



Minutes of Annual General Meeting held at Patching Lodge, Saturday 21st May 2016

Members present: Paul Gillett (Chair), Colin Bennett, Shirley West, Ruby Woolven, Sam Callingham-Wood, Keith Turner, Sue Vivian, Iris Keppler, Denise Sharp, Margaret Pearson, Jacqui Campbell

Volunteers present: Ray Woolven, Rosemary Collins, Steve Evans, Sue Joseph,

Guest: Daniel Brookbank, Chief Executive East Sussex Association for Blind & Partially Sighted People (ESAB)

1. Introduction

Paul welcomed everyone to City Synergy's 13th AGM.

2. Apologies for absence

Chris Dutton, Jonathan Dutton, Christina Mendez, Valerie Mainstone, Tony McCoy, Barbara Wells, Martin French

3. Minutes of last meeting dated 21st Feb 2015 were taken as read. Matters arising covered elsewhere in minutes

4. Chair's Report

Paul read his report to the meeting starting by thanking Daniel, Sue Fever and the team at ESAB for their welcome and support in our first year as members of the organisation, we all hope to build on this in the coming year with more information of what is available

Reporting on the sub groups from last year he thanked Jonathan for his help in bookings for activities. He noted that the financial position had stabilised and thanked Iris and others for efforts in this. There does however remain a big challenge to reach more visually impaired people. It has been good to welcome Kevin and Yvonne during the last year.

Paul reported on another busy year including 16 organised events and our monthly tea/coffee meetings and thanked the Committee, Volunteers and Members for their support.

The report acknowledge the very real challenges being faced by members in regards to benefits etc, and said we were keen to ensure that members had access to support at times of need even where the group itself might not have the resources to offer direct help.

Paul summarised by saying that the last year had been challenging in many ways and the mutual support within the group has been appreciated more than ever

A vote of thanks was expressed to Paul by Iris

5. Treasurer's Report

Iris distributed the finance report showing a balance carry forward at 31st March 2016 of £2,524. In the year we spent £1,611 on activities receiving £1,002 in contributions towards these costs. In the year our fundraising and donations raised £774 which went a considerable way to improving our financial position along with an £800 grant from Sussex Community Trust.

Iris added that we had sufficient funds for the year ahead but needed to constantly plan ahead as things were getting increasingly difficult to get grants

Paul gave a vote of thanks to Iris for all her hard work.

6. Election of Committee

Paul stood down as chair and Daniel took the chair for the election of the committee.

The following members had agreed to continue to stand for the committee:

Paul Gillett
Iris Keppler
Ruby Woolven

Keith Turner was also nominated and Sam Callingham Woods was standing down

The revised committee of Paul, Iris, Ruby and Keith was proposed by Denise, seconded by Sue Vivian and approved by the meeting

Paul resumed as chair and thanked Sam for her contribution to the committee

7. Constitution Revision

Paul advised the meeting that our constitution needed to be revised to reflect our membership of ESAB. The opportunity had been taken to make some small changes to bring the document up to date with the way that City Synergy had evolved since the last update in 2004

The revision was proposed by Paul, seconded by Iris and carried by the meeting

8. ESAB Update

Daniel gave a brief outline of the services provided by ESAB, in particular those for the Brighton & Hove Area, He mentioned that these were part of a contract with the Council and therefore vulnerable to future cuts.

Responding to a question from Colin. Daniel said that ESAB were always keen to take up issues with B&H council regarding street access. Following a discussion about the subject it was suggested that Keith co-ordinate with Daniel regarding the issues

9. Activity Suggestions

Paul went through a list of activities currently planned or suggested as potential activities.

Sue Vivian asked if we could move the afternoon coffee to a later time slot, It was agreed to experiment with 3pm to 4.30pm but that this would rule out Brighthelm which closed at 3.30. A suggestion to change to Thursdays was made but more people find Thursday impractical than those who could not make Wednesdays.

Sue Vivian asked if Sailability could be included in the list. Paul said he would include it on the newsletter and suggest members contact Sue if interested

10. Any Other Business

Sue Joseph asks about the reasoning behind volunteers needing to contribute towards activities and asked the committee to review charges. Paul said that the committee would look at this afresh

11 Date of Next Meeting

Saturday 20th May 2017 (subject to confirmation)