

Minutes of the annual general meeting of Community Base held on 28th March 2000

Present: Chris Bull, Bob Cristofoli (Brighton Housing Trust and Brighton Victim Support Scheme), Gwen May (Big Issue), Clive Pepe (RORE), Maureen Rimmington (Carr-Gomm), Jackie King (Money Advice and Community Support), Anna King and Rob Whitehead (Voluntary Sector Forum), Louise Stone (SARO), Gladys Paulus and Kane Brough (River Ocean Research & Education), Betty Davies and Geraldine Desmoulins (Brighton & Hove Council for Voluntary Service), Paul Bramwell (Working Together Project), Richard Penfound (Sussex Community Internet Project), Kevin Richmond (Carers' Centre)

In attendance: Colin Chalmers (manager) and Sue Cole (minutes)

1 Election of chair

In the absence of Sylvia Alexander-Vine it was agreed that Bob Cristofoli would chair the meeting.

2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Sylvia Alexander-Vine, Alan Pratt, Mencap, Sussex Interpreting Service, St John Ambulance Homeless Service, Lesbian & Gay Community Centre and Rough Sleepers Project.

3 Minutes of previous annual general meeting

The minutes of the annual general meeting held of 28th January 1999 were approved.

4 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

5 Adoption of accounts for financial year

The meeting was presented with audited accounts for the year ending 31st March 1999. The accounts were approved.

6 Appointment of auditors

It was agreed to reappoint Clark Brownscombe as auditors.

7 Election of trustees

It was reported that valid nominations had been received for membership of the board of trustees from Sylvia Alexander-Vine, Charity Bevan, Chris Bull, Bob Cristofoli, David Hockey, Gwen May, Clive Pepe and Alan Pratt and that all nominees were therefore elected to the board of trustees.

8 Report on Community Base activities since the last annual general meeting

Colin reported on activities since the last annual general meeting.

100% occupancy had been maintained ensuring the financial viability of Community Base. Improved income from room booking and parking charges contributed to this viability.

Expenditure has taken place to improve the building and develop Community Base within budgetary constraints but had been considerable:

- All communal areas have been decorated
- a coffee room has been established
- a cycle room has been created
- a recycling point has been created and financed

- a weekly yoga class has been established and financed
- a seedbed space has been established
- an open day has been held
- a *Guide to Community Base* has been published
- a website has been created
- window displays have been created.

Applications for grant funding were being made to finance improvements to the roof, lighting, ceiling, flooring of communal areas and wheelchair access and toilets. Colin reported that the Brighthelm Centre had recently indicated a willingness to permit the building of a wheelchair accessible entrance to Community Base from Brighthelm Gardens.

Colin reported on participant groups who have left and new participant groups. The Voluntary Sector Forum moved to their own office in January 1999, Friends, Families and Travellers moved in in January 1999 and The Big Issue moved into the space previously occupied by HFC Bank in December 1999. In February 2000 Brighton & Hove Racial Equality Service left and Sussex Interpreting Services, Warm Front, Scarman Trust and Homeshare moved into the space vacated by them. Brighton & Hove Council for Voluntary Service have indicated that it will be leaving Community Base in June 2000 and negotiations are taking place with a number of groups who may move into Community Base.

Colin reported that valid leases and licences had now been signed by all participant groups. Brighton & Hove Racial Equality Service had refused to sign a lease and had decided to leave Community Base.

Colin reported that a questionnaire seeking the views of participant groups had been carried out and its findings had been useful as a way of gauging what issues were of most concern to groups.

A discussion followed. Geraldine Desmoulins (Brighton & Hove Council for Voluntary Service (CVS)) asked why ex-CVS projects such as the Older People's User Panel could not stay at Community Base when they transferred out of CVS. Colin told the meeting that CVS had given notice to leave Community Base on June 22nd 2000 and that a number of ex-CVS projects had been offered space, including the volunteer bureau. Community Base had felt that, given CVS's notice, it did not seem the best use of much sought-after space to allow three small projects to occupy 1,500 square feet. Community Base had had a number of meetings with CVS trustees to discuss the needs of CVS projects, had made a number of offers of help and would continue to be willing to discuss options with CVS trustees if this was felt to be useful.

9 Participant group meetings

Colin reported that participant group meetings had not been well attended and asked for suggestions on how to improve attendance. Anna King (Voluntary Sector Forum) suggested that meetings take place in pubs and involve groups giving talks about their work. Colin agreed to organise this.

10 Any other business

Bob Cristofoli paid tribute to Colin Chalmers and Sue Cole for their hard work over the last year and invited the meeting to join him for light refreshment.