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Voluntary Action North Somerset Limited

Annual General Meeting

Held on:

Monday, 26th September 2022 – 18:00-20:00hrs

Worlebury Golf Club, Worlebury, Weston-super-Mare

1. Welcome, introductions and Housekeeping

Voluntary Action North Somerset Chairperson, Delyth Lloyd Evans (DLE) welcomed members, commissioners, trustees, and stakeholders to the meeting and outlined the programme for the evening.

DLE set out the agenda for the evening and explained the housekeeping rules for the venue and the AGM. Voting rights were explained to members and cards were provided in information packs along with required documents for the proceedings.

All documents can be downloaded from VANS website following the AGM using the link provided - <https://www.vansweb.org.uk/about/governance/>.

Trustees introduced themselves to the AGM.

2. Apologies

A list of apologies and attendees are noted at the end of the minutes.

3. Keynote Speaker – Rachel Mostyn, Founder and Director, Women’s Work Lab

The Women’s Work Lab vision is to create space and support for all Mums in the UK - irrespective of their past - to recognise their brilliance and build a financially secure

future for themselves and their children. WWL believes no-one should ever feel excluded or forgotten in realising their potential. Established in 2019, the WWL supports unemployed mums back into the workplace. The first programme launched their first programme in Bristol in February 2020 and have now supported over 100 women back into work.

In 2021 they offered three training programmes in Bath (May, September and November), in partnership with Bath & North East Somerset Council, and a further programme in Bristol (September). Of these 60 women 60% are now back in employment. Given the right opportunities, they have seen so many of our Mums go from strength to strength.

WWL have never been more certain our programme unlocks hidden talent and gives our Mums the confidence and skills to thrive. In 2022 we are thrilled to be supporting 90 women across the region. Four of their programmes in Bristol, Bath and South Glos are in partnership with Bath College and the two North Somerset programmes are supported by North Somerset Council.

RM explained that one WWL programme attendees is now employed by VANS as a Business Support Administrator delivering projects across North Somerset. DLE thanked RM for her presentation and commented on how passionate the team are in supporting mums across the region.

Questions from the floor were focussed on referral mechanisms and how to get involved, and expectations from the programme following completion of the programme. RM provided a link to the website and suggested for members and businesses to contact with offers of placements.

Website link here - <https://www.womensworklab.co.uk/>.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the last held on AGM 21st September 2020

Proposer Sue Shillabeer, seconded Neil Salter.

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record by members of the AGM.

5. Opening statement from the Chair

DLE commented that the AGM is about sharing some of our achievements from over the last year as the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) infrastructure lead and accredited volunteer centre for North Somerset.

DLE thanked the VANS team for pulling together this impact report for the year and gave highlights of the charities key achievements:

- In excess 600 registered charities and Social Enterprises, with around 2000 regular community activities across North Somerset
- VANS the accredited volunteer centre for the national Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA).

- 30% increase of volunteering opportunities on our On-Line Volunteer Centre website and over 1000 individual volunteers active across various VANS led volunteer programmes
- Increase in the range of organisations seeking volunteers, 175 organisations registered, with 280 live opportunities currently registered on the On-Line volunteer Centre
- Range of programmes and projects delivered during the year, to meet identified community need
- Recruited new expertise into the VANS team to provide strategic support across Volunteering initiatives and the response to COVID, the vaccination programme, and more recently support to those coming to the Southwest as refugees from Ukraine
- VANS continues to provide a pivotal role, bringing experience and guidance of volunteer management and advice and guidance to enable the safe deployment of volunteers and delivery of best practice here in North Somerset
- Work in partnership with colleagues across the sector and represent the sector and their views at the highest levels both in North Somerset and further afield

DLE thanked VANS Trustees for the support, leadership and time they have given to VANS. The small band of competent, committed, courageous trustees, who between them have a significant range of expertise, give their time voluntarily for VANS. Over the last couple of years in particular, the board have worked their way through the challenges facing our sector and the pandemic. The board meets formally four times a year for Board meetings, with two briefings and two sessions to focus on strategic priorities and board development.

DLE handed over to PL to reflect on our 2021/22 year and how the organisation has continued to respond to various challenges and embraced the way forward for our sector across North Somerset and wider.

6. Presentation of Annual Report 2020-2021

PL explained that he will highlight some of our key successes from over the last year or so. VANS covers the following three areas as an independent charity:

1. The Council for the Voluntary Sector – this covers key infrastructure support role for the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector or VCFSE as we call it. This includes providing advice and guidance around governance and policy, training and other support.
2. As the Volunteer Centre for North Somerset – this focusses on VANS support for the sector to access volunteers through brokerage and through internal volunteer management programmes.
3. Facilitated project arm – this covers delivery provided that sits outside of funded core business or volunteering provision, such as community development initiatives and Reclaim Domestic Abuse Counselling.

PL continued that over the six years involved with VANS, three as a trustee and three as an employee, the voluntary sector landscape has changed significantly at all levels.

The weight of expectation on third sector organisations has increased. This includes additional pressure on food banks and charities to meet demand linked to financial pressures faced by many families, with less funding available to do so.

A focus on the rise of mutual aid through COVID, much of which still exists, and the learning has helped to shape a new community approaches to delivery, and on the horizon, challenges around cost of living and people choosing to heat or eat, and the pressures this will bring posed by economic downturn will have an impact moving forward.

Where there is challenge, there is opportunity, and none more so than in the increase in new Community Interest Companies (or C.I.C's or Kicks as they are also known), meeting demand within communities through a social business model. Between 2019 and 2021, the numbers of new CIC's being registered, doubled nationally, and this is further evidenced by the fact that both of our speakers this evening are from Community Interest Companies themselves.

In light of this, the nature of VANS role changed to reflect the charity's strategic position and the changing dynamics of the sector. This has included the development of new initiatives and doubling of the size of the team since 2019, to focus more on our infrastructure role, to enable capacity building support and to meet need identified within our membership.

In expanding the offer, VANS has inevitably sought new and different funding streams to support the broadening of our support. It continues to be funded through North Somerset Council and Weston Town Council to deliver our flagship initiatives focussed on infrastructural support and volunteering brokerage, without which VANS would certainly not be able to perform this crucial and fundamental role.

VANS continues to receive vital grants from local community foundation, Quartet and the Police and Crime Commissioners Office, and with the changes underway in health, our work with commissioners such as the newly formed Integrated Health Partnerships, Sirona Care and Health and North Bristol NHS trust are crucial to VANS ongoing delivery.

Key to everything that we do here at VANS, is the importance of our relationships across the public, private and third sectors. Without understanding the breadth of community led activity and need at a grassroots level, it would be impossible to reflect a true picture back through the various networks and partners who can make a difference.

This has made the broadening of VANS functions to directly engage with communities of interest, particularly through an equality's lens, more vital to better understand and work towards integration across the multitude of community groups and cohorts based here in North Somerset.

VANS partnership approach is being driven across our various forums including our voluntary sector leader's forum, volunteer coordinators network and children, young people and family's forum, and more recently brought into existence our work around equality and diversity, sport and active and befriending, to bring together relevant sector members to drive forward our shared ambitions for North Somerset.

In addition, we have played a key role in the development and delivery of new Community Renewal funded partnerships working across Community Hubs and Employability over the twelve months.

VANS continued to work in partnership with our colleagues under the banner of the North Somerset Wellbeing Collective, Citizens Advice and Healthy Living Company to provide a strategic interface between health and the voluntary sector.

Building on our role as a volunteer agency, VANS continued to deliver on behalf of the West of England Civil Society Partnership, providing coordinated approaches to the delivery of volunteers at covid vaccination sites throughout Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire, alongside which the team maintained a programme of volunteers delivering vital Oximeter – oxygen reading devices, to homes of covid patients throughout the past year.

Other volunteer initiatives delivered included our work with Children Centres, an extra care volunteers housing project piloted last year and our continued volunteer brokerage which currently has over 175 live organisations promoting over 280 positions in North Somerset.

Through our internally facilitated project programme, Reclaim Domestic Abuse Counselling Service continues to build and develop with funding coming from a range of funders including Big Lottery, Quartet, Police and Crime Commissioner, and the local authority.

This growth has enabled more residents to access vital person-centred counselling here in North Somerset. The next year will see the model adapted to support children and young people, as well as adults, and the potential to support people living outside of North Somerset also.

The final version of the Impact Report can be downloaded from here - <https://www.vansweb.org.uk/about/governance/>.

DLE thanked PL for his time and commitment to supporting VANS as Interim and then Chief Executive over the last three and a half years, before welcoming VANS new CEO as of 1st October 2022, Mandy Gardner to the AGM. MG introduced herself to the meeting and explained that she was looking forward to starting in post and working with VANS members to develop the role of infrastructure and the sector over the coming year.

DLE commended the Impact Report to meeting attendees.

7. Presentation of Annual Accounts

NS gave an overview of the full trustee report which includes the financial statements for the year ending March 2022.

The key message to take from these financial statements is that VANS, as an organisation remains financially robust. Page 10 of the financial statements shows that VANS ended the year with unrestricted reserves of £150k. From this the trustees have designated £22.9k to support an integrated care project that will be undertaken in the near future, leaving £127k as the underlying general reserve fund.

In the light of the major impact that the COVID pandemic had on VANS, as with other organisations, the trustees have agreed that the general reserves should be held at 12 months of the core operating costs of the organisation which is circa £100k. This means that at year end the general reserve level was slightly ahead of the level set by the trustees.

It should be noted that as VANS as an organisation grows, staffing levels have increased by 25% from 8 full time equivalents in the previous year to 12 full time equivalents by year end, meaning the core support required and the expectation is that over the coming months the underlying core costs will increase to broadly the level of reserves currently held.

If we now look in more detail at the accounts starting with Income which is set out on pages 16, 17 and 18. The Income for the year ended at £733k is significantly in excess of the £279k reported for the year ending March 2021. This increase is as a direct result of the number of projects that VANS undertakes with new projects undertaken or started in the year including support for the vaccination programme, Locality Lead Partner programme, Step Forward and Capacity Builders funding.

As can be seen on page 23, a large proportion of this funding £275k is to cover the future costs of ongoing projects through 2022/23, the funding for which has been received in advance.

VANS received income from 4 main areas:

1. Grants received towards the core costs of the organisation totalled £33.6k for the year just 5% of the total income. These grants help to ensure the sustainability of VANS but currently only account for 30% of the organisations core costs.
2. VANS staff projects such as our work supporting strategic health delivery, the Vaccination , Step Forward and just coming online Capacity Builders and Community Hubs generated £564.6k, 77% of the income this year. However, £245.8k of this will be carried forward to 2022/23 with the majority of the costs of these projects being incurred within the next financial year.
3. Hosted Projects supports the delivery of the Bridging the Gap together and the Reclaim project and at £66.6k accounts for 9% of in year income
4. One Off projects supported by the VANS team £67.3k accounts for 9% of Income with Other Income from activities such as training and advertising generating less than 1% of income at £1.6k.

The meeting was asked to note that whilst the current financial position is secure there remains an ongoing challenge for the staff team each year to work towards ensuring that we cover the total core costs of the organisation. To this end further funding is achieved by delivering specific projects focused on volunteer coordination and leadership for the VCFSE sector on behalf of funders and commissioners either directly utilising VANS staff or via the hosted projects that we support.

The meeting was asked to further note that whilst the accounts report the gross amount received it should be noted that the majority of this income will be used to deliver the project itself with only a small management charge accruing to VANS as an organisation.

As an organisation the VANS Staff Team and Trustees continue to keep a tight rein on costs with ongoing reviews of the expenditure base to ensure that all cost areas continue to deliver value for money for the organisation.

The detail of the charity's expenditure is set out on page 19 and as the chart shows the bulk of expenditure 71% is incurred on staff costs, totalling £294.38k. This covers staff employed on projects as well as the core administration team. The increase in the number of staff members given the increase in the number of projects supported accounts for the year-on-year increase of £172k

Central infrastructure costs covering Rent, Telephones, IT costs etc account for 4% of total expenditure, £17.6k in line with the costs for the previous year.

Direct project costs cover the payments made to hosted projects and project related costs such as workwear and staff scheduling software for the Max Vax programme accounts for 23% of costs, totalling £98.6k. Again, an increase year on year as a result of the additional projects undertaken

Governance costs including the employment of the financial examiner and the bookkeeper accounting for 2% of total costs and again are broadly in line with the previous year .

In their final review of the accounts, it was noted by the trustees that Income generated by the organisation such as advertising has been reported as restricted as opposed to unrestricted. This has been raised with the financial examiner with a view to correcting this ahead of the submission of the trustee report to the charity commission. This does not impact on the overall financial results of the organisation just how the funds are allocated in the accounts

That covers this year's overview of the accounts the full details of which, including the main trustee annual report, are included in the Trustee annual report and accounts.

One comment was made by Juley Howard from YMCA Clevedon commending the VANS team on diversifying its project base to include both strategic and delivery funded programmes to maximise its potential for people and communities across North Somerset.

The final version of the Accounts can be downloaded from here - <https://www.vansweb.org.uk/about/governance/>.

Delyth commended the financial statements to the AGM.

9. Appointment of the Independent Financial Examiner

Their reappointment has been approved by the Board of Trustees at our meeting held on 23rd September 2022 and we ask the meeting to approve their re-appointment for the forthcoming year 2022/2023

Proposal to remain with Albert Goodman for the next financial year.

Proposer NS, Seconded SS

The motion of approving the appointment of Albert Goodman as the Independent Financial Examiner for 2022-23 financial year was passed by members of the AGM.

10. Election of Board of Trustees

DLE informed the meeting that since the last AGM there had been one resignation from the board, Katherine Scott is leaving VANS as she is moving out of the area. The board thanked Katherine for her dedication over the last three and a half years to enable VANS through covid and a period of growth which has left us in a strong position for the future.

VANS had two trustees successful in a recruitment and selection approach recently, the board commended the appointment of them as Trustees for VANS. DLE explained that bio's had been provided in the information pack upon arrival.

Elizabeth Wormald-Kelly

Proposer	Fiona Cope, CANS	Seconded	??
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The motion of approving the appointment of Elizabeth Wormald-Kelly to the Board of Trustees was passed by members of the AGM. One abstention was noted.

Michael Harriott (not in attendance at the AGM)

Proposer	Neil Salter	Seconded	Sue Shillabeer
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The motion of approving the appointment of Michael Harriot to the Board of Trustees was passed by members of the AGM.

DLE welcomed the two new Trustees to VANS and explained that two new members are currently being interviewed to be co-opted to the board later in the year. There are more vacancies should anyone be interested in joining the board, contact info@vansmail.org.uk.

11. Final Guest Speakers – Kaylee-Rose and Candice, Directors at Reset WsM

At Reset WSM, the team embrace and understand that not all children and young people fit inside the 'box'. They need different skills and learning experiences to enable them to succeed.

The team have worked in children's services and seen first-hand how positive relationships and personalised learning can help children and young people who are struggling in mainstream settings. With these, they can reset and be successful.

Reset WsM has a shared passion for supporting young people and providing them with opportunities for them to see how amazing they can be. This was what inspired the team to start Reset WSM.

Through their experiences working with children and young people, the team have learnt a number of strategies to support a variety of needs. These strategies include trauma informed practice, PACE techniques, TEAM teach strategies, Lego therapy, and many more.

Following various comments and offers of support received from the floor, DLE thanked the Reset WsM and commended their passion and commitment for the cause.

12. Closing Remarks

DLE closed the AGM with some final remarks in relation to the forthcoming year for VANS. In addition to welcoming new CEO, Mandy, on 1st October to drive forward our Strategic Objectives and further develop VANS for the benefit of the VCFSE sector in North Somerset. VANS key areas of focus for delivery over the next year will be:

- Launch of the Capacity Builders programme, including targeted support around Ageing Well, Sports and Active and the North Somerset Community Lottery
- Continuation of the mass vaccination and oximeter volunteer led programmes across Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG)
- Build on the work of community hubs through the Community Renewal Fund and support the strategic development of the hubs network
- Continue delivering our Step Forward Employability and Volunteering pilot, which supports residents to access volunteering as a route to employment, with the latter half of this year will focus on those recovery from addiction
- Reaccreditation of the Volunteer Centre for North Somerset, working with membership body NAVCA to maximise the potential of access to volunteers in North Somerset. This includes implementation of a new CRM, internal volunteer management portal and volunteer brokerage service for member's organisations.

Finally, DLE thanked the team, board, commissioners and members in attendance. To finish with a quote:

"Think big thoughts, but relish and celebrate small achievements"

Thank you and good night.

[MEETING ENDS]

Minutes produced by PL on 11th October 2022.

Signed-off by the Board on: ??

AGM ATTENDEES	
Alison Bancroft	Redport
Amanda McKirgan	Sirona Care and Health CIC
Andy Ryan	Alliance Homes
Bernie Micklewright	Voluntary Action North Somerset
Cathy Mounsdon	We Are With You (Formerly Addaction)
Cheryl Baines	Children's Centre Volunteer
Claire Payne	Voluntary Action North Somerset
Colin Bradbury	Bristol, North Somerset, and South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group
Dali Sidebottom	Home-Start North Somerset
David Crossman	Voluntary Action North Somerset
Delyth Lloyd-Evans	Voluntary Action North Somerset
Fiona Cope	Citizens Advice North Somerset / North Somerset Wellbeing Collective
Georgie Bigg	Healthwatch North Somerset
Gloria Ingham	Multi-Cultural Friendship Association
Ian Morrell	No 65 High Street / North Somerset Wellbeing Collective
Ian Noah	BME Network
Isobel Jones	Alive Activities
Jac Blacker	Alliance Homes
Jack Bailey	Curo Group
Jackie Evans	Big Worle Community Hub
Jan Connett	Bristol Health Partners
Janice Saunders	Voluntary Action North Somerset
Joanna Howard	Sirona Care and Health CIC
Julie Newman	Quartet Community Foundation
Julie Stafford	Vision North Somerset
Karen Black	Off The Record
Kate Wilcox	North Somerset Council
Katherine Scott	Voluntary Action North Somerset
Kenton Mee	North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together
Kirsty Staunton	Voluntary Action North Somerset
Laura Leadbeater	Naco
Lisa Cooper	Somewhere To Go Day and Night
Lorraine Bush	North Somerset Council
Lyn Gilbert	Reclaim Domestic Abuse Counselling Service (VANS)
Marc Robinson	Voluntary Action North Somerset
Marilyn Edwards	Clevedon Community Resilience
Mark Jackson	Voluntary Action North Somerset
Mary Morgan	Big Worle Community Hub
Mike Kellaway-Marriott	BME Network

Miriam Robertson	BME Network
Neil Salter	Voluntary Action North Somerset
Norma Lawrence	Reclaim Domestic Abuse Counselling Service (VANS)
Paul Denovan	SSAFA North Somerset
Paul Edwards	Clevedon Community Resilience
Paul Lucock	Voluntary Action North Somerset
Richard Blows	North Somerset Council
Sean Kelly	Nailsea Disability
Semra Esr	BME Network
Steve Nelson	Wesport (The West of England Sport Trust)
Steve Winter-Gray	NSLGBT+ Forum
Sue Shillabeer	Voluntary Action North Somerset
Sue Stone	Voluntary Action North Somerset
Suzanne Rolt	Quartet Community Foundation
Tamsyn Grant	North Somerset Council
Thalia Joyner	Reclaim Domestic Abuse Counselling Service (VANS)
Tours Mitchell	Voluntary Action North Somerset
Trevor Smallwood	Churchill & Langford Minibus Society
Triliria Newbury	Multi-Cultural Friendship Association
Zeina Banks	BME Network

APOLOGIES	
Anna Temblett	Swan Advocacy
Cat McElvaney	Bristol, North Somerset, and South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group
Clare Hunt	Nailsea Town Council
Danielle Curtis	YMCA - Clevedon
Dick Whittington	West of England Rural Network (WERN)
Jane de Bude	Clevedon Aid CIC
Jane Franklin	Supportive Parents
Janice ??	Outdoor College
Jess Aston	Avon and Somerset Police
Jessie Wilcox	Alive Activities
Juley Howard	YMCA - Clevedon
Laura Colman	Second Step
Lydia Dorey	Second Step
Lydia Dorey	Second Step
Mary Adams	Bristol, North Somerset, and South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group
Melanie Rees-Lewis	Young Carers Development Trust
Mike Jackson	Coroners Court Support Service
Molly Ellis	Secret World
Paul Winspear	Weston Hospicecare
Roz Willis	North Somerset Council
Sarah Bishop	SEND And You (SAY)

Sarah Pearce	Weston-super-Mare Town Council
Sarah Prendergast	Sirona Care and Health CIC
Steve Hogg	Wrington Parish Council