

## Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2024

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**Held at:** The Menphys Hub, Bassett Street, South Wigston, Leicester, LE18 4PE

Wednesday 16th October 2024 – 3 to 4.30pm

Present:

### **Trustees**

Jenny Hand, Chair (Independent)

Miriam Mckee (Treasurer)

Eric Waweru (Centre Project )

Kiran Kala (Emerald Centre)

Liz Chahal (Leic Community Advice & Law Centre)

Mandy Wardle-McLeish (Independent)

Marie Davis (Falcon Centre)

### **Members**

Angie Wright - B-Inspired

Anita Roa – Wesley Hall

Dorothy Francis – CASE

Gareth James – LAMP

Kieran Breen – Leicestershire Cares

Maryan Anshur - Somali Dev't Services

Nusrat Hathiari – WEA

Dujana Nasair – Gold Token

Shabana Ahmed – Wesley Hall

Simon Gribbon – Sandstar

Suleman Jamal – Somali Dev't Services

Vincent Halladay – Wellbeing Centre

Danny Myers – Sort Touch

Sarah Primer – NHS

Abi Harrison – Alice Hawkins

### **In attendance**

Sangeeta Patel - RP

Sarah Richards - RP

Anjana Mistry – RP

Bharti Mistry – RP

Jane Hastings – RP

Tim Adkin - RP

## **1. Welcome**

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting.

## **2. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from David Fawcett (Bridge Homelessness to Hope), Gaynor Quilter (Mindfulness CIC), Nigel Rose (Hope Against Cancer) and Simon Parkinson (WEA).

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### 3. Consideration and approval of Minutes of AGM 2023

The minutes were agreed and accepted (proposed by Kieran Breen and seconded by Mandy Wardle-McLeish) and duly signed by the Chair.

### 4. Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

### 5. Chair/CEO's annual report (Sarah Richards and Sangeeta Patel)

Sarah Richards and Sangeeta Patel, joint CEOs of Reaching People (RP), presented the highlights of 2023-24. Sarah Richards welcomed new members Hope Against Cancer and Helping Hands along with new CEOs Robert Martin at Menphys and Gareth James at LAMP.

The year started with a review of our strategic plan involving many of our members, staff and trustees. We actively welcome feedback on our strategy as it is a working document developed through members input to ensure RP keeps in train with current and future national and local political, social and economic developments.

2023 saw the end of our Moneywise Plus and Kickstart Gateway programmes reducing our income by £385k (table shown on slide), however several new projects ran during the year, including Environmental, Moneywise Living, Social Prescribing, Community Food Coordination and debt mapping for De Montfort University.

#### *Environmental*

We partnered with the Leicestershire and Rutland Community Foundation to administer the environmental grants, funding 24 projects to tackle everything from clean ups, recycling, hedgehog highways to market gardens. The impact on individuals, communities and organisations went well beyond the initial aims of the projects.

Whether it was making business connections; learning to garden, cook and eat healthily; finding friends and place to belong; or discovering the joy of being creative and gaining the confidence to face new challenges.

#### *Refurb IT*

Refurb IT was our first environment project. Reflecting on the work of Golden Token and other community organisations we supported, we are now looking at creating greater community accessibility to skills and devices.

Refurb IT supports a number of our other projects such as Moneywise Living which started in January 24.

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### *Moneywise Living*

Funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and building on the success of our previous partnership project - MW Plus.

Our previous success was due to the skilled advisers; holistic, 1-2-1 support; a starting from strengths approach; and critically, increasing resilience and confidence of individuals by building financial and digital skills.

We have continued to work this way with MW Living which aims to help with the cost of living and making energy efficiency savings. The partnership is delivering well against all our targets to date.

### *Community Food Coordination*

In the second year of this contract, we have worked with 22 food projects across the City helping them to develop new and sustainable relationships with the food industry, with the aim to ensure a consistent supply of good quality and nutritious surplus food.

A number of projects have shifted to affordable food where they charge either a membership fee or sell heavily discounted food. This is a better model for low-income households. It also fits into the new thinking of the projects to stop creating a dependency on their services and encourages clients to become responsible for their own incomes and lifestyles. There is also a move to develop more wrap around services which could be Foodbank Plus advice delivered by LCALC or say energy advice.

The food banks have been supported with grants from the Household Support Fund and we have continued to operate this scheme in the current year although there is an expectation that the funding will be cut at some point.

We have been assisting De Montfort University with their work mapping types of debt for in work poverty. The results of this are due to be announced very shortly.

### *Just Ask*

To further support food hubs and build resilience in communities, our newest project Just ASK, is about to start.

Funded through the Anti-Poverty fund, we aim to build individual and organisational capacity around access to digital services.

Delivered primarily through food hubs, Just ASK - Just Access to Service Know-How – will help staff and volunteers build their digital skills and knowledge in order to help their

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users understand, navigate and access vital online services and information such as the NHS app, council website, DWP websites etc.

### *Health+*

Digital inclusion also underpins our work around health. Funded by the ICB Better Care Fund, it provides training in small groups or 1:1 in how to use the NHS App (for Leicester City only) as well as covering the Get in the Know Campaign, NHS and surgery websites and NHS 111. We work with GP surgeries and also reach communities through our community links and members.

### *Social Prescribing*

We continued to build around our work in health, digital and financial inclusion through our Social Prescribing work in relation to Over 65's.

### *Leadership*

Our 3 year lottery funded Leading in Leicester and Leicestershire programme was designed to build the capacity of individuals and the sector. The unique and successful aspects of the programme were the variety of delivery methods, the range of topics responding to the sectors needs and crucially a focus on reflection, coaching, connection and community. 333 individuals from 120 organisations took part in 17 different programmes and workshops. To build on this we have continued with the CEO Forum and Trustee Networking events.

Following the highly successful Community Connector course we are looking at embedding its principles more deeply across the sector, for example, by building it into the equally successful Aspiring Leaders course recognising it is critical to leadership in the sector.

We've also started wider conversations with the Lottery and community anchor organisations about Community Connection at organisation level, identifying the support and tools needed to strengthen connection beyond service and contract delivery.

## **6. Treasurer's annual report**

Total Income was down by £404k from £1.4 million to £972k (changes in grant funding and new projects starting up discussed above). This has meant that we did not need an audit and so the accounts have been independently examined as permitted by the Charity Commission regulations.

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This year has seen us report a deficit on our unrestricted and restricted funding which has necessitated us transferring £370 from our designated funding to cover business development. The deficit on restricted funding related to planned expenditure on funds put aside last year. The majority of business development was managed within income generated.

However, thanks to the great efforts of staff, £951k has been raised in grant funding which has been utilised to support VCSE partners across the county. The breakdown of these grants can be found at note 3 on page 16.

The charity maintains a strong balance sheet with £164k – with the bulk of these funds to be found in our designated reserves.

There has been a small reduction in total reserves from £175k to £164k.

We have a very small amount of IT equipment in fixed assets. Overall debtors have increased by £82k: £41k is due to Refurb IT income, which is claimed from the LLEP in arrears, the other £41k is trade debtors.

Cash reserves are much lower as the Moneywise Plus and other funding has come to an end and liabilities with charity partners have been settled.

Creditors have decreased by £135k, mainly due to Moneywise Plus finishing and liabilities being settled as noted above.

### **7. Accounts – for adoption**

The Chair advised that the board had agreed and approved the accounts. The accounts were adopted by members, proposed by Eric Waweru and seconded by Angie Wright.

### **8. Auditors – for recommendation**

Members agreed the re-appointment of Mayfield & Co.

### **9. Re-appointment of Trustees**

Jenny Hand gave thanks to Mandy Wardle-McLeish for her time as Chair and noted that she will stay on the board for a little while longer. The Chair noted that unusually all trustees are up for re-election. She gave a vote of thanks to Tracey Beighton who stepped down earlier in the year and to Eric Waweru who is not standing for re-election.

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Jenny welcomed the new trustees: Tracey Waterfield and Kiran Kala were co-opted in August 2024; Marie Davis and Rachel Hall will job share the role, but both need to be formally elected; and Henrietta Chubb joins us as an independent trustee, also to be elected.

Miriam McKee, Mandy Wardle McLeish, Jenny Hand and Liz Chahal are all standing again.

Kiran Breen proposed all these appointments and re-elections, and Maryan Anshur seconded them. Kieran Breen thanked all the staff and trustees for their hard work and effort in a difficult year.

### **10. Any other business**

The meeting closed as there was no further business.