

Shire Training Workshops t/a OPENhouse

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

5.00pm, Monday 29th September 2014

The Hall, The British School, Stroud

1. Welcome by the Chair

Alasdair Gordon welcomed Members, Trustees, Service Users and Guy Biggin of Crow Clark Whitehall (CCW) Auditors to the meeting. The Chairman reminded the meeting that the Michaelmas Festival was approaching.

Prior to the opening of the formal business of the AGM, Alasdair invited Chloe Slater to speak on behalf of service users. Chloe gave a presentation in which she described her life experiences and the difference that had been made since coming to OPENhouse and taking up residence at Delmont's Lot.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Elizabeth Baker, Crockett Cresswell, Aonghus Gordon, John Marjoram, Jehanne Mehta, Rob Mehta, Kim Mulford, Tim Mugford, Wendy Pitt, Catherine Roberts, Deborah Robinson, Ellie Taylor, David Tilling, Timothy Wakefield and Veronika Wyse.

3. Approval of 2013 AGM Minutes

The Minutes of the 2013 AGM were approved by those Members present and signed by the Chairman.

4. Presentation of Trustees' Reports for 2013/14

Chairman's Report

Alasdair said the organisation continued to be pro-active. The Board had regular meetings at which any major strategic risks were discussed and steps taken to ensure that procedures were in place to minimise risk. Board meetings, for a time, had been held weekly before moving to fortnightly and now on to monthly. Day-to-day running of the organisation continued, as always, to be delegated to Claire and the Senior Management Team.

Alasdair said the Board had looked at ways of making the organisation more rigorous and had investigated options for collaboration with other bodies, in particular Ruskin Mill. The negotiations had taken place with the assistance of an independent advisor. However, after a great deal of thought, it was decided not to proceed on this route. The organisation continued to actively and successfully explore the ways to best increase the benefits and opportunities for young people and vulnerable individuals.

Education Presented by Richard Brinton

Richard Brinton introduced himself as the Trustee with responsibility for and special interest in education. He said one of the most important things was in getting the interest and engagement of young people. The need was to find a connection with their interests and what they were learning. In today's world this had become an increasing challenge. He said he had been drawn to OPENhouse by the recognition that people are finding the world more difficult to deal with and are increasingly disengaged. He was very impressed by the OPENhouse concept based on Steiner principles in which each person is an individual and needed an individual approach. The education opportunities offered at OPENhouse are an important part of recognising individuals and can lead on to higher qualifications. He said outside bodies are very impressed with the standards delivered by OPENhouse. The challenge was to obtain funding for the educational work that OPENhouse was committed to carrying out. This would continue to be a high priority for the Board and CEO in the coming year.

Supporting Housing Presented by Marie Waring

Marie Waring said OPENhouse was committed to its supported housing programme for young people. Currently there are 10 single rooms with shared facilities at Painswick Inn House. At 48 High Street there are two three bedroom flats which allow young people the experience of shared independent living. London road provides two single bedroom flats for individuals with high support needs. OPENhouse was exploring further funding options which would enable the further expansion of this vital service.

Enhanced Support Service Presented by Jem Sweet

Jem Sweet said that, since recently joining the Board of Trustees, he had responsibility for and taken a special interest in the Delmont's Lot micro-community. It provides accommodation for young people with complex and challenging needs to live with shared facilities. As well as being fully supported, Delmont's Lot created a safe environment with social interaction, a garden and a kitchen. It is intended this would be a transition process to enable young people to move on to independent living.

Objectives for Growth Presented by Nicki Severs

Nicki Severs emphasised the need for the organisation to continue to develop, adapt to change and to seek ways in which to grow existing as well as new services. There were increasing numbers of young people who needed enhanced support. The challenge was to identify those groups who needed help. OPENhouse had become pro-active in this and was taking the lead in providing creative learning for 14-16 year olds in need of support and was also working to expand supported housing into Gloucester and Cheltenham. More staff resources were needed for this and recently a deputy CEO, Dan Jones had been recruited. This was enabling Claire to spend more time on projects aimed at expansion.

5. Presentation of Accounts for the Year Ending 31 March 2014

The Finance Officer, Tasha Flaherty, gave a presentation of the accounts for 2013/14. She referred in particular to the Balance Sheet and highlighted the comparisons between the last two financial years. She said the total funds at the end of the year were up from £599K to £703K and the organisation was moving forward in a stronger financial position each year.

The Chairman proposed the following **Resolution**:

To adopt the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2014.

Proposed: Nicki Severs **Seconded:** Richard Brinton

On being put to the vote, the Resolution was passed unanimously with no abstentions.

6. Confirmation of Appointments to the Board

The Chairman introduced Jem Sweet and said he had recently been appointed to the Board of Trustees. The Chairman proposed the following **Resolution**:

To confirm the appointment of Jem Sweet as a Trustee who had been appointed to the Board since the last AGM,

Proposed: Jo Carrier **Seconded:** Neil Sharpe

On being put to the vote, the Resolution was passed unanimously with no abstentions.

7. Appointment of Auditors

The Chairman said the Board of Trustees recommended that Crow Clark Whitehill LLP be re-appointed as auditors for SWT until the next AGM. He proposed the following **Resolution**:

To confirm the appointment of Crow Clark Whitehill LLP as auditors for SWT until the end of the next AGM.

Proposed: Janice Foreman **Seconded:** James Derieg

On being put to the vote, the Resolution was passed unanimously with no abstentions.

Claire Mould said the Trustees had been very determined that the audit should be rigorous and she thanked the auditors for their assistance during the year and for producing a thorough report. The Chairman added his thanks and said the report underlined the Trustees confidence in the organisation.

On behalf of Crow Clark Whitehill, Guy Biggin said he looked forward to continuing to work with STW and the Trustees during the coming year. He left the meeting at 6.00pm.

8. CEO's Report

Claire Mould paid tribute to the efforts made by staff and Trustees over the last 12 months. Their contributions had been invaluable and she was sorry that more members had not attended the AGM

in order acknowledge this. She thanked the individuals for their important contributions which have helped to grow the organisation and also thanked those staff who had moved on after many years of great service to STW.

Claire said over the last 12 months STW had gone through a period of evolution and restructuring which had given opportunities for thorough reflection and consolidation. Great progress had been made and she was enormously proud of the way in which staff and Trustees had responded and contributed.

Service users were also becoming more involved and Claire mentioned the fundraising 60/60 Challenge which was launched on 6th June 2014. The original target of raising £600 had been exceeded, with the total now just over £1,200 and had inspired staff and service users to combine in a series of enjoyable fund-raising events.

9. Close of AGM

The Chairman said he and the Trustees were very grateful for the progress that had been made over the last 12 months and was amazed at the way in which Claire and her staff had worked so hard to bring about the changes.

At the end of the AGM, those present watched an entertaining yet moving video which had been put together by some of the service users.

The AGM closed at 6.35pm.