
Brighton & Hove Social Welfare and Educational Trust Ltd

Minutes of Annual General Meeting
held on Thursday 3rd November 2022
at St George's Hall, Moulsecoomb, and on Zoom at 7pm

There were 21 organisational members of the company present (represented by 31 people)

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| 1. Albion Life | 12. Robert Lodge Residents' Association |
| 2. Coldean Independents | 13. Salaam FC |
| 3. Chattri Memorial Group (Zoom) | 14. Somerset Point Residents' Association |
| 4. Coldean Residents' Association | 15. Sudan Club |
| 5. Essex Place Tenants' Association | 16. Sudanese Community in Sussex (Zoom) |
| 6. Hereford Court Tenants' Association | 17. Sudanese Women & Children (Zoom) |
| 7. Highcroft Lodge Residents' Association (Zoom) | 18. Sussex Refugee and Migrants Self Support Group |
| 8. Hollingdean Residents' Association | 19. Sussex Syrian Community CIO |
| 9. North Portslade Residents' Association | 20. Woodingdean Residents' Association |
| 10. On Your Way Job Club & Digital Inclusion | 21. Warwick Mount Tenants' Association |
| 11. Oromo Community in Brighton & Hove | |

Individual members of the Company present

Directors: Robin Berry, Awel Harun Abdo, Muriel Briault, Christine El-Shabba, Jonathan White, Ahmad Yabroudi

Staff: Dani Ahrens, Kate Chapman, Judy Goss, Kate Page, Mireille Shimoda, Rebecca Luton

Chair: Judy Goss; *Minutes:* Rebecca Luton

1. Chair's introduction

Judy welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming.

She introduced the Resource Centre staff.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from 10 organisational members:

1. 2nd Hangleton Rainbows
2. 3rd Hangleton Brownies
3. Alnoure Academy
4. Brighton & Hove Black History Group
5. Clarendon & Ellen Residents' Association
6. Craven Vale Community Association
7. Indian Friends of Brighton
8. Lupus Brighton & Hove

9. Sylvan Hall Residents' Association

10. Vertigirls

Apologies were received from two directors:

Ann Packham – Ingram Crescent Residents' Association

Aisha El-Turki – Alnoure Academy

Apologies were received from one individual:

Pat Weller

3. Welcome from Chair of Trustees/Directors

Robin welcomed everyone. He said it had been another difficult year but he continued to be amazed at the excellent work groups have been doing to support their communities. He said how delighted he was at being able to meet face-to-face again for this AGM after two years only on Zoom.

He announced the sad news that Barry Hughes, one of the Centre's directors, passed away this year and held a minute's silence for him.

He thanked everyone for their support and continuing to use the Centre's services, and also thanked staff for keeping the Centre running.

4. Minutes of B&H SWET Ltd Company AGM 3rd November 2021, and matters arising

There were no matters arising. The meeting approved the minutes of last year's AGM. There were no objections or abstentions.

5. Finance and Fundraising Report (Annual Report and Financial Statements year ended 31st March 2022 and financial position)

Mireille gave the following report on the Centre's financial position:

Finance Report 2021-22

Total income in 2021-22 was £216,369

Total expenditure was £207,600

Net income was £8,769

At the end of the year (31st March 2022) the bank balance was £96,451.

The breakdown of our income for 2021-22 was:

- 18% raised from print and equipment (£38,571)
- 81% from grants (£176,001)
- 1% from donations and interest (£1,797)

The money we raised from print and equipment services was slightly lower than that of 2019 (£44,445), before the pandemic. Taking into consideration that we were still under lockdown between April and July, and that community events and activities have taken some time to revive again, we did well to generate this much income and it looks like this income stream is recovering slowly.

Grants received in the year were:

- £89,853 - Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC, front desk work)
- £36,347 – BHCC Housing Services (work with tenants' and residents' associations)
- £18,912 – Government furlough scheme
- £14,914 – BHCC Contain Outbreak Management Fund (to support groups coming out of Covid)
- £7,500 – BHCC Early Years & Childcare (work with groups providing childcare)
- £5,000 – Sussex Community Foundation (Covid-19 recovery support)
- £2,000 – East Brighton Trust (work with groups in East Brighton)
- £1,350 – BHCC Business Support Fund

Finance Report 2022-23 (current year)

We are very pleased to have secured grants again this year from Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC), Housing Services, and Early Years and Childcare.

Our partnership funding from BHCC is secure until 2025. Our grant from Housing is currently renewed on a yearly basis and we have been receiving this for over 10 years. There had been concerns that this grant was going to be put out to tender, but we have now heard that tendering will not be necessary.

In addition, we have raised funds for the current year from Sussex Community Foundation (£5,000), East Brighton Trust (£2,000), Chalk Cliff Trust (£5,000), and the National Lottery (£10,000, of which £2,500 is for new equipment).

Based on our quarter 2 forecast, it looks like our income from print and equipment is getting back to pre-pandemic levels (forecast at £43,793 for this year compared to £44,445 in 2019). It is really heartening that community activity has picked up again over the last year and that groups are organising more events and gatherings again.

However, costs are also going up – paper costs, in particular, are rising steeply. We are monitoring this closely and have had to increase our print prices, but still aim to keep prices as affordable as possible for groups.

The future

We may be over the worst of the Covid-19 pandemic, but we are still living in uncertain times. Inflation and the cost of living is affecting everyone. But the Centre has always been good at keeping a close eye on our financial situation and making sure we do everything we can to be in a stable and sustainable position.

As always, we really appreciate any good word you can put in for us with your councillors or council officers – it really helps them understand why we are worth funding. Please do tell spread the word to other groups too about our print and equipment services.

There were no questions from members.

The meeting approved the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2022. There were no objections or abstentions.

6. New Members

Two new membership applications had been approved by the management committee at meetings during the past year:

1. Imaya
2. Sikhs of Sussex

Since the committee's last meeting, a further four applications had been made by:

1. Friends of Coldean School
2. Friends of St Mark's School
3. East Brighton Food Coop
4. Naigaga Foundation Trust

All four groups meet the criteria for membership.

The meeting approved all new applications.

Judy welcomed all new members.

7. Election of Trustees/Directors for 2022-23

Judy thanked outgoing trustee and director Ann Packham (Ingram Crescent Residents' Association) for having served on the committee for several years.

She asked this year's nominees to introduce themselves and say a few words about how they have worked with the Resource Centre:

1. **Awel Harun Abdo**
(Oromo Community in Brighton & Hove, existing member of the committee)
2. **Ramy Mohamed Alsafe**
(Sudan Club, standing for the first time)
3. **Robin Berry**
(Coldean Residents' Association, chair of committee for 2021-22)
4. **Muriel Briault**
(North Portslade Residents' Association, existing member of committee)
5. **Chris El Shabba**
(Robert Lodge Residents' Association, existing member of committee)
6. **Aisha El-Turki**
(Alnoure Academy, existing member of committee) – *in her absence, Judy read out her written statement*
7. **Jonathan White**
(On Your Way, existing member of committee)
8. **Jason Williams**
(Hereford Court Community Association, returning to the committee)
9. **Ahmad Yabroudi**
(Sussex Syrian Community, existing member of the committee)

The voting system was explained, and votes were cast either using paper ballots (in St George's Hall) or the Zoom poll system (for those online).

8. The work of the Resource Centre

Kate Page gave a report on the work of the Resource Centre.

We think it is some accomplishment – given what has gone on over the last two years – that we are all here, still working for our communities and still making a difference. Coming together today is a chance to pause and celebrate our collective achievements.

We know how hard all our member groups work for their communities, and we know how exhausting and at times overwhelming that can be. We also know what a difference the work of these groups makes to thousands of people in Brighton & Hove. If the last two years have taught us anything, it is the absolute crucial importance of people getting together – not only to support each other but also to change things.

The Resource Centre is all about helping groups with that crucial work – supporting groups to do the things they want to do, with practical, responsive help based on what they need. We can promise that this is what we will continue to do. It is at the very heart of the Resource Centre.

One of the ways we ask groups about their needs, and their experiences of Resource Centre services, is through a snapshot survey every two years. Some headline figures from our most recent survey, in July 2022, are:

- 100% of groups agree that Resource Centre staff are helpful
- 94% agree the prices are affordable
- 98% agree that the Resource Centre makes life easier for their group

The comments people made in the survey were overwhelmingly positive, and stressed the importance of the Resource Centre and the nature of what we do. Some examples are:

- Knoll Community Association: "Thank you for being there for us and supporting the little groups"
- Friends of Royal Spa Nursery: "The RC makes so many things do-able for so many community groups, we quite literally could not do without them"
- Friends of Hertford School: "Brilliant resource, well used and loved by our school"
- East Brighton Food Co-op: "It's an amazing service. The staff go above and beyond to get the job done and we are very grateful"

We know from this survey, and from the constant feedback and support we get from groups, that our services are useful and really highly valued.

When we look at who is using Resource Centre services, the key message is that while Covid-19 affected groups' activities and, as a consequence, their use of the Centre, things are starting to build back up. The following figures are for the year from April 2021 to March 2022, and there has been an upswing in activity since then.

- 398 groups used the Centre. This is almost double the number of user groups in 2020-21 (208 groups), but still only about half the number in the last pre-pandemic year, 2019-20 (809 groups)
- There were 1,485 visits to the Centre. This is about 60% of pre-pandemic numbers (2,580 visits in 2019-20)
- 113 member groups used the Centre, with a total of 666 visits. This is 62% and 67% of the 2019-20 figures, respectively.

Uses of all of our key services (print, equipment hire, advice and support) have increased over the last year, although they are still not back to pre-pandemic levels. We are hopeful, though, that this is where they are heading: we are seeing that groups are rebuilding and we know that use of the Resource Centre will reflect this.

However, the Centre is about quality as well as quantity! Listening and responding to the needs of our user groups is at the core of the Resource Centre's work, and we are always striving to improve, develop, and learn from our groups.

We know that there will continue to be challenges, and frustrations. We would like more money. We would like more security. We would like more time. But these are not new problems, and they haven't stopped us yet. The Centre's been here since 1975 and we intend to keep on going!

The Resource Centre is only here because of the work of groups. It is a privilege to work with them all, and we thank them for their dedicated hard work in their communities. Let's celebrate what we have all achieved.

9. Election results

All nine nominees were elected as trustees and directors to sit on the Resource Centre Management Committee for 2022-23.

Judy congratulated the new committee, and thanked candidates for standing.

10. Close of meeting

Judy thanked everyone for their support and contributions to the meeting, and invited them to stay for a buffet and social. The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

These minutes were approved by the Annual General Meeting of Brighton and Hove Social Welfare and Educational Trust Ltd on _____ (date)

Signed

on behalf of the Management Committee
