



## General Meeting No 39/1 – 8 July 2010 Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action, Board Room

**Present:** Bob Pennell *Chair*, Revd Jane Manley *trustee*, Allan Emmett *trustee*, Cllr Peter A'Hearne *Winkfield PC*, Janet Thomas *ACBF volunteers*, Chris Cowap *BFVA*, Clair Harris *CMHT*

**Apologies:** Eve Marshall *Vice-chair* is indisposed; Kerry Edwards *Treasurer* has unavoidable work commitments; Adrienne Jones *Bracknell Town Council* on holiday; Sarah Frenett *CEO* on holiday; Terry Pearce *Over 50s Forum* on holiday.

### 1 Welcome and Introductions

This was a General Meeting of members of the charity. Discussion was based on a power-point presentation by the chairman.

There were no minutes to adopt because previous meetings of "Management Committee" did not comply with the constitution. This meeting was to re-establish regular proceedings and re-establish a register of members.

There are supposed to be at least three General Meetings between consecutive AGMs but that would not be possible this year.

The minutes of the 39<sup>th</sup> AGM held on July 22<sup>nd</sup> 2009 have been corrected and are to be adopted at the 40<sup>th</sup> AGM to be held at Coopers Hill at 1:45pm on August 26<sup>th</sup>.

### 2 New Governance framework

Barbara Knight and Maurice Alston had resigned in November 2009, and Janet Thomas resigned from the Executive Committee in April. Progress had stalled because of overwhelming management issues, particularly that the constitution had not been fully understood.

Bob was appointed by the trustees on June 4<sup>th</sup> 2010 to fill the casual vacancy of Chair-person and there are now a total of five trustees, Bob is experienced in management and use of IT and is keen to improve those aspects.

A new governance framework has been agreed.

**The constitution** is now understood and the trustees refer to an annotated version. Minor changes may be needed in order to modernise and improve efficiency of administration. In essence it is simple.

- The aims are to promote the relief of elderly people in and around Bracknell Forest in any reasonable way and in particular by providing and operating day care facilities.

- It is a members' charity for individuals or representatives of voluntary organisations or statutory authorities who are interested in furthering those aims. Members observe, guide, or directly support the aims. They are invited to four general meeting per year, one being the AGM where members elect trustees.
- The trustees comprise the Executive Committee. They include a chair, vice-chair, treasurer and up to five others including representatives of the day centre volunteers and day centre clients. In addition those trustees can co-opt one or two further trustees. Hence the maximum number is ten.

Proceedings are subject to the constitution and charity law.

**Written regulations** have now been agreed and introduced by the trustees and are subject to review by members.

**Four sub-committees** have been set up to address: Governance; Finance & Operations; Marketing & Publicity; and Fundraising. The regulations for these are designed to allow faster progress and simplify participation by non-trustees.

However, there is a pressing need for more trustees.

Peter reported that Cllr Roberta Kaye may be willing to become a trustee and might then also replace him as representative for Winkfield PC. **ACTION Bob** to make contact.

### 3 Register of Members

Bob explained that there was a need to reconstruct a register of members to guide the charity and elect trustees. He felt that in the spirit of the original constitution there should be a well balanced steering group of about 30 people.

Chris felt that the charity should be open for as many people as possible to become members. There were many interested groups e.g. BARA. Bob felt that a very large group would be unwieldy for the purpose of general meetings but the trustees might consider the possibility of two classes of member. **ACTION Bob**

### 4 Financial Report

The constitution calls for a written statement of accounts at every general meeting. It was not prepared for this meeting because the treasurer was unavailable at short notice. However, Bob presented slides to summarise the situation.

In 2009/10 Day Centre activity was severely underfunded. The charity had survived by moving out of the Coopers Hill office, making an administrator redundant and cutting down on charitably activities. Even after extraordinary (un-repeatable) grants totalling £18,000 expenditure exceeded income by £9,475.

For 2010/11 cash flow predicts a further loss of £19,500. A new financial strategy and the management processes to support it are essential. Meanwhile ACBF is in a recovery

phase. Bob had carefully studied cost attribution and met with BFBC to discuss possible solutions. The CEO, Sarah, was on holiday at this time but Bob recognised she has an important role in liaison and strategy, and was determined she should be able to do so with greater support and cohesion than in recent months.

## 5. Day Care

Bob described the trustees' view that the ACBF Day Centre was at a "higher level" of care than most local Day Care facilities, providing a superb ethos and a degree of therapy for the more dependent and mentally infirm clients - as well as vital respite for their carers. Most clients were referred by healthcare professionals. There were 50 attending, 40 on the waiting list and a high turnover to be administered. The level of care and the turnover made this intrinsically more expensive to run.

BFBC had remarked that ACBF costs were similar to Heathlands, which also handles a higher level of dependency, and had suggested that ACBF could possibly reduce costs by providing for a less dependent group. The priority for ACBF was to regain strength to save the Day Centre and to save the charity activities without any significant change of direction this year. More funding would be essential because it was not believed to be an option to increase fees to a level around £18 which would exclude needy people.

BFBC had undertaken to discuss the ACBF problem with their healthcare colleagues.

Chris thought that Demcare currently charged £30 for possibly equivalent Day Care at Woodmancote.

Clair believed that the ACBF facility was more beneficial than the current Heathlands Day Care. Maybe another alternative was for Age Concern to take over Heathlands!

## 6. Any Other Business

Janet remarked that the meeting had concentrated on Day Care to the virtual exclusion of other Age Concern activities. Bob assured the meeting that the trustees held it important to preserve and indeed grow other Age Concern activities.

Financing Day Care is currently a top priority, not least because it has blocked and weakened other charitable activities.

## 7. Next Meeting Dates

40<sup>th</sup> AGM Aug 26<sup>th</sup>,      December 9<sup>th</sup>,      February 24<sup>th</sup>,      May 6<sup>th</sup>