**Shire Training Workshops t/a OPENhouse**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**5.00pm, Monday 13th December 2021**

**Held via Zoom**

**In Attendance:** Richard Brinton, Chairman. Nikki Severs, Trustee. Andy Warner, Trustee. Anna Herbert, CEO. Neil Sharpe, Operations Manager. Members: Jill Hancock, Lucas Shoemaker. Alan Clarke, Minute Secretary.

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

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

Richard said the AGM had been unavoidably delayed due to issues with finalising the annual accounts. The accounts themselves were fine, but there had been a number of delays with the OPENHouse accountants who appear to have experienced difficulties through the Covid pandemic.

During the year, OPENHouse had also had to face many operational problems presented by the pandemic, all in addition to the normal day to day difficulties. Richard said he had been very impressed with the way that Anna and her team had faced up to and dealt with the many challenges. He congratulated her and all the staff at OPENHouse for their professionalism throughout.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Alasdair Gordon.

**3. Approval of 2020 AGM Minutes**

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

**Proposed:** Andy Warner **Seconded:** Lucas Shoemaker

The proposal was agreed unanimously by those members present.

**4. Presentation of Reports for 2020/21**

Anna Herbertthanked those who attended the AGM and said she would be presenting the reports as the Service Manager, Sam Gilbert, was currently on long-term sick leave.

**Painswick Inn**

She said that there were currently no voids at Painswick Inn. This was largely due to the Government edict to provide accommodation for rough sleepers during the Covid epidemic. In doing this, OPENHouse was helping to provide a number of social needs. Annasaid she was also currently in discussion with Stroud District Council on the provision of severe weather emergency accommodation at OPENHouse.

OPENHouse had recently agreed a Supporting People contract with the District Council.

**Delmont’s Lot**

Annasaid accommodation at Delmont’s Lot was provided for 5 people with primarily non-complex needs. However 3 of the current service users had highly complex needs and dealing with this was taking a toll on staff. Discussions were ongoing with Council Social Services about the appropriate level of referrals to OPENHouse as staff are not properly equipped to deal with such complex levels of need and this is not in the long-term interests of those service users.

Moving service users on from OPENHouse was a slow process, largely due to a shortage of accommodation and the fact that some service users have severe and complex problems. While 3 service users had moved on during the year, this was below the target hoped for which had been 5.

One flat at Delmont’s Lot has recently been fully refurbished thanks to a grant being received.

**Operational Update**

**Covid19.** Full covid protocols were in place at OPENHouse. Funding for this, including for PPE, was being received from Gloucestershire County Council. Nevertheless, OPENHouse was experiencing a loss of income through accommodation hire during to the pandemic.

**Maintenance.** A full 5 yearly electrical has been carried out. Some safety work had been completed to cut back large trees on site. Restoration work, including repair to stonework, has been done at the British School. General maintenance to accommodation is ongoing, often due to damage inflicted by service users.

**5.** **Accounts 2020/21**

Anna presented the annual accounts which had been previously circulated. She pointed out that income for the year had been £445,049 while outgoings were £405,932 giving a surplus of £39,117. She said this was an extraordinary outcome given the current operational circumstances. Most of the surplus has been subsequently spent on maintenance to the buildings.

Anna said, at the end of the financial year, OPENHouse held fixed assets valued at £1.525M and bank cash assets of £282, 738.

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 31st March 2021.**

**Proposed:** Nikki Severs **Seconded:** Andy Warner

On being put to the vote, **the Resolution was agreed 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. Trustees**

The Chairman said there had been no changes to the Board of Trustees during the year and serving members were all willing to continue. However contacts are being made for potential new Trustees.

**8. Auditors**

The Chairman said the income level of OPENHouse meant that there was not a requirement to have a full audit of accounts each year. This was being kept under review. In the meantime the Trustees felt it would be appropriate to look at a change of Auditors for the current year and he put forward the following **Resolution:**

**That the Trustees and OPENHouse Management look at options for a change of Auditors.**

**Proposed:** Lucas Shoemaker **Seconded:** Nikki Severs

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

Lucas Shoemaker said he had a suggestion for a potential local Auditor and would pass the information on after the AGM.

**9. Membership Considerations**

The Chairman said that despite the number of registered members, OPENHouse only ever received contact from a handful and the feeling was that this was perhaps not very representative. There were currently 42 members on the mailing list but there appeared to be little value gained from this.

Jill Hancock said perhaps because of the change of OPENHouse focus from training to supported housing, members may be unsure of what they can offer.

Lucas Shoemaker said that there was a need to highlight that Steiner principles were still being respected. Annasaid OPENHouse was fully committed to Steiner principles and in particular to transforming lives. The Star Anise café on site was also an example of providing help and engagement with work experience for service users.

It was agreed that the membership list needed to be refreshed regularly and kept up to date. Consideration could be given to membership being renewed on an annual basis rather than for life.

**10. Reflections on the last 12 months and the year ahead**

Anna said the year had again posed many problems. The Covid19 pandemic was adding to the everyday pressures at OPENHouse while the organisation was being faced with increasing numbers of service users with very complex needs. Despite this, staff had continued to face up and deal with the challenges this brought. All this was aided by focussing on the strengths at OPENHouse while broadening the remit to meet changing needs. This has helped to build an excellent relationship with Stroud District Council with the aim of addressing the issues surrounding the accommodation needs of local homeless people.

OPENHouse will maintain its efforts in this respect despite the ongoing difficulties thrown up by reduced funding for contracts and increased costs, particularly for staff salaries and listed building maintenance. Anna said she had confidence in the organisation’s ability to adapt and respond to a landscape that was now the new normal. Crucial to this is maintaining financial resilience by aiming to stay in profit. OPENHouse also needs to remain outcome focussed while building quality assurance and delivering on its contractual services and objectives. Keeping an open and flexible approach will play a key part in meeting the ever changing needs of those most vulnerable in society today.

Lucas thanked Anna and her staff for a very fulsome report and for providing a good service in difficult circumstances.

Jill agreed and complimented OPENHouse on its brilliant achievements during the year.

**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.