

Minutes of Dingley's Promise AGM

7pm, 30th September 2021

Via Zoom

Chair: Michael Scheepers (MS) - Chair
 Attendees: Abi Preston-Rees – Centre Manager West Berks
 Carol & Mick – Volunteers West Berks
 Catherine McLeod (CM) – CEO
 Helen Hart – Family Support Worker Wokingham
 Jo Evans – Fundraising & Communications Manager
 Karen England – Bid Writer
 Laxmi Patel – Advisor
 Lorna Fairbairn (LF) – People Trustee
 Matthew Bond – Volunteer Wokingham
 Myra Kelly (MK) – Trustee
 Nadia Masoodi – Deputy Manager Wokingham
 Paula Chambers – Family Support Worker West Berks
 Peter Brogden (PB) – Treasurer
 Russ Fowler (RS) – Trustee
 Theresa Bowers – Finance Manager
 Zoe Cox – Centre Manager West Berks
 Zora Morgan – Centre Manager West Berks

<u>Points for discussion</u>	<u>Actions</u>
<u>Welcome and Apologies</u> MS welcomed the attendees to the meeting. There were apologies from Joy Essien, Emma Wilkinson, Michaela Gartside, Arlette Bell and Rachel Thompson.	
<u>Previous Minutes</u> MS asked for any queries related to the minutes of the last AGM. None were received. MS proposed the minutes and MK seconded them.	
<u>Chair person's Report</u> MS delivered his report as follows: It is difficult to overstate the direct impact the various lockdowns and other measures brought in to combat the spread of COVID-19 have had on the children and families we support, our teams, and wider communities. While framed by the pandemic, this past year shines bright with the passion,	

perseverance, commitment and strength of our staff and volunteers, led by our impressive CEO Catherine and her management team. Having taken the role of Chair in May 2020, it has been truly inspiring to see how Dingley's Promise has been able to continue to provide support to our children and families, despite Centres closures and restrictions in place regarding in-person visits. We have also managed to continue increasing our impact on the national stage by further extending our training programme and have played an active role in the debate around Childcare and Early Education as part of the APPG (All Party Parliamentary Group).

As the Trustee Board continues to focus on closely supporting our CEO and her team, we also look to the future and the opportunities available to us in further growing our charity's reach, impact, and reputation. Key to this strategy is furthering the cause of inclusion of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in mainstream education as well as growing our national training programme, ensuring many more children and families will have the opportunity to access the quality of services offered by Dingley's Promise. We have strengthened, and will continue to do so, our Trustee Board with the necessary skills to ensure the Trustees are able to adequately support these ambitious plans.

These are exciting times for Dingley's Promise and with so many new opportunities ahead of us I am confident we will be able to go from strength to strength.

On behalf of all our Trustees I would like to thank once again our dedicated staff and volunteers for their tireless work throughout these very challenging times. You are all the true heart of this exceptional charity and the positive impact you make every day is immensely important.

Thank you also to everyone who funded Dingley's Promise during this critical time, without you none of the charity's wonderful achievements would be possible

Treasurer's Report

PB delivered his report as follows:

2020/21 was a successful year from the finance perspective. Income grew by 24% over the previous year to a total of £802K while expenditure increased by 16% to £749K. We were able to invest £33K in improvements to our centres, 4 times more than in the previous year. We hold a reserve of £116K in order to meet our financial liabilities and continue to run our centres for 4 months in the event of an unforeseen collapse in our funding.

<p>Delving into the sources of our income, we saw significant changes year on year. The impact of the COVID restrictions meant that most fund-raising events could not take place, resulting in a fall of £40K in this category. This was largely offset by an increase in Earned Income from the provision of a training course to other early years practitioners and from the government furlough scheme payments (£14K). Local Authority grants remained at a similar level to last year, £91K. However non-statutory grants increased by a remarkable 65%, £160K. Over 50 charitable trusts and foundations made contributions to Dingley's Promise in the year, more than half for the first time. This was a magnificent response from these bodies to the huge challenges that COVID presented to Dingley's, our children and their families. It is also a great tribute to the tireless work of Cath and her team promoting Dingley's and reaching out to all these funders.</p> <p>The additional funding enabled us to increase expenditure to meet the demands of remote working, including buying new IT equipment and software, and to expand and strengthen the staff team.</p> <p>PB then proposed the accounts and MS seconded them.</p> <p>MS asked that we register his thanks for PB and Theresa Bowers who have undertaken the detailed and time consuming work of submitting the accounts and getting sign off from our accountants.</p>	
<p><u>Special Resolution</u></p> <p>MS explained that the charity has submitted minor changes to our objects to the Charity Commission so that they can approve them in advance of a vote by our members. The changes are a result of the growth in our wider work including outreach services and training programmes, but will not change the aims of our Centres and their work in any way.</p> <p>Once a response has been received from the Charity Commission, an EGM will be scheduled to vote on the special resolution.</p>	
<p><u>Election of Trustees</u></p> <p>Since the last AGM, the following Trustees have been appointed with due process: Osama Bader (Secretary), Lucie Harris (Student Trustee) and Joy Essien (EDI Trustee).</p> <p>MS expressed thanks to the four Trustees who left the organisation during this year. Namely these were: Giles Beattie, Pritpal Virk, Osama Bader and Lucie Harris.</p> <p>Two Trustees had completed a two year cycle and were therefore put forward for re-election. Both Helen Amber Munslow (Parent Trustee) and Lorna</p>	

Fairbairn (People Trustee) were proposed by MS and seconded by Myra Kelly so both were re-elected.	
<u>AOB</u> None	
<u>Date of next AGM</u> Expected to be in September 2022 but will be confirmed next year.	
<u>Summary and Thanks</u> MS thanked attendees for their support of the charity and expressed his belief that the organisation will go from strength to strength in the coming year.	
The meeting closed at 7.20pm.	