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Voluntary Action North Somerset Limited

Annual General Meeting

Held on:

Monday, 21st September 2020 - 5-6:30pm

Held online via “Go To Meeting”.

1. Welcome and introductions

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

2. Apologies

All apologies and attendees are noted at the end of the minutes.

3. Key Note Speaker – Lizzie Harvey

The audio from Lizzie’s presentation can be listened to via the VANS website here - <https://www.vansweb.org.uk/about/governance/> and the Presentation slides can be downloaded from Prezi here – <https://prezi.com/view/StfjnVI9O4CoBmBJ7dX5/>.

4. Approval of the Minutes of last AGM 23rd September 2019

Proposer KS, seconded NS.

The Minutes were voted on and accepted as a true and accurate record.

5. Opening statement from the chair

DLE provided an update on changes at a board level, to be noted within the minutes. The following trustees had stepped down in year due to family and work commitments. Annabelle Smith and Tim Lamb resigned in year and Kathy Headon fulfilled the year as Trustee and stepped down with effect from 1 September 2020. DLE thanked them all for the support, leadership, and time they have given to VANS over the years.

Also noted that Paul Lucock took up the interim position of Chief Executive just before the AGM last year and has been appointed permanently to the role by the board with effect from 1 September 2020.

Trustees introduced themselves to the meeting. It was noted that new trustee, Sue Green, would be standing for election at the AGM. Full trustee profiles can be found on the Impact Report and on VANS website.

Sue has worked in human resources at a senior level for over 20 years with the agility to successfully operate within organisations undergoing significant transformation which has ranged from blue chip as well as a number of community interest organisations up to Board level.

She has highly developed leadership and project management skills with a proven track record in the translation and delivery of strategic people solutions in support of organisational strategic priorities. Offering a strong skill set relating to employee engagement which underpins organisational vision and values.

As a Board of Trustees, we meet 4 times a year for formal board meetings, in addition we have 2 seminar sessions and an annual away day to focus on strategic priorities and our own development. VANS has a very competent, committed, courageous and strong board in which skills continually refreshed and membership increased to meet need.

DLE took the opportunity to thank the Board for the expertise and time they bring to the leadership of VANS. Especially over the last few months during a period of change and challenge.

6. Presentation of Annual Report 2019-2020

The Annual report had been approved by the Board of Trustees and was presented to members.

DLE thanked the staff for producing the Impact Report. The report outlined the achievements of VANS over the last year and looked forward into 2020/21.

PL talked through highlights through 2019/20 and explained that it had been a transitional year for VANS. He explained that he had stepped down from the board to take up a secondment in the second quarter of the year at VANS. The main priority was around reviewing the annual business plan and financial processes to ensure that a robust programme and portfolio of projects was in place for the remainder the year and looking forward into 2020/21.

As a charity we have two distinctive functions, these are providing an infrastructure role for the voluntary community sector across North Somerset, and aside to this we facilitate a number of volunteer initiatives which enable providers and statutory services to maintain vital service delivery, by putting volunteers at the heart of everything we do. There have been notable successes on both fronts and a number of key achievements that we can be proud of as a team.

Our infrastructure role combines sectoral representation at strategic boards and networks, with the business support provided to voluntary and community sector organisations based in North Somerset. PL talked through VANS role on the North Somerset Partnership and Integrated Health Board, as well as our lead role chairing the Children and Young People's Forum for North Somerset.

In terms of direct support for voluntary and community organisations, we have continued to provide a variety of training and support tailored to meet need. This has included providing advice and guidance on governance, policy, and business processes, to enable charities to demonstrate and maintain best practice.

The online brokerage service called VC Broker, continues to see a real variety of different volunteer opportunities being promoted across the patch. Positively we also saw a real difference in the demographics and characteristics of the individuals coming forward to volunteer, this has further developed in the wake of Covid19 with large numbers of new volunteers engaging in localised support efforts through the pandemic.

Volunteers in children's centre settings remain committed to providing wrap around support that new families appreciate so much. In partnership with community health and the local authority teams, this year the breast-feeding peer supporters in particular were recognised with a national 'baby friendly' UNICEF accreditation award. This is a real accolade.

VANS worked closely with the previous community health provider, North Somerset Community Partnership, to manage the transition of volunteers to our new provider Sirona Care and Heath. We continue to work closely with Sirona to maintain and develop volunteer provision in community health settings this year and we are also working hard to identify and stimulate new opportunities for volunteers.

Reclaim Domestic Abuse Counselling Service provides vital support to survivors of domestic abuse, funded through The Big Lottery. Unfortunately, due to increasing demand for domestic abuse services, we will continue to develop and grow this offer to ensure that all residents requiring help, support and guidance are able to access timely funded counselling sessions through this service in North Somerset.

The huge volunteer response providing support in communities talked about so eloquently by keynote speaker, Lizzie, has been transformational and will long live in the memory, but this has also driven our own operational delivery in a direction where we are able to share our knowledge and experience as the accredited volunteer centre for North Somerset. Further integrating the new community networks into the well-established third sector in North Somerset will really help to shape our priorities and to ensure that we continue providing benefit to the communities in which we represent in this year and for many years to come.

DLE commended the Impact Report to VANS members and partners.

7. Presentation of Annual Accounts

NS presented the accounts and explained that the change of auditors last year brought VANS many benefits. The charity is now supported by an audit team that specialise in charity structures. This new format meets the requirements of the Charity Commission and provides greater clarity over the financial position for the year.

2018/19 financial year was a difficult year for VANS, the previous year's accounts showed a substantial excess over expenditure received. Significant progress has been made in stabilising the financial position of VANS as an organisation. Page 11 shows deficit net movement of £2241 compared to £44372 in the previous year.

Page 11 shows that VANS income was £164,000 in year, this increased by £1700 from 2018/19, more detail of this can be seen on pages 16-18 of the accounts.

Page 17 provides an overview of income from VANS charitable activities, aligning to the facilitated project undertaken by VANS across the year. Project specific funds are now clearly reported as individual restricted funds, providing clarity around ringfenced budgets for each programme of delivery, this was previously reported as unrestricted funds. Page 24 sets out main aims of each project.

The overall cost of running the organisation is summarised on page 11. Strides have been taken to reduce the costs base by over £40,000 from £207,000 to £167,000.00. Page 19 sets out detail around how this has been achieved.

As expected, staff remain the biggest cost of VANS. Broadly in line with the previous year, the existing workforce have delivered an increase in income through more targeted delivery and meeting increased demand within existing capacity.

Direct project costs fell by £42k as the CAMHS project came to an end this year.

The balance sheet on page 12 shows that VANS has net assets of £11k. Coming into the new financial year, a robust strategic plan sets out to ensure long term financial sustainability and financial security for the future of VANS as a charity.

A strong pipeline of projects was in place in April 2020, Covid19 has meant that thanks to our funders and the flexibility of team, VANS has reorientated some key projects and contracts to enable us to remain as a key focal point supporting the voluntary and community sector in North Somerset.

Regardless, Covid19 will have an impact on our programme delivery in year. The pandemic has necessitated a detailed review of the budget and some programme delivery in the pipeline, whilst additional Covid specific funding has supported this refocus on our delivery, for this we are extremely grateful to our funding bodies. Whilst we recognise that this will inevitably have a short-term impact, the board remains satisfied that the current situation will not impact the longer-term operations of the charity.

DLE thanked Neil and Mark for work to bringing the financial report together and for the ongoing efforts of the board and the team to stabilise the charity through a prudent approach to expenditure, whilst not jeopardising the quality-of-service provision.

Approval of Accounts - Proposer NS, Seconded SS

8. Appointment of Independent Financial Examiner

NS explained that Albert Goodman have been the VANS auditors since their appointment last year. The board thanked both Michelle Ferris for completing the audit and our inhouse bookkeeper Mark Jackson, for maintaining the accounts throughout the year.

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

Proposer NS, Seconded KS

9. Election of Board of Trustees

DLE informed the meeting that since the last AGM there had been three resignations from the board for varying reasons. Profiles of all Trustees were provided with the papers before the meeting and available within the 19/20 Impact Report.

Standing for re-election: Delyth Lloyd-Evans and Neil Salter

Proposer SS, Seconded KS

Standing for election: Sue Green

Proposer SS, Seconded DLE

8. Closing Remarks

DLE closed out the AGM by thanking the Board of Trustees who have given time and expertise over the year, but particularly over the last few months where meeting frequency had increased, and the board met remotely on a fortnightly basis.

Thank you to staff and volunteers who work within and support VANS. All are flexible, professional, and committed to providing a comprehensive range of programmes of work and support for the sector. The last few months have been particularly challenging, and all have been diligent, flexible, and resilient to supporting people in communities across North Somerset.

Thank you to Funders and Commissioners in whom VANS values the trust that is put in us to deliver support, facilitated projects, representation to the sector and to signal where other parts of the sector can best deliver services to add value to our residents.

Thank you to Member organisations that VANS represents. VANS seeks to support our partners and stakeholders through a variety of mechanisms and offers of advice and support. Thank you for the varied and significant work that our sector partners do for the people of North Somerset

To conclude the AGM, thank you to everyone for attending and we hope we can see you in person next year. VANS looks forward to working alongside members, stakeholders, and funders as the infrastructure organisation for North Somerset over the coming months.

To leave you with a quote:

Cesar Chavez - "We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community... Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own."

Thank you and good night.

Board Papers Signed Off By the Board on: **19th July 2021**

Attendees:	
Delyth Lloyd-Evans	VANS – Trustee
Neil Salter	VANS – Trustee
Sue Shillabeer	VANS – Trustee
Katherine Scott	VANS – Trustee
Sue Green	VANS – Trustee
Mark Jackson	VANS – Staff
Paul Lucock	VANS – Staff
Claire Payne	VANS – Staff
Sue Stone	VANS – Staff
Lizzie Harvey	Clevedon Aid
Stephen Anderson	Age Diversity Forum
Isobel Jones	Alive Activities
Liz Shayler	Clerk to Banwell Parish Council
Colin Bradbury	BNSSG Clinical Commissioning Group
Liz Kelly	Bridging the Gap Together
Fiona Cope	Citizens Advice North Somerset
Wendy Fletcher	Citizens Advice North Somerset
Sue Dixon	Curo Group
John Bradford	DigiLocal
Richard Blows	North Somerset Council
Cllr Steve Bridger	North Somerset Council
Lorraine Bush	North Somerset Council
Neil Turner	Oasis for Men
Julie Newman	Quartet Community Foundation
Alison Bancroft	RedPort
Penny Hynds	ROC Weston
Janet Rowse	Sirona Care & Health CIC
Jane Langley	St Monica Trust
David Cottam	The Care Forum
Fiona Mathews	Theatre Orchard
Mary Backhouse	Tyntesfield Medical Group
Nina Farr	Vision North Somerset
Heather Read	Volunteer
Paula Malow	We Are With You
Chris Head	West of England Rural Network
Maria Beaton	Weston Hospice Care
Ian Morrell	65 High Street, Nailsea
Apologies:	
Mike Jackson	Coroner's Court Support Service
Marion Erison	Curo Group
Georgie Bigg	Heathwatch BNSSG
Joe Norman	Marlens
Cllr Donald Davies	NSC
Cara McMahon	NSC
Cllr Bridget Petty	NSC
Kenton Mee	N-Somerset Parent Carers Working Together
Paul Denovan	SSAFA North Somerset
Alison Blackhall-Wright	Vita Health Group