

## **Minutes of Hastings Voluntary Action's AGM held Friday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2020 on Zoom**

### **Welcome and Apologies:**

Mike Cornish as Chair of Hastings Voluntary Action opened the event by welcoming those present. He explained that due to the complications of holding such a large event on Zoom, HVA's member organisations were asked to vote in advance so there will be no votes during the AGM and that the event would be recorded. Mike confirmed with Peter Thorpe that the meeting was quorate.

### **Minutes of Previous Meeting held 16<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

The minutes had been circulated to members and published on the HVA website. The approval of the minutes was agreed. Mike Cornish announced the outcome of the vote:

- Proposed: Mike Cornish (Winterbourne Close R A)
- Seconded: Graham Goode (SLiC)
- Votes for: 29
- Votes against: 0
- Abstentions: 3

### **Consideration and Adoption of the Annual Report for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

Steve Manwaring, Director of HVA, introduced himself and gave a presentation highlighting HVA's work.

**Group Support:** Demand has been high with complex cases. The sharing of information has largely moved to online with Ebulletins and the use of social media; Twitter, Facebook etc. HCN events have taken place on Zoom and have been a mixture of Open Mic and themed events. Matt Pitts (HVA) is employed as a Communication Officer & Group Support Worker.

**Representing the Sector:** HVA works in collaboration with the Hastings Community Network, the Local Strategic Partnership with Carole Dixon as Chair for both, and the East Sussex Strategic Partnership. The elections for the HCN have just been held.

**Accommodating the Sector:** At Jackson Hall, HVA offers affordable meeting space and are in the final stages, in conjunction with Hastings Trust, of the work around the future use of Silchester Mews which will return to its former use of a community space.

**A Strategy For Older People:** HVA were asked to look after the assets of FOTOP and to ensure that the assets were used in the best interests of older people in Hastings. Over time a three

pronged strategy has been created with a town centre Hub at Central Hall created, the preservation of the Isabel Blackman Centre as a community asset for Hastings with HVA in the process of buying the building from the county council and forming a new charity – The Isabel Blackman Centre In Perpetuity, who will hold the building. With the work in partnership with HOTRA, AGEUK, HVA and the Seniors Forum the building has been saved for use in Hastings. Steve wanted to thank donators who were Trust Funds, individuals and residents for the money that they raised to buy the building. The third prong is work with HBC to designate Hastings as an age friendly community with services designed with older people in mind.

**Work With BAME Communities:** HVA staff and Trustees had a discussion about the Black Lives Matter issues. HVA is celebrating over 30yrs work with BAME communities with the service at LINKS, a new programme of research and outreach and work supporting victims of hate crime.

**Neighbourhood Activity:** HVA are the trusted local location for the Big Local North East project which supports a resident led partnership and the Making it Happen project which gives support and resources to the Hollington and Castle Ward communities enabling them to take forward their ideas for improving their community.

**Partnership Working:** HVA concluded their work with the fishing industry in Hastings helping them to get funding to support their own projects. Work is also being done around Community Led Local Development with colleagues, match-funding one of the CLLD projects, the SLiC project. HVA have been part of the process looking at the Town Deal and the best ways of getting that investment into Hastings.

**Volunteering:** HVA has been selected as a part of a national pilot to look at volunteering and older people and to roll out a programme of activities. Some new work is being done with the college to encourage young people to volunteer and they are in the process of developing a work scheme to enable that to happen.

**COVID19:** During the pandemic, HVA had to look at rapid changes of direction; using Zoom for meetings and events, looking at keeping people safe and reducing some of the issues and problems incurred during lockdown. Activities include facilitating Hub meetings, managing volunteers during lockdown, setting up a Telephone Befriending Service pairing volunteers with people that were isolating, a Checking In Service providing a quick phone call once or twice a week, activity in the food network with other organisations ensuring that food supply could be maintained. Jackson Hall was used as a food depot for a short time with staff packing up food packages.

**Thanks:** It has been an unusual AGM in an unusual year and a tough time and Steve would like to thank all the staff, trustees, volunteers and supporters of HVA for their contributions in the last year.

The vote was based on the Annual Report that is contained within the Annual Accounts with HVA's work on their website and social media.

Mike Cornish announced the outcome of the vote:

- Proposed: Teresa Flower (Groundwork South)
- Seconded: Jacky Everard (Hastings Advice & Representation Centre)

- Votes for: 31
- Votes against: 0
- Abstentions: 1

## **Consideration and adoption of the independently examined accounts for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

Graham Goode introduced himself as the Treasurer. The accounts are published on the HVA website and the full accounts have been distributed. Graham highlighted the important bits whilst Keith Miller shared the documents on screen:

- The money HVA had at the end of the financial year
- The Restricted funds which is money held for specific purposes
- The Unrestricted funds which is money that HVA pays for its operating costs

In summary, HVA's finances are in good shape. Graham thanked Keith Miller, Pat Weaver and Peter Thorpe for their work and advice. The accounts have been independently examined by Ashdown Hurrey and have been approved by the Trustees. The accounts were accepted and agreed.

Graham Goode announced the outcome of the vote:

- Proposed: Helen Barraclough (Education Training Consortium Sussex)
- Seconded: Jim Breeds (Ore Community Land Trust)
- Votes for: 28
- Votes against: 0
- Abstentions: 2

## **Appointment of Independent Examiners for 2021**

At a meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020, the HVA Trustees agreed to appoint Ashdown Hurrey as independent examiners.

Graham Goode announced the outcome of the vote:

- Proposed: Helen Barraclough (Education Training Consortium Sussex)
- Seconded: Teresa Flower (Groundwork South)
- Votes for: 31
- Votes against: 0
- Abstentions: 1

## **Announcement of Election of HVA Board of Directors:**

The nominations for the HVA Board were held in September 2020. HVA Trustees have a three year term. Two independents have been co-opted during the last year. There was a confirmatory vote. The members of the Board introduced themselves:

- Mike Cornish – Winterbourne Close Residents Association
- Graham Goode – Skills & Learning in the Community (SLiC), Risk Assessor
- Kenneth Hales – Hastings & St Leonards Seniors Forum
- James Johnson – Friends of Africa and the Caribbean (FACE)

- Julia Wells – Hastings Older Peoples Ethnic Group (HopeG)
- Helen Barraclough – Education Training Consortium Sussex (ETC)
- Vic Kempner – Counselling Plus
- Nell Chang –
- Mary Carter – Co-opted Board member, Independent
- Dawn Poole – Hastings & Rother Credit Union (HRCU)
- Marc Turczanski – LINKS

Mike Cornish announced the outcome of the vote:

- Proposed: Jacky Everard (Hastings Advice & Representation Centre)
- Seconded: Jim Breeds (Ore Community Land Trust)
- Votes for: 32
- Votes against: 0
- Abstentions: 0

## **Close of AGM**

### **Comments & Questions**

Ken Hales thanked HVA staff for their work, particularly Steve & Peter.

Cllr Nigel Sinden thanked all the organisations for their work to keep Hastings going during the pandemic

Pal Luthra asked for more information about the work that LINKS does. Marc Turczanski explained about the two projects – the LINKS drop in service and the Community Cohesion Service giving support to people that are victims of hate crime and ensuring that BAME communities are not excluded. James Johnson spoke about the research that has been done into the impact of COVID on BAME communities which will raise awareness and inform future work. Steve suggested that as Pal lives in Westfield, he introduce himself to RVA and Clare Cordell.

Steve Manwaring wanted to record the passing of Chris Beaumont who did a lot of work with HVA.

Mike Cornish thanked the other Trustees for their work throughout the year and for the way they have adapted to working from home. He also thanked the HVA team for their work putting the AGM together.