

## ROOT & BRANCH

### Minutes of Annual General Meeting – 2010

*Monday 25 October starting at 7 pm*

Held at Coleshill Village Café, Carpenters Yard, Coleshill, SN6 7PT.

In the Chair

Ian Matheson

Present

Dave Butterworth*, Trustee	Nicola Fordham*	Peter Moss*
Chloe Cooke*, Trustee	Patrick Hand*	Alex Mullins*, Trustee
Phil Chesterton*	Susan Hand*	Gill Palmer*
Gordon Davidson*	Ian Matheson*, Trustee	Trish Wickstead*, Trustee
Liz Faulkner	Faith Mitchell, Manager	

\*Root & Branch members. There were 12 members present.

#### **1. Welcome and introductions**

Ian Matheson welcomed those present at the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Brian Mildenhall (trustee/treasurer), Adam Twine (patron) and Yvonne Castellano (advisor to the trustees).

#### **2. Minutes of previous meeting**

The meeting approved these as a true record of the last meeting (proposed by Peter Moss and seconded by Liz Faulkner).

#### **3. Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting**

There were no matters arising.

#### **4. Annual report**

Trish Wickstead gave an overview of the year which ran from April 2009 to March 2010. She presented the main highlights of the year which are that we

- Helped a total of 37 people with mental health problems some of whom have moved on to employment, education or voluntary work.
- Continued to operate a healthy-eating activity throughout Oxfordshire with support from the Big Lottery Funded chances4change programme
- Sustained and developed our team of dedicated volunteers who have a wide range of skills and expertise to share.
- Succeeded in obtaining major funding from Zurich Community Trust and Lloyds TSB Foundation.
- Forged a close relationship with Faringdon and District Rotary Club resulting in the club supporting us in many ways.
- Held a successful open day in July 2009 which raised just over £1000.

- Completed and erected a 6 metre high totem pole to add to the exciting features around our site. Many service users helped to carve the pole during the previous year.
- Created a new and attractive gravel garden from a previously unpromising weed-infested, hard-standing area. This project was conceived and led by Susan, one of our service users.
- Developed a closer relationship with Bridewell Organic Gardens that we hope will lead to successful future collaboration.
- Completed the forged lettering, "Faringdon" that now can be seen when you enter Faringdon on the road from Lechlade.
- Maintained our transport service for clients, to help them reach our site

As Trish was resigning as a trustee at this meeting, she was presented with a gift and flowers, and thanked for her excellent work for Root & Branch over the years.

## **5. Financial Report**

Dave Butterworth presented the annual accounts in the absence of the treasurer, Brian Mildenhall. An excerpt from the accounts was circulated at the meeting and full copies were available at the meeting for people to consult. The reports and accounts had been prepared by AJ Carter & Co. (chartered accountants).

Dave first showed a bar chart showing income and expenditure for the 5 years ending 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010. This gave a healthy overall picture with most years showing a surplus of income over expenditure.

He then went into details of our accounts for the 12-month period from 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010. This showed

• Incoming resources	£110,289
• Resources expended	£101,231
• Net incoming resources	£9,058
• Brought forward funds	£30,023 (from the previous year)
• Carried forward funds	£39,081 (carried forward into the next year)

He explained that the "funds" carried forward were mainly in the form of cash but did include some tangible assets comprising the residual (not yet written off) value of capital items bought during the year and during previous years.

The major sources of income were Oxfordshire PCT, Big Lottery Funded chances4change programme, Oxfordshire County Council, Zurich Community Trust and Lloyds TSB Foundation for England and Wales. In addition, we had many small donations and had sold craft items and plants.

The main costs during the year were staff costs, rent and insurance, repairs and equipment renewal, and transport.

The accounts were approved by the meeting (proposed by Liz Faulkner and seconded by Peter Moss)

Dave went on to outline the financial position for the current year, April 2010 to March 2011. The PCT contract had been rolled forward to around the end of the financial year meaning that we retain funding from the PCT. We also continued to receive funding from Oxfordshire County Council (for transport) and from chances4change (for healthy eating). By the end of the year, we will receive the second instalment of the two-year funding from Lloyds TSB Foundation. We were pleased to receive an anonymous donation of £15,000. The

relationship we have formed with Faringdon and District Rotary Club resulted in a donation of £1500 in addition to the help in kind that they have been giving us.

With our known income for the year and estimated expenses, we are currently predicting a very healthy unrestricted cash surplus at the end of the year of £26,000. We will also carry forward substantial restricted funds.

We are also taking a number of new fund-raising initiatives:-

- Nicola Fordham has joined us as a volunteer to organise fundraising events and her first event, a wine tasting evening, raised over £300.
- We have contracted professional fundraisers who will raise funds on a commission basis from trusts that we have not developed contacts with.
- We are continuing to make proposals for funds to appropriate charitable trusts including the Allen Lane Foundation, Wates Foundation and Zurich Community Trust. Given the time scale in preparing these proposals and assessment processes, these bids may not all result in funding during the current financial year.

## **6. Future prospects for Root & Branch**

Faith Mitchell talked briefly about the prospects for Root & Branch and the initiatives that we were taking to ensure our future prosperity.

Firstly, she announced that we had today received notification from the Allen Lane Foundation that they will be providing us with funding of £12,000.

She stressed that while we did put a lot of effort into finding new funds, we were also ensuring that we focussed on the service that we provide to our users. Furthermore, we were a community charity and needed to be part of the community so that it was important to us that we receive support and funding from local groups in addition to the larger charitable trusts. She particularly mentioned the support we have from groups like Faringdon Rotary Club, Sing Faringdon, Faringdon Art Society, various faith groups and the Highworth Garden Society. Also, the work of Nicola Fordham in developing local fundraising activities is instrumental in developing community contacts.

Our current contract with the PCT comes to an end towards the end of the current financial year and so we have been working on a bid for the next round of contracts. As these new contracts require the provision of Oxfordshire-wide services, we are collaborating with other organisations in a joint bid. This bid is currently being finalised for imminent submission.

We hope to be successful in this new bid but are conscious that new requirements from the PCT, and working with other groups, will require us to change the way we provide some services. Also, the funding available to us from the new bid will not be sufficient on its own to give us long-term viability. We are therefore working on a business plan which involves us being funded from new organisations for us to provide them with similar services to other users with perhaps different needs than mental health. The idea is that we could open our site to these other groups on the days when we are not open for our current service users. With the agreement of our trustees and of the trustees of Bridewell Organic Gardens, we are developing this business plan as a collaborative venture with Bridewell.

Faith was asked if working with Bridewell would lead to a merger of Root & Branch and Bridewell. She replied that nothing was ruled in or out in the long term but that we have no immediate plans to merge.

## **7. Amendment to our Charitable Objects**

As noted in the previous item, we need to continue to help our current service users while providing services to new groups of service users. Our current Objects limit our scope to extend the type of service users we take on. Hence, in consultation with the Charity Commission, we have arrived at the following new objects:

"To promote the mental and emotional well-being of persons who are affected by a range of health problems including mental health problems and physical disabilities by, in particular but not exclusively, the provision of therapeutic horticulture and craft activities."

Dave Butterworth explained that the two key changes from our previous objects are that we would be able to have service users below 18 years of age and that we could also help service users with other problems than just mental health problems. The Charity Commission accepted these new objects but we needed the approval of the meeting before we adopt them.

The new objects were approved by the meeting (proposed by Peter Moss and seconded by Trish Wickstead).

### **8. Election of trustees and honorary officers**

The following existing trustees have stated that they wish to continue as trustees

- Dave Butterworth
- Chloe Cooke
- Ian Matheson
- Brian Mildenhall
- Alex Mullins

These were elected by the meeting (proposed by Gill Palmer, seconded by Peter Moss).

It was noted that Yvonne Castellano (one of the founders of Root & Branch) would continue to attend trustee meetings as an advisor.

As noted above, Trish Wickstead is retiring as a trustee.

The following trustees have offered to take on honorary posts (proposers and seconders shown in parenthesis)

- Ian Matheson – Chair (proposed by Gordon Davidson, seconded by Trish Wickstead)
- Brian Mildenhall – Treasurer (proposed by Ian Matheson, seconded by Chloe Cooke)
- Dave Butterworth – Secretary (proposed by Ian Matheson, seconded by Gordon Davidson)

These were approved by the meeting.

### **9. Any other business**

There was no other formal business. The Chair thanked all those that have contributed to the success of Root & Branch.

The meeting closed at 7:56 pm

*Dave Butterworth  
Hon. Secretary  
5 November 2010*