



Reading Advice Network (RAN) Minutes of the Sixth Annual General Meeting Tuesday 9th November 2021

Attendees;

Richard Harrison, RAN Chair
Francesca Yates, RAN Trustee
Hazel Wright, RAN Trustee
Mike Allen, RAN Vice-Chair
Peter Kayes, RAN Treasurer
Adele Barnett-Ward, RAB
Su Hamblyn, Launchpad
Nick Harborne, Reading Refugee Support Group
Rachel James, YMCA Reading
Caroline Marsh, RBC
Fiona Price, Age UK Berkshire
Stephen Ritchie, YMCA Reading
Abbie Trussler, No 5
Alyson Wylding, No 5

Apologies

Leslie Macdonald, Reading Mencap
Sarah Snow, Stepping Forward

The AGM commenced at 09.35. Richard Harrison, RAN Chair, opened the meeting and welcomed all those present.

1 RAN 2020 AGM Minutes

Richard introduced the RAN 2020 AGM minutes. The motion that the minutes be approved as an accurate record of the proceedings of the AGM was proposed by Mike Allen, seconded by Fiona Price and carried unanimously.

2 RAN Report and Accounts for 2020-2021

Peter Kayes introduced the RAN Report and Accounts for 2020-2021, which had been approved by the RAN Trustee Board and by the Independent Examiner, Julian Ansell. Peter explained that the Board had reduced future annual expenditure by around £400 by moving to a new host for the RAN website and

secured from this an in-year refund of around £150. The remaining significant expenditure was around £160 on insurance, and nearly £100 on bank charges, but these were more than covered by membership fees.

The motion that the Report and Accounts be approved was proposed by Francesca Yates, seconded by Hazel Wright, and carried unanimously.

4 Election of Trustees

Richard reminded those present that RAN Trustees served as individuals, not as representatives of their organisation, and that under the constitution one third of the Trustee Board had to retire each year but could stand for re-election. This year Hazel Wright and Mike Allen had to retire but wished to stand for re-election. The motion that both be re-elected was proposed by Fiona Price, seconded by Adele Barnett-Ward, and carried unanimously.

5 Closing remarks

The Chairman made the following closing remarks:

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic all RAN events over the past year had been online, but despite this it had been a successful year, and he wanted to thank his excellent team of fellow trustees - Fran, Hazel, Mike and Peter - for the help and support they had given him.

Over the last year:

- We had held three Advice Forums:
 - One immediately after our last AGM, on 'The last six months', sharing members' experiences of transforming their services during the first lockdowns
 - A second, in February, on 'Delivering advice from home, online and by phone - advantages, disadvantages and issues' - which had taken a more in-depth look at those transformed services. That had led us to review our Quality Standard and update it to reflect those changes in members' services
 - And a third, in June, on 'Strengthening links between RBC Councillors and RAN member organisations'.
- Our speakers at that last Forum had suggested that RAN produce a booklet for Councillors setting out the services provided by our different member organisations, to help Councillors identify the particular organisation best able to give information or advice on specific problems raised by their constituents. He was very grateful for the help member organisations had given over the summer and early autumn as we developed the booklet. The booklet was now with the printers and would be available shortly. We would send personal copies to every Councillor and to each member organisation, and

on Adele Barnett-Ward's advice we would update and republish it each May, at the start of the Civic Year.

- Perhaps because of the opportunity the booklet had offered to make Councillors aware of the services different organisations provide, we had welcomed four new members in the last few months - BWA, PACT, The Mustard Tree, and YMCA Reading - which now gave us a total of 20 member organisations.
- Finally we had held 5 meetings of the RAN CEOs Group - all of which he believed had been useful to those attending.

He closed by paying tribute to Sarah del Tufo, who had carried out all the assessments of member organisations against the RAN Quality Standard since we began over 5 years ago, but who had decided over the last few months that it was time for her to stand down. She had done that work with a hugely impressive mix of expertise and sensitivity to the different challenges faced by our member organisations. All who had dealt with her knew how hard she had worked to support them to achieve that Standard.

Earlier in the year we had set about recruiting her replacement and in June we were very pleased to be able to appoint Janice Haynes, who had come to us from a long career in the voluntary sector, including several years as CEO of Citizens Advice Slough. Janice was with us today and he was delighted to be able to introduce her to those present.

The AGM concluded at 09.50.