

Shire Training Workshops t/a OPENhouse

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

5.00pm, Wednesday 23rd September 2019

The Hall, The British School, Stroud

1. Welcome and Introductions by the Chair

The Chairman, Richard Brinton welcomed Members and Trustees to the meeting.

In his opening address, Richard said today was marked by Solstice Day, the Equinox and was a time for preparation as we all move further towards the darker days of Autumn. He said that the challenges being faced in the world today struck a chord with those described by Charles Dickens in his novel "Hard Times". In the modern world, the challenges often come from organisations such as OFSTED and the thinking that lies behind the desire to tabulate results in order to measure success or failure. This type of thinking has become deeply entrenched but does not directly make children in the education system any happier. There is a need to let the heart have a greater say and give attention to the needs of individuals rather than trying to merely deal in hard facts. This is where the OPENHouse approach of giving personal attention to each individual service user matters most.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from David McAuley, Alastair Gordon and Tim Mugford.

3. Approval of 2018 AGM Minutes

It was proposed by that the Minutes of the 2018 AGM be approved and signed by the Chairman.

Proposed: Lucas Schoemaker **Seconded:** John Marjoram

The proposal was agreed unanimously by those members present.

4. Presentation of Trustees' Reports for 2018/19

Housing Support and Enhanced Support Overview

Richard Brinton introduced Karen Brown, the new Service Manager who had joined OPENHouse in May 2019. Karen presented an overview of management of the Supporting People contract. She said staff at OPENHouse were continuing to work hard to help service users towards the goal of being able to sustain independent living. There were currently 8 service users at OPENHouse at the moment with 2 voids. Referrals had slowed down recently but she was hopeful that they would pick up soon.

Delmont's Lot currently had 4 residents and 4 voids. A number of projects and activities were ongoing to enable residents to gain skills and enable them to move on.

John Marjoram asked what impact Brexit might have on OPENHouse. Anna Herbert said this was hard to assess but it was becoming clear that, going forward, OPENHouse could no longer rely on central government funded projects. New ways of funding would need to be developed.

Operations Update

Neil Sharpe highlighted a number of HR enhancements which had been introduced over the 12 months and the benefits this had brought for staff:

- An increased focus on staff mental health and wellbeing.
- A rise in annual leave for staff after 3 years' service.
- Employer pension contributions increased to 5%.

During this period staff turnover had reduced to 28% compared to 39% in the previous year. Sickness absences were just 4% compared to 16% in the previous year.

Neil said a great deal of good progress had been made on IT structures:

- The rollout of a new integrated HR system had been completed.
- A new website was up and running.
- Cyber Security Essentials Accreditation has been gained.
- Infrastructure upgrading now allows for cloud monitoring.
- GDPR compliance has been fully reviewed.

Plans are in place to continue to improve IT services:

- All PCs are to be upgraded to Windows 10.
- Cloud systems will be set up using Office 365.
- More advanced security will be introduced for electronic record keeping.

Maintenance at OPENHouse

Richard Brinton said an extensive program of maintenance work was in the process of being carried out at OPENHouse. Painswick Inn has been updated with new secondary glazing, refurbished bathrooms and all bedrooms had been redecorated.

Plans were in hand to carry out essential works on the British School and to continue to update facilities at Painswick Inn, such as kitchens, the communal area, the utility room and to replace flooring in the hallways and stairs.

5. Presentation of Accounts and Annual Report for the year ending 31 March 2019

The Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2019 were presented by Anna Herbert. She highlighted the main points in the accounts:

- OPENHouse had an income during the year of £646,549 against an expenditure of £666,846 resulting in a deficit of £20,297 in the years' accounts.
- Overall income had decreased from £736,649 to £646,549. But there had also been a more significant decrease in expenditure from £852,014 to £666,846.
- There had been a slight decrease in the overall balance sheet for OPENHouse from £1.486m to £1.471m and also a decrease in debtors from £63k to £41k.

The Chairman then put forward the following **Resolution**:

To adopt the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2019.

Proposed: John Marjoram **Seconded:** Andy Warner

On being put to the vote, the Resolution was passed unanimously.

6. Submitted Questions and Answers

Members had been invited to submit questions which would be answered at the AGM. No written questions had been received.

7. Resignation from the Board of Trustees

The Chairman said that during the year Eilise Cope and Linda Lawrence had resigned from the Board. He thanked them both for their contributions while serving as Trustees.

8. Re-appointment of Auditors

Richard Brinton paid thanks to the auditors, Hewitt Warren for preparing the accounts. He said that the auditor had advised that, under current rules, OPENHouse did not need a full audit of accounts. However the Trustees had decided that it was beneficial to have the experience of a qualified auditor, particularly as it is difficult to find Trustees with a sufficiently strong financial background. He proposed the following **Resolution**:

To re-appoint Hewitt Warren Ltd as auditors for the current year.

Proposed: Nicki Severs **Seconded :** Deborah Leah

On being put to the vote, the Resolution was passed unanimously.

9. Presentation on last 12 months

Richard Brinton said that David McAuley but other commitments had precluded this. Richard said that David had absolutely loved his work at OPENHouse. In a comparatively short period of time, he had introduced a range of improvements and had gone a long way to turning around the finances at OPENHouse. In a message sent to the AGM, David expressed his thanks to the organisation for having him and he misses the working and personal relationships that he enjoyed so much.

John Marjoram proposed a vote of thanks to David McAuley for the work and energy he brought to OPENHouse. This was unanimously supported by the AGM.

10. Looking Forward

Anna Herbert said she was very grateful for the support she had received from David McAuley in taking over from him as CEO. She also thanked the staff at OPENHouse for their excellent support as well. The outcome of the OPENHouse bid to be part of GCC's contract framework was expected to be known very soon. Irrespective of this, the way forward was becoming clearer in terms of funding and it was vital for OPENHouse to broaden its remit and look beyond the current age limit of 25 year olds. A meeting is scheduled with Stroud District Council to see if OPENHouse can help provide accommodation for the homeless in Stroud. The absolute priority is about focussing on the needs of those service users who come to OPENHouse.

Jill Hancock said there was so much positive energy around OPENHouse and she felt very impressed by this.

Karen Brown said it hadn't been possible for any of the service users to attend the AGM this year, but she read two short stories that had been written by two of the service users in which they thanked everyone at OPENHouse for the help and support they had received. Richard asked Karen to thank the service users for their reports.

11. Any Other Business

There was no further business for discussion.

12. Close of AGM

Richard Brinton brought the AGM to a close by thanking everyone for the contributions they had made to the meeting.

The AGM closed at 7.00pm.