

Wakefield District City of Sanctuary

Minutes of Annual General Meeting October 28th, 2022

Wakefield Baptist Church and on Zoom

Present: Siegfried Breuning (M), Flora Davies (M), Richard Davies (M), Brian Hamill (M), Tracey Kinsella (M), Barbara Lodge (M)* Don Lodge (M)* Elizabeth Martin (M)* Susan Sanderson (M), Dr Richard Sloan (M)* Claire Way (M)* Bryan Weston Mucheriwa (M)* Hilary Cooper*, Salli*, Jen Brummitt*, Sarah Connell* (M) – (11 people of the 15 present were members)

1. Dick Davies, as Chair, welcomed everyone to the face to face and zoom meeting
2. **Apologies:** Linda Fielding, Josie Walsh, Joy High
3. **The Minutes** of the AGM July 28th, 2021, were proposed and accepted as a true record by 6 votes for and 5 abstentions.

4. Matter Arising

A query was raised as to the number of members on the list and whether the meeting was quorate.

It was established that the number of members needed for a quorate general meeting was the greater of 10% or five members. Since the total listed membership was 34 and the members present were 11 in number: the meeting was therefore quorate.

Dick also said that the listed membership was different in number to the recipients on the emailing list as that included volunteers who were not members. That list was approximately 120.

5. Chair's Report

Dick gave a commentary on the written Report which he had previously circulated (Appendix 1). He displayed the basic elements of his commentary onscreen by PowerPoint. (Appendix 2)

Welcome and induction – website

Important words – equality and welcome – relieve poverty

Year of Challenges

Sustain social interaction - Increasing use of St Michael's as a centre of welcome - Food store etc – Mosques. Clothing Store – Latter Day Saints – Resource limited

English

Siegfried gave a short report – the online facility was working well – there was more consistency in attendance – clients could stay in touch after leaving Wakefield – help with letters of reference and support at a distance – first year there was up to 30, many from Turkey who had good English and became teachers – numbers allowed a morning and afternoon session during the week – now there is a shortage of teachers as these have moved on in their lives – 5 have departed and 2 are ill.

Susan added her comments that online work was very rewarding – it provided a safe space to talk and hear English – no need for training as teachers.

Loan of tablet computers

We still have over 130 tablet computers on loan to residents of the hostel and the hotel. Many get broken but there is often help from Urban House residents to mend them – overall the system is working well. Urban House staff report the positive benefits to mental well-being.

Welcome to Wakefield

The new Media group postcards were on show featuring the art of Bryan, Maha, Maryam, Mo, and Nazreen. We also saw the Window stickers and plastic cards being used to give free entry to Hepworth and spread the message of welcome to sanctuary seekers in town.

Craft and Handiwork etc

The various projects run in conjunction with other – especially the Art House Studio of Sanctuary included Art, Craft and Planting.

Sanctuary Awards

WMDC approving – means collaborating with us – Art House

Query from floor

Refugee children in Urban House – helped to apply to WDMC – quick learners – transport difficulties

Volunteers

We were reminded that we are still in great need with respect to volunteers. All are encouraged both to volunteer and recruit more helpers.

Former Co-workers

Our appreciation of the great contribution made by former volunteers. Special mention was made of Jen, of Nigel and of course Linda.

6. Finance Report

Claire gave a brief introduction to the Annual Finance Report which had been circulated previously. (Appendix 3)

7. The resolution to formally adopt the accounts was passed unanimously

8. Election of Trustees

Siegfried Breuning and Susan Sanderson were retiring as trustees according to the rotation system of the Constitution. They were however available to be re-elected for 3 years and had agreed to stand again. Their appointment was unanimously supported by the members.

9. Members Discussion

Query: How do we become Trustees?

Reply: Dick said that up to the present, when anyone offered to become a Trustee, he would look for background information himself. There was the need for more than one person doing this work and an application form might be created in the future. The candidate is then invited to a Trustees' meeting as an observer and subsequently there would be a vote on the candidate if he/she still wished to continue.

We need specialist assistance in legal matters and fund-raising etc, but it was pointed out that such specialists do not have to become Trustees.

Query: Who is the link person now Linda has left this work?

Reply: Connor has the WDCoS (Wakefield District City of Sanctuary) phone and there is an email address plus that phone number on the website. Susan, Dick, and Connor are the three involved in fielding and responding to queries.

Query: What is the status of our Food Store?

Reply: The St Michael's food store is busy provided food for both the Asylum Community but also for the local destitute population. The Council provided funding specifically for this purpose and Claire is seeking an increase in this amount. We are looking to a reconnection with the Morrison's Depot at Junction 41 for contributions.

Flora commented that the Trustees are doing work which is not specific to their office especially on the areas of administration and secretarial work. There is a clear need to lighten the burden on them.

Query: Is the food bank for just Refugees & sanctuary seekers? (a minority are not)

Query: Are some donations given for refugees only? (the majority are not)

Comment: Many People are Waiting outside the food bank (there is a lack of volunteers we would like to open more days! - we are recruiting volunteers)

Query: Can we have a Christmas Party? – (Tracy volunteered to organise one)

Dick closed the meeting.