

Minutes of the annual general meeting of Community Base held on 17th May 2001

Present: Sylvia Alexander-Vine (chair), Kevin Dacosta, Jen Henwood and Paul Dobson (Brighton Housing Trust), Bob Cristofoli (Brighton Housing Trust and trustee), Mark Sole (Brighton Victim Support Scheme), Katie Jo Symes (Carousel), Karen Goldup (Carr-Gomm), David Hockey (Carr- Gomm and trustee), David Biddle (Crime Reduction Initiatives), Jan Ireson (Cruse), Sarah Lee (Fiankoma Project), Clive Pepe (RORE and trustee), Naomi Alexander (Scarman Trust), Richard Penfound (Sussex Community Internet Project), Paul Bramwell (Working Together Project), Chris Bull, Alan Pratt and Gwen May (trustees)

In attendance: Colin Chalmers (director and company secretary), Peter Watts (building manager) and Sue Cole (minutes)

1 Election of chair

Sylvia Alexander-Vine was elected to the chair and welcomed members, trustees and employees to the meeting.

2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Crossroads Care Attendant Scheme, Friends Families and Travellers, The Gender Trust, Mencap, Private Sector Housing Forum, Richmond Fellowship, St John Ambulance Homeless Service and Sussex Interpreting Services.

3 Minutes of previous annual general meeting

The minutes of the annual general meeting held on 28th March 2000 were approved.

4 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

5 Adoption of accounts

Bob Cristofoli, treasurer, presented audited accounts for the year ending 31st March 2000. The accounts were approved.

6 Appointment of auditors

It was agreed to reappoint Clark Brownscombe as auditors.

7 Election of trustees

Colin Chalmers, company secretary, reported that valid nominations for election to the board of trustees had been received from Sylvia Alexander-Vine, Charity Bevan, Chris Bull, Bob Cristofoli, Paul Dobson, David Hockey, Gwen May, Clive Pepe and Alan Pratt.

David Hockey proposed a motion that Paul Dobson not be elected to the board of trustees. The membership voted to appoint Sylvia Alexander-Vine, Charity Bevan, Chris Bull, Bob Cristofoli, David Hockey, Gwen May, Clive Pepe and Alan Pratt to the board of trustees. The membership voted not to appoint Paul Dobson to the board of trustees.

8 Report on Community Base activities

Colin Chalmers, the Community Base director, reported on Community Base activities over the last year.

Colin reported that the number of people getting help or support from groups at Community Base continued to grow, from 18,000 in 1999 to at least 28,000 people (16% non-white) last year (April 2000 to March 2001). Of these people, at least 7,500 (40% non-white) got help or support for more than three months. At least 400 people (20% non-white) volunteered with groups over the year.

Colin reported that Brighton and Hove City Council had agreed to renew our 100% discretionary rate relief for a further three years except for the offices occupied by The Big Issue. Colin reported that we recently received a grant of £245,365 from the Community Fund for refurbishment of our roof, outside walls and lifts and that we were currently applying to the Home Office Active Community Unit and the Community Fund for a further £500,000 to complete our refurbishment programme.

Colin reported on the appointment this month of a part-time building manager, Peter Watts. Peter's appointment should allow maintenance and improvement work to the building to be carried out quicker and allow more staff time for developmental work.

Colin noted that the photocopier that Community Base had bought for use by groups was being well used. There are plans to buy a franking machine for use by groups.

Colin reported that since the last annual general meeting in March 2000, Brighton and Hove Council for Voluntary Service (CVS), the Lesbian and Gay Community Centre, Care for the Carers and the Rough Sleepers Project had left Community Base. Colin reported that Brighton and Hove Volunteer Bureau left with CVS despite an assurance from Brighton and Hove Council that this would not happen without consultation and despite strenuous attempts by Colin to keep it in Community Base where it was (and still is) well known to the public. Our reception currently sees between 50 and 150 people a month looking for the volunteer bureau.

Over the same period the Shaftesbury Society, Cruse Bereavement Care, the Fiankoma Project and the Richmond Fellowship have moved into Community Base. The Carers Centre and CRI had both significantly expanded the area they used as a result of CVS moving out. The Voluntary Sector Forum and the Working Together Project, both former CVS projects had been given their own rooms We have provided seedbed space for used by the online magazine Seelife and The Private Sector Housing Forum. Colin reported that there are currently over 25 groups expressing an interest in moving into Community Base and a number of groups already here who are interested in more space.

9 Any other business

David Biddle congratulated the board of trustees and Community Base employees for making Community Base a good place to work.

The meeting closed for light refreshment and to view videos about the work of participant groups.