Niall Scully, Aoife Spillane-Hinks, David Teevan.

In attendance: Irma McLoughlin, Eileen Stevenson

1. Opening of the Meeting
Mary Boland as Chair opened the Annual General Meeting and welcomed members. The minutes of the previous AGM
(2025) were reviewed and approved.

2. Resolution 1 – Adoption of Financial Statements
It was proposed to adopt the company's 2025 Financial Statements together with the report of the statutory auditors. Members voted by proxy and live.
Resolution: Adopted.

3. Resolution 2 – Appointment of Statutory Auditor
It was proposed to authorise the Directors to appoint the statutory auditor and to fix their remuneration. Members voted by proxy and live.
Resolution: Adopted.

4. Election of Directors
The eight candidates standing for election presented their statements. Members were invited to vote.

Result of the Election:
The live votes were added to the proxies post-meeting and verified by Paul Johnson, Secretary. Dafe Orugbo and Annette Nugent were elected.

5. Chair's Review
The Chair provided an overview of the company's affairs in 2025. The report appended to these minutes.

6. Any Other Business (AOB)
No additional items were raised.

7. Close of Meeting
The Chair thanked members for attending and closed the meeting.

Chair's Report

Report on January–December 2025 Activities

This report accompanies the 2025 Directors' Report and Financial Statements.

This is the company's 23rd AGM and my second report as Chair.

I am delighted to share highlights from 2025, a year in which Performing Arts Forum consolidated the transformation launched in 2024, deepening our new identity, growing our membership significantly, and expanding our reach across the sector.

While 2024 was a year of launch, unveiling our new name, website and tagline, 2025 was a year of consolidation and growth: strengthening our membership base, expanding our working groups, and deepening our support for artists, arts workers and organisations.

Financial Overview

Details of the organisation's financial performance are set out in the Financial Statements. In 2025, total income grew to €465,820, up from €402,922 in 2024, an increase of over 15%, driven by continued growth in membership income and Arts Council support. The organisation returned a surplus for the year of €15,254, compared to a deficit of €10,281 in 2024, reflecting careful financial management following the investment made in our rebrand and new website in 2024.

Programme of Activities

Digital Reach

In 2025, Performing Arts Forum's website attracted 56,000 unique users, an increase of 16% on 2024, reaffirming the effectiveness of our online resources in reaching a broad audience.

The Gathering, Limerick

Our flagship sectoral conference took place in Limerick in May 2025, welcoming a sold-out audience of 380 delegates from across the island for two days of conversation, connection and debate. The Gathering continues to grow as the key annual gathering point for the performing arts sector.

PAF Connects

Developed at the end of 2024, PAF Connects invites practitioners to attend performances together, preceded by a networking event. In 2025, this initiative delivered 16 events across the country, with over 500 people attending performances as part of the programme. Partners included the Abbey Theatre, Belfast Children's Festival, Carlow Arts Festival, Dublin Fringe Festival, Galway Theatre Festival, Pan Pan, Project Arts Centre, and many more.

Members' Meetings

Regular members' meetings took place throughout the year, addressing funding challenges facing the sector alongside opportunities for resource development and peer learning

Working Groups

2025 saw the establishment of a fourth working group, for Independent Artists, joining the existing Arts Centre, Producers and Festivals Working Groups. Comprised of board members and appointed representatives selected through open call, these groups continue to play a vital role in fostering dialogue and strengthening connections across the sector.

Artist Development: MAKE & Next Stage

The MAKE residency took place at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre in December, where 15 artists worked with international mentors, delivered in partnership with Dublin Fringe Festival, Project Arts Centre and Cork Midsummer Festival.

In partnership with Dublin Theatre Festival, the Next Stage programme was delivered during the festival period in September and October, offering participants professional development and networking opportunities.

Audience Insights

Building on the aggregated audience research presented in 2024, we published further findings in 2025 exploring demographics, motivations, perceptions and impact through our post-show audience survey. The results were presented at the Limerick Gathering and informed a series of marketing forum events.

Green Arts Initiative in Ireland

With continued support from Culture for Climate Scotland, our Green Arts Initiative supported individuals and organisations in taking meaningful action on climate change. 2025 saw the launch of the Irish adaptation of the Theatre Green Book, an important step in embedding sustainability in Irish arts practice.
We also delivered Theatre Green Book training supported by Cultural & Creative Industries Skillnet.

Advocacy: Revenue and the Karshan Judgment

Performing Arts Forum worked with its membership throughout 2025 on monitoring and responding to the implications of the Supreme Court's Karshan judgment, which has significant consequences for how arts organisations engage independent artists and arts workers, with potential impact on long-standing working practices across the sector.

Membership

Membership growth continued strongly in 2025. Total membership increased by 25%, rising from 312 in 2024 to 390 in 2025.

- Individual memberships grew by 38%, from 186 to 256.
- Production Company memberships rose by 13%, from 30 to 34.
- Arts Centre/Venue memberships held steady at 62.

This continued growth further reinforces Performing Arts Forum's position as a central, trusted network for the performing arts sector, and is reflected in a corresponding rise in membership income.

2025 Year-End Outlook

As we reflect on 2025, it is clear this was a year of consolidation and continued growth, building on the strong foundations laid during the 2024 rebrand. With our strategy, vision and values guiding our work, we remain committed to supporting members, enabling change and building a stronger, more sustainable arts ecosystem. The introduction of our fourth working group, together with the sector's ongoing engagement with the Karshan judgment, will shape our focus into 2026.

Closing Remarks

I wish to extend my sincere thanks to our members, partners and sponsors, and to the Arts Council, our principal funder, for their continued support. And to you our members for placing your trust in us – we are your organisation and we are here because of you and we never forget that.

I want to acknowledge the commitment of our executive team. Irma, as Director, together with Eileen, Paul and Mary, has led the organisation through another year of growth and consolidation.

I would also like to thank the directors who stepped down from the Board last year Janice de Broithe and Joy Nesbitt, for their contribution. And we were delighted to welcome Dafe Pessu and Katherine Murphy to the Board in 2025 and also to note that Lianne Quigley and Luke Murphy joined as co-optees earlier this year. We also want to thank Paul Johson and Tom Creed

Finally, I thank my fellow Board members for their leadership and support. Together, we look forward to building on the progress of 2025 and ensuring that Performing Arts Forum remains a place where connection creates change.

Thank you,

Mary Boland
Chair, Performing Arts Forum CLG