

# **Shire Training Workshops t/a OPENhouse**

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**5.00pm, Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020**

**Held via Zoom**

### **1. Welcome and Introductions by the Chair**

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

In his opening address, Richard said the past 18 months had been a challenging period and it was a tribute to all those at OPENhouse who had contributed to ensuring the organisation had kept going through such difficult times. If anything, OPENhouse has grown with the needs of the times and has enhanced its reputation with both Gloucestershire County Council and Stroud District Council during the exceptional circumstances presented by the Covid Pandemic. Everyone wished that things were more settled but there were signs for optimism that the hard work being put in now would secure benefits for the future.

### **2. Apologies for Absence**

No apologies had been received.

### **3. Approval of 2019 AGM Minutes**

It was proposed by that the Minutes of the 2019 AGM be approved and signed by the Chairman.

**Proposed:** Nicki Severs                      **Seconded:** Andy Warner

The proposal was agreed unanimously by those members present.

### **4. Presentation of Trustees' Reports for 2019/20**

#### **Housing Support and Enhanced Support Overview**

The Service Manager, presented an overview of the year ay OPENhouse. She said 16 referrals had been made by GCC, of which 14 had been accepted. Those rejected had been as a result of aggressive behaviour. This was an indicator of the more difficult referrals OPENhouse was now being expected to deal with. OPENhouse nevertheless remained committed to offering a wide range of service and was now additionally providing crash pad accommodation when needed.

The Supporting People contract had ended on 3st March 2020 which was a great disappointment to many, especially to those residents who had had to leave OPENhouse as a result. It had taken a lot of care and effort from staff to help them move on to other suitable accommodation. OPENhouse would be tendering again for a Supporting People contract once it is available from GCC.

With the onset of the Covid pandemic, OPENhouse was approached by SCC for help with the provision of accommodation for rough sleepers. OPENhouse now has a contract with SCC for this provision for the next 6 months from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2020. Hopefully this will become a longer term arrangement.

There were currently 4 residents at Delmont's Lot with 1 void. The onset of Covid has had a big impact on the ways in which support has traditionally been given but staff were continuing to work in new ways to ensure that clients continued to get the help they needed.

In addition, 9 clients were receiving floating support in their own homes.

The Service Manager said it had been an exceptionally difficult year but thanks to the efforts being made by staff, the organisation was continuing to move on.

### **Operations Update**

The Operations Manager said Covid has had a significant impact on the way things are now managed at OPENhouse. A full risk assessment was undertaken at the outset and has been kept under continuous review. The emphasis has been particularly on more frequent cleaning and enhanced hygiene wherever possible.

IT plays an increasingly important role in the running of OPENhouse and a number of updates have taken place during the year:

- The Organisation's cyber security accreditation has been renewed.
- All PCs have been upgraded with Windows 10 and Office 365 software.
- Additional enhancements have been made to the website.
- Upgraded CCTV surveillance has been installed at Delmont's Lot.

The Operations Manager said that substantial maintenance and upgrade work had been carried out at Painswick Inn during the year. He presented a short series of slides to illustrate some of this work.

## **5. Presentation of Accounts and Annual Report for the year ending 31 March 2020**

The Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2020 were presented by Anna Herbert. She referred in particular to some of the main figures in the accounts:

- OPENHouse had an income during the year of £556,833 against an expenditure of £575,909 resulting in a deficit of £19,076 in the years' accounts.
- Overall income had decreased from £736,649 to in the previous year, but there had also been a significant decrease in expenditure compared to £666,846 in 2019.

On a positive note, as shown in the accounts, 48 High Street had been sold and now provided OPENhouse with more substantial cash reserves. However, as the sale price was slightly lower than the valuation had been, this was reflected as a loss in the overall asset figure for OPENhouse..

Anna said that a lot of work had gone into reducing outstanding debts owed to OPENhouse. The figure for this year was down to £28K compared with £41K for 2019.

As no questions were raised regarding the annual report and accounts, The Chairman then put forward the following **Resolution**:

**To adopt the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010.**

**Proposed:** Andy Warner                      **Seconded:** Tim Mugford

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

## **6. Submitted Questions and Answers**

Members had been invited to submit any general questions they wished to raise which would be answered at the AGM. No written questions had been received.

## **7. Resignation from the Board of Trustees**

The Chairman said that Deborah Leah was standing down as a Trustee following 7 years' service on the Board. On behalf of OPENhouse he expressed his gratitude for her work and input over such an extended period of time.

## **8. Re-appointment of Auditors**

Richard Brinton paid thanks to the auditors, Hewitt Warren for preparing the accounts. He said working with the auditors had been a very positive and thoroughly professional experience through the year and he had no hesitation in recommending that they be re-appointed for a further year.

He proposed the following **Resolution**:

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

**Proposed:** Nicki Severs **Seconded :** Lucas Shoemaker

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

## **9. Presentation on last 12 months**

Anna Herbert said an enormous amount of thanks and praise needed to be given to the staff at OPENhouse who had worked well above their job descriptions in order to keep services going through such an unprecedented period of time. It had been a truly amazing experience.

The loss of the Supporting People contract had been a blow, but it offered an opportunity for OPENhouse to re-group and focus its efforts going forward.

There had been an increase in capital investment in property improvements. This needed to be seen as part of an ongoing policy in order to make the most of the accommodation facilities OPENhouse has to offer.

Changing circumstances help to broaden horizons. OPENhouse's ability to respond to the accommodation needs for rough sleepers was an indication of the aid that the organisation can offer to the current needs of society.

## **10. Looking Forward to the Year Ahead**

Anna Herbert said continuing to provide accommodation for rough sleepers would play a part in helping to end homelessness in Stroud. It would also help in providing with mental health and addiction support along with other agencies. She said OPENhouse was in a position to play a key role in these areas.

When the time came, a fresh tender would be made for the Supporting People contract. However, accommodation has been full for most of the year so there will be a need to look at options to create more accommodation on the site.

Anna said a number of challenges lay ahead including:

- Reduced funding from current contracts
- Further building repairs and renovations
- Changes to the current remit, looking to a wider age range
- Continuing to deal with Covid-19

Anna added that OPENhouse was ready to tackle these challenges and a lot of work lay ahead:

- Developing a business strategy for funding
- Researching grant funding for future capital investments
- Being prepared to adapt and respond to change post-Covid.

Anna said she saw the immediate targets to focus on would be:

- To build on the OPENhouse brand and values
- Review the scope of services offered and develop relationships with local organisations to offer employment opportunities.
- Prioritise support for addition and mental health disorders.
- Work to maintain the current homelessness prevention contract beyond the current 6 months

In closing, Anna thanked the staff at OPENhouse and the Trustees for their help and support throughout the year.

Richard added his thanks to Anna and congratulated the staff for all they have achieved during the year and highly commended their efforts through difficult times. He said new challenges lay ahead and he had confidence that those at OPENhouse would deal with them in the best possible way.

## **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 and said that if members had questions at any time they were welcome to call by OPENhouse or contact Anna.

The AGM closed at 6.30pm.