

4SIGHT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

28th October 2016 at 11.00am.

Clair Hall, Haywards Heath.

1. Welcome

The meeting was opened by the 4SIGHT Chairman Dr Norman Boyland DL who welcomed everyone to this years' meeting in Haywards Heath.

2. Attendees/Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from one Trustee Robert Hayes and 25 members. In attendance were 97 people made up of members, volunteers, Trustees, VIP guests, guest speakers, staff and the 4SIGHT Auditor. Also in attendance were equipment suppliers and local voluntary organisations.

3. Minutes of the AGM held on 30th October 2015.

The Chairman presented these minutes and it was **proposed by David Whyberd, seconded by Janette Penn and unanimously approved by all members present that these minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of that meeting.** There were no matters arising from those minutes.

4. Report from 4SIGHT Chairman – Dr Norman Boyland DL.

The past year has been a time of continued change and this particularly so as Nik has started to bring his experience and influence to bear on the management of 4SIGHT. It begins a new chapter in our long history and I am pleased to be able to report things have started well with the year under review being a good one. A number of steps taken both before and during the last year have proved successful in strengthening our financial position and this has given Nik a chance to assess the continued challenges we face and how best to meet them.

It is very gratifying to report a strengthening of our area structures with area committees now in place or being formed across the County. It is through these we will be able to build much closer links with all our members and be able to reach out to many who might benefit from our services. We are already seeing the benefits with our very successful new centre in Midhurst and the ever-stronger area committee in Mid Sussex where Phil Revis, the area Chairman has continued to drive a strong volunteer programme and provide a raised profile. In Shoreham we have been able to move into smart new accommodation in the civic centre and this, the culmination of at least three years hard work and negotiation, has given the team there new impetus.

We will continue to work to bind all these excellent efforts together using our branding as 4SIGHT, a name that over the last year or two, has been achieving much greater recognition across the County.

Our communications are key and we will be taking a closer look at these in the coming year but in the meantime, I would like to commend our newsletter to you, as this gives an excellent overview of our activities across the organisation, both past and what is coming up in the near future. Well done Sonia, who almost un-noticed, compiles the articles and distributes the newsletter each month.

As a dispersed organisation, excellent communication and close teamwork between clubs, area committees and the central services will help us to grow our strength and influence and make best use of our precious resources.

Working together in the last year at local and club level, regionally through district committees and county wide through the central team, we have again been able to fulfil our mission and purpose in bringing support and benefits to our community and in particular, those people with sight impairment.

I have mentioned that our finances have been more secure in the past year and we are certainly more in control of our fundraising now this has been brought back in house. It is a real pleasure to be able to recognise the efforts of the fundraising team, spearheaded by Bev, and some of the successes they have had. Also, to thank all those organisations listed in the annual report that have supported us through the year under review. Locally though, and to give perspective to the diversity of fund raising efforts I would like to cite events such as the Bognor Hotham Rotary club's 10k run for which we were the lead charity, Mayor Sujan Wickremaratchi's fundraising dinner here in Haywards Heath and of course the Mid Sussex Tandem ride this year in which he took part. Also, the Chichester university events students who support us with an event each year, and the ramble at Angmering so kindly allowed by our late Patron Lady Sarah and this year again by her husband Nigel.

Big events such as these together with the generous donations from Trusts and local government have helped benefit sight impaired people across the County through the support and services we offer. It is a truly an inclusive and collective effort for which all the Trustees express their gratitude.

Big challenges remain however, none the least of which is an indication from the County Council that the annual grant they have provided in years past is to be gradually phased out. Your

Trustees have anticipated this may happen for some years and considerable effort has been made to diversify the income streams 4SIGHT depends upon. Even so, this loss represents around 20% of our income and must be replaced over a three-year period just to maintain the current funding levels. As previously reported we have developed experience with working in partnership, contracting and bidding to supply the services we offer. We anticipate the partnerships we have formed and this experience will be very useful in the task ahead as central and local government looks to fulfil their statutory obligations in the absence of traditional funding.

We do not yet know the way the vote to leave the European Union will work out but it is worth mentioning that in the past there has been a good flow of support for charities such as 4SIGHT via European funding which will now disappear. This loss is a further challenge and at 4SIGHT we will be watching carefully to see how the UK government intends to replace it.

Our operational achievements are laid out in some detail in the Trustees Annual report and I commend this to you. However, my comments would not be complete without congratulating Nik and the whole of his team on their achievements this year. They have shown immense maturity and flexibility in the face of all the work changes and funding uncertainty thrown at them. The Trustees will be working closely with them in the coming year updating the strategic plan, plotting our way forward in the future and producing a new business plan to accommodate the inevitable changes that will follow the Brexit decision.

As Chairman I have again been fortunate to have the support of a strong team of Trustees. However, elections in Crawley have resulted in heavier local government demands on Stephen

Joyce's' time and sadly I have received his resignation. Stephen has served 4SIGHT as a Trustee for more than 12 years and I am extremely grateful for all the contributions he has made during that time. We wish Stephen well as he focuses on his local authority responsibilities.

During the year we have been fortunate to recruit a number of area chairpersons who - by virtue of this role - are eligible to become Trustees, including Derek Drake in Crawley, Maureen Jenkins in Arun and Chichester and Velia Hall in Midhurst. Also, we have co-opted Sheilagh Baker, one of our volunteers and a retired Orthoptist to the Board during the year and Sheilagh with the area Chairs, will be standing for election as Trustees. I commend each one of them to you.

Of the future, I said last year 'Evolving a sustainable charity in an ever-changing environment continues to present major challenges and a need to adopt new ways of doing things. The constant is the service we offer in support of all those with sight loss and vision impairment.' We have delivered on our service promise in the last year and I remain very positive that although the environment remains just as uncertain or more so, we have the skill and tenacity to continue to fulfil it in the future.

Finally, I would like to repeat my thanks and those of all the Trustees, to the staff and very active team of volunteers for their continued unstinting efforts, without which 4SIGHT would be unable to fulfil its mission. Also, thanks to my fellow Trustees who have supported me throughout the year and given freely of their time and skills in support of the Charity.

5. Report from 4SIGHT Chief Executive – Nik Demetriades.

Using a series of presentation slides, Nik said 4SIGHT had a positive & successful year and that our financial performance had improved, with grants up by 8%, our fundraising efforts improved, donations were up, Bognor shop sales had increased by 23%, overall, our net income was up by 37% to £115,800 and the formation of more Area Committees was improving, rising from 2 committees to 5 in a year.

Nik went on to say that, looking more closely, there were significant challenges ahead which included reduced funding as a result of our WSCC core grant tapering down to zero in 3 years' time, alongside a slow decline in membership and the number of our activity/leisure clubs across the County reducing also.

He went on to show slides that gave some of the results from the recent Members & Stakeholders Survey that had taken place early this year. Some positives from those surveyed were that;

- Club members 'love our clubs!'
- 93% rate our staff as excellent or good
- 92.7% would recommend us
- 89.6% feel supported
- 93.8% feel welcomed
- 81.3% say we've helped
- 85% know we cover West Sussex
- 81% of Partners feel appreciated

One person surveyed said: *"4SIGHT means opportunity, technology, friendship and support"*

Summary of Positives:

- Loyalty is consistently high
- 4SIGHT's people are advocates for the charity
- Volunteers / Partners feel really valued
- Our greatest offer = the help & support we provide

Feedback from the survey highlighted the following challenges for the charity;

- Average age of members = 80.7 years
- Only 13% of members access Information, Advice and Guidance from 4SIGHT
- Only 39% of members use the resource centres
- 16.7% said they don't feel valued
- Only 25% heard of us through the Sight Care Advisors
- Only 5% heard of us through ROVIs
- 71% didn't know we worked with the ROVIs

Our Partner organisations and Funders said -

- We don't inform them enough
- 37% would like an e-bulletin

One respondent said: *"4SIGHT needs to ask members more, and give members a better idea of what it offers right across the County"*

Summary of challenges;

- We need to better inform members about our services and partners about what we're doing
- Offer services in the North of the county
- Work with younger visually impaired people

- Value our Members and the 4SIGHT brand more!

Another respondent said: *'Raise awareness of 4SIGHT by sharing the stories of the changes you make to people's lives'*

Members and Stakeholders were asked for the positives and negatives thoughts on our name '4SIGHT' and what it means to them. Comments included;

- It's nice and neat
- It's memorable
- It's modern
- Aptly named

Equally, others said:

- It's confusing
- It means nothing to most people
- It's not clear what you are and what you do
- Unsure what it stands for

Nik summed up his report on the Membership & Stakeholder Survey by saying that in the coming months:

We will work as a Team to find ways:

To improve our reach, to better inform, to value each other and to enable & support visually impaired people in West Sussex.

Nik also invited the audience to view the new 4SIGHT website that went 'live' that morning.

6. Report from 4SIGHT Hon. Treasurer – Arthur Mayson.

Copies of the full statutory accounts have been available ahead of this meeting and further copies are available today for those

that require them. They are also available on line via the 4Sight website.

The accounts have to be presented in a very precise format to comply with the requirements of the Charity Commission and Company Legislation to accompany the Trustees report of which they are an integral part. They therefore contain a lot of detail and information which is sometimes difficult to follow.

Most individuals simply wish to know how we performed in the year and whether we are in a sound position financially. I am pleased to report that the answer to both questions is positive and to help you understand how we have fared; a summary is shown on screen.

It is pleasing to report that we have maintained last year's progress in that income has once more exceeded expenditure. We have never budgeted for legacies but these have again boosted the figures but even without them we would have achieved a substantial surplus. With steadier economic conditions Trusts and Foundations grants have increased.

Costs have also been strictly controlled resulting in a reduction of £13K overall.

I should also like thank those individuals and clubs and area committees who have assisted in fundraising activities by giving so generously of their time and money. It is pleasing to see that clubs are now virtually self-financing which releases central funds for major activities.

We are also very grateful to community fundraisers such as Chichester University, with whom we have a very fruitful relationship, Rotary and Lions Clubs and the various parish and town councils who award us grants.

We are always seeking new sources of funding and with this in mind, we have been seeking contracts with NHS bodies and partnerships with other organisations which are finally beginning to bear fruit. This is just as well since our funding from West Sussex County Council is to be phased out over the next 3 years which presents us with a major challenge. I believe however that we are a viable and competitive service provider with a good track record and this is a significant factor when applying for grants and tendering for contracts.

I can report that as shown in the accounts, shop income has risen 23% which is encouraging but the shops are still not performing or contributing at the level that was anticipated when we decided to go down this route. To this end we are seeking outside advice on our retail activities by employing a retail consultant at modest costs.

Similarly, our experiment in employing outside fundraisers has now been terminated and we have brought this operation back in house. Initial indications show this is bringing positive results.

We are able to do this because of the improved financial position shown in the accounts and to which I have referred in my report. We should be able to move forward by expanding activities whilst still mindful of controlling costs.

I should like to conclude by thanking all staff for their efforts in the year under review. Everyone is concerned with all aspects of finance but my particular thanks go to Mel and Sonia (our small finance team) who are ever resourceful and again to be complimented on achieving an unqualified examiner's report.

You will be hearing shortly from Paul Wright of Sheen Stickland but I should like to add my personal thanks for his guidance and support during the year and not just at audit time.

Our new Chief Executive, Nik Demetriades, has quickly settled in and has greatly assisted the trustees by developing new reporting procedures which aid us in our role of directing the Charity.

In summary therefore, we have weathered some years of difficulty but I believe that we are now in a sound position to meet the challenges ahead.

If there are any specific questions these will be taken at the end of the meeting. Thank you all for your support.

7. Report from Auditor – Sheen Stickland

Paul Wright said it has been an honour to be involved with 4SIGHT once again for another year and that he finds it a pleasure in attending AGM's like ours because it enables him to understand how charities function and deliver their services. He went on to say he always finds the 4SIGHT AGM's very enjoyable and informative.

He reported that our accounts are now prepared under a new set of regulations and consist of two parts; the accounting part showing all relevant figures and the trustee report which shows the exciting challenges to come, the difficulties experienced in the last year, the financial health of the charity and the indication factors that we needed to take into account.

He said it was a pleasure to say that a surplus was made for period ending March 2015 and that we are now back to a position of having proper reserves. He said the cash flow figure shows it is nearly £90k higher than that shown in the previous financial year.

He concluded by saying that he was able to confirm that the 4SIGHT Trustees have carried out their role adequately and are doing all the right things for the future and continue to ensure that expenditure is well controlled. He went on to say we are being sensible in choosing to work with other charities and partners, especially when it comes to joint funding applications.

Going forward, he reported that he has no concerns as an examiner of this charity.

8. Annual Trustee Report and Accounts for 2015/2016.

Norman Boyland formally presented the accounts for adoption bringing to attention that the resignation of Stephen Joyce albeit during the current year rather than the year under review means his name is still shown in the report. **The Annual Trustee Report and Financial Statements for P/E March 2016 were proposed by Phil Revis, seconded by David Whyberd and unanimously approved by all members present.** There were no member comments on these accounts or report.

9. Nomination and election of Trustees

There were four Trustee nominations put forward this year and all had been co-opted to the Board in previous months. The nominations were; Sheilagh Baker from Adur area, Derek Drake from Crawley area, Velia Hall from Midhurst area and Maureen Jenkins from Arun area. The Chairman asked each of the nominees to stand and give a brief history of their experience and state why they wished to stand.

After the nominees had given their introduction they left the room whilst the vote took place. The Chairman asked members if they had any comments and two members spoke;

DB (Midhurst) – “without the help from Velia, I would not be where I am and certainly would not be here at this meeting today. She has been a great help to many of us in the Midhurst centre”.

DL (Mid Sussex) – “it’s nice to see three ladies of a mature age and with social care experience standing and I would like to **propose** we vote for all the nominees’ en-bloc”.

The proposal was seconded by David Whyberd and the four nominees were duly elected by all members present to the Board of Trustees.

The existing Trustees wished to remain standing for the coming year and were voted in unanimously. A slide was displayed showing the current and newly elected Trustees;

Honorary Officers

- Chairman: Norman Boyland
- Vice-Chair: David Whyberd
- Treasurer: Arthur Mayson

Elected Trustees

- Jan Penn
- Robert Hayes

Area Trustees

- Phil Revis (Mid-Sussex)
- Derek Drake (Crawley)
- Maureen Jenkins (Arun & Chichester)
- Velia Hall (Midhurst)
- Sheilagh Baker (Adur)

10. Special Resolutions – There were none.

11. 4SIGHT Volunteer of the Year Awards 2016.

This year's awards went to Anne Tomlinson for her dedicated fundraising efforts in the Mid Sussex area and to David Beer for the static box collections from many outlets throughout the county.

12. Questions from the floor.

Q. A member from East Grinstead said she has been treated for her Macular Degeneration at Surrey hospital and has been referred onto someone who has been very helpful to her. However, she does not know what organisation she was referred to and does not know what service she has become a member of.

Mandy Whitman answered this question by saying that whenever the Sight Care Advisors see someone within the hospital setting, they always explain that they are employed by 4SIGHT but as people can be very emotional at this point, they may not always remember who they have seen.

Q. Sujan Wickremaratchi – WS County Member for Haywards Heath and Town Mayor asked what engagement we have with the county schools.

Nik Demetriades took this question and replied that it is our aim to do more work with younger people in the county who are living with sight loss and that, subject to securing the appropriate funding for such a project, we do have the opportunity to work with the 13 Special Needs Schools in the County to help identify sight loss in young people with additional needs earlier, as it could be a potential barrier to their attainment.

However, obtaining the exact figures of young people in West Sussex with sight loss is rather difficult so we will be working with other partners to try to overcome this so we can engage with them to identify their needs.

Bev Tinson then took the floor and explained that 4SIGHT obtained some funding through the County Local Committees back in 2012 and used this money to put together some Sight Awareness Packs that were sent out to every school in the county. As a result, about six different schools invited 4SIGHT in to do presentations to various year groups. She said that one particular Community College local to the Bognor HQ arranges for Health & Social Care students to come into the centre in January to have a Sight Awareness Session with the Outreach Workers.

Q. A member from the Mid Sussex Ramblers Group asked if we thought there were enough reminders in the newsletters about the benefits of Gift Aid.

Arthur Mayson took the question and said he will speak with the finance team to see how this can be rectified.

Chairman's closing remarks

The meeting was closed at 12.30pm by Dr Norman Boyland who said the meeting had been very enjoyable and informative and he thanked the people of Haywards Heath for making us welcome, 4SIGHT staff for organising the event, our volunteers who helped on the day and to everyone for coming. A note of thanks was also expressed to all the suppliers and organisations for coming along to the event.