

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting Home-Start North West Hampshire



**North West
Hampshire**

Date: Friday 21st July 2023
Venue: Rucstall Community Centre, Basingstoke
Time: 10:45am

Present:

Janette Hewitt	Chair
Patricia Fox	Treasurer
Jeffrey Northam	Company Secretary
Elizabeth Taylor	Trustee – QA Lead
Natalie Fletcher	Trustee – HR Lead
Mark Flower	Trustee – Funding Lead
Sue Bailey	Trustee
James Malmesbury	Patron
Jools Anderson	Director of Operations
Bethan Rixson	Mental Health Co-ordinator
Em Cater	Group Co-ordinator
Claire Wooldridge	Volunteer Co-ordinator
Katy Carter	Group Co-ordinator
Gill McMillan	Volunteer Co-ordinator
Anna Chiappetta	Office Manager (Minutes)
Cllr David Leeks	Mayor of Basingstoke & Deane
Amanda Leeks	Mayoress of Basingstoke & Deane
Angela McArt	HSNWH Volunteer
Shirley Vacher	HSNWH Volunteer
Heather Wilson	HSNWH Volunteer
Jan Allen	HSNWH Volunteer
Jane Michael	HSNWH Volunteer
Tricia Roche	HSNWH Volunteer
Jill Hamilton	HSNWH Volunteer
Margaret Rogers	HSNWH Volunteer
Jen Laidlaw	HSNWH Volunteer
Jo Attridge	HSNWH Volunteer
Laura Parker	Potential HSNWH Volunteer
Karin Jardine-Brown	Friend of HSNWH
Alan Attridge	Friend of HSNWH
Maggie Bates	Friend of HSNWH
Donna Pink	Friend of HSNWH
Richard Wilson	Friend of HSNWH
Peter Anderson	Friend of HSNWH
Eileen Anderson	Friend of HSNWH
Sarah Winser	Sarum Hill Centre
Lizzy Chenery	Milestones – Events Co-ordinator
Stevie Chadwick	Sovereign Housing
Jane Stubbs	Tesco Community Champion
Sarah Baker	Little Ducklings Nursery
Paula Ryman	Little Ducklings Nursery
Sue Haywood	Little Ducklings Nursery

1. Welcome and Introduction

Janette Hewitt, Chair welcomed staff, trustees, volunteers & friends of HSNWH to the AGM. Special thanks was given to our patron James, Earl of Malmesbury for his

continued support to Home-Start NWH and to Cllr David Leeks Mayor & Amanda Leeks Mayoress of Basingstoke & Deane for attending.

Janette advised that each attendee should find a copy of last year's AGM minutes, Treasurer's Report, AGM Report & Agenda on their chair.

2. Official AGM Business:-

Apologies received from:-

Lauren English	Trustee
Sam Baker	Trustee
Amanda Britton	Trustee
Naila Aslam	Trustee
Nicola James	HSNWH Volunteer
Julie Hartnell	HSNWH Volunteer
Sarah Robertson	HSNWH Volunteer
Erika Wilson	HSNWH Volunteer
Annie Saunders	HSNWH Volunteer
Pauline Irving	HSNWH Volunteer
Steve Bushell	HSNWH Volunteer
Lindsey Nicholls	HSNWH Volunteer
Rachel Hart	Friend of HSNWH
Georgina Clews	Health Visitor
Liz Narracott	Friend of HSNWH
Priya Brown	Marketing Consultant

Minutes of AGM held on Friday 22nd July 2022

Janette asked that the minutes from the last AGM be accepted as a true record which was proposed by Natalie Fletcher and seconded by all.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

Chair's Presentation of Annual Report & Update 2022/23

Janette thanked staff for producing the Annual Report and volunteers and families for their contributions.

Reflecting from her Message in the AGM report Janette begun by saying that "2022-23 was a very interesting year and thought that life after the Pandemic was going to be wonderful but the cost-of-living crisis hit affecting lots of the families we work with financially: -

- We worked with Citizens advice who provided fuel vouchers, grants and other financial support to those families struggling financially and made lots of referrals to the Foodbank. Benefits have since gone up but will become tighter in the Winter months.
- HSNWH supported 235 families in the last year, which shows that although Basingstoke is considered an affluent town there are areas of child poverty in pockets across the Borough.
- Sheren Butler – Trustee - Safeguarding Lead stepped down from the Trustee Board at the beginning of the year.

- Funding is still a big challenge with fewer grants available and more competition for them. We are running fundraising events and promoting the 200 club to generate income for core costs which is harder to get.
- We are considering changing the organisation's name to Home-Start Basingstoke & Deane to avoid confusion Home-Start Hampshire."

Janette ended by thanking everyone who has been involved with Home-Start in the last year in helping to give children the best start in life.

Janette asked attendees if they had any questions regarding the Annual Report.

None were received.

Presentation of Annual Accounts 2022/23

Treasurer Patricia presented the accounts from the 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 which have been independently examined by Caroline Scull.

Patricia asked everyone to turn to the last page of the Accounts which shows a detailed summary of the income & expenditure for the past year. Patricia explained that unrestricted funds can be spent on everything including core costs, however restricted funds can only be spent on specific projects.

Total funds received in the last year was £168k of which £95k was restricted and £73k unrestricted. Pages 6 and 7 show a breakdown of where restricted & unrestricted funding is received from. Patricia advised that applying for non-restricted funding has become very competitive and is frustrated that there is no statutory funding available for core costs. She advised that the HSNWH 200 Club fundraiser is a great way to raise money for core costs.

Adoption of Annual Report and Accounts

Janette asked for the Annual Report and Accounts to be formally adopted which was agreed by all.

Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2023/24

It was proposed that Caroline Scull be again used as External Examiner for the next financial year. No objections were received and it was agreed that Caroline Scull be the independent Examiner for the new financial year.

Election of Trustees

Janette explained that a third of the Trustee Board must stand down each year and can offer themselves for re-election. The following trustees were re-elected to the Board of Trustees:-

Jeffrey Northam
Mark Flower
Janette Hewit

3. Chair's Update

This was covered under Presentation of Annual Report

4. Director of Operations Update

Jools thanked everyone who had given up their time to support in the last year and announced that after her presentation she will hand over to HSNWH Volunteer Shirley & HSNWH Family Emily to talk about their journey with Home-Start and how that has made a difference to them.

In the last year the whole staff team has undertaken training to help in making everyone more confident with speaking to corporates within Basingstoke who are looking to partner with Charities more locally. We are currently working with Berry Bros. who provided Volunteers for "Preparing for School Course" and The Gabardine Bar who have hosted two of Cocktail/Mocktail Fundraising events. We have also strengthened our relationship with local supermarkets Morrisons, Co-op & Tesco.

Jools asked for everyone's help in sharing the Annual Report with family and friends who work for companies. This would be a way of getting a foot in the door to raise awareness of the work we do which could lead to becoming their charity of the year.

Jools carried on to say that the 5 week Preparing for School programme had just finished and was again very successful. Feedback received from families and headteachers has been phenomenal – they saw a difference in those children who attended the course compared to those who came to a recent taster day.

A slow Cooker Course was held in the Autumn, which helped families prepare meals in a cost effective way. Each Family was given a Slow Cooker, which had been donated especially for the course and free recipe cards to take home with them weekly.

Home-Visiting remains at the heart of the organisation working with families non-judgmental. An Increased number of high complex family needs referrals are being received which takes up more time when matching with an appropriate volunteer. Duty of Care for funding is for early intervention and will be working with our referrers over the next year to ensure more appropriate referrals are made.

Group Changes from September 23:

1. **Outdoor Group** - whilst attending a Young Parents Session in June, Jools asked what families would like to attend but can't due to barriers. Many of the Young Mums expressed an interest in going to a Park Meet-Up but do not feel confident going on their own, the majority live in flats with no gardens. Jools contacted Fairfields school who are going to lend their community garden once a week to HSNWH for a Gardening Club/Nature Meet Up.
2. **Bishops Green Baby & Toddler Group**-worked well for the year but families attending have children starting school/nursery from September and no longer need the Group. Despite advertising on social media and leaflet dropping no new families are joining. However, we are proposing to run the group monthly on a different day until December in the hope may attract more families.
3. **Multiple Birth Group** – The Group was completely Volunteer-led with staff on-site, throughout the last part of the Summer Term whilst

Group Co-ordinator Katy was involved with Preparing for School. This ran really well and will continue to be volunteer led from September allowing capacity for Katy to be involved elsewhere.

4. **Weigh Stay & Play – not finalised** – weekly Stay & Play group with a Qualified Health Visitor volunteering twice a month for new parents to bring their babies to be weighed and provide the opportunity to ask for health and wellbeing advice, Awaiting finer details from our Insurance to ensure Health Visitor is covered to offer advice as a Volunteer before starting a funding campaign.

Friends of Home-Start Group – we are creating a group for families both past and present, volunteers and referrers to come together to discuss what service gaps they see and what they they would like offered in the future. Jools ended by saying that “we recognise this will change the way we work and require us to become even more dynamic but if we can provide the support at the earliest opportunity in the way that the community tells us will make a difference to them it will/can have a meaningful impact on a child’s future.”

Jools handed over to Claire Wooldridge – Volunteer Co-ordinator to introduce Guest speakers Volunteer Shirley & HSNWH Family Emily.

Claire introduced Volunteer Shirley who was one of the 13 Volunteers who attended Volunteer training in January run by herself, Gill & Bethan.

In Shirley's words:-

“I had heard about Home-Start and went along for an informal chat 6 months ago, and yes they welcomed me with open arms. The next step was 6 weeks of training with a lovely group of about 15. The training was so very well run, informative, humorous and sometimes emotionally hard. We always had the option that if any subject was too much personally, we could just leave the room with no questions asked.

Then we were ready. Decision time - Group or Family? I am now on my 2nd family and absolutely loving it. I have been given the confidence by the Home-Start team knowing any of the fabulous co-ordinators-Claire Bethan & Gill or Anna and Jools in the office are only a phone call away. I have also done a couple of groups, taken part in some fundraising and attended a fabulous fundraising Cocktail Evening.

What is there not to like! I would recommend to anybody if you have a couple of hours to spare each week and a big heart and want to make a difference – Volunteer!”

Claire thanked Shirley for sharing her Volunteer journey.

Claire introduced Emily who she had the pleasure of visiting in January to discuss how Home-Start could best support her and her baby.

Emily agreed to share her journey through a Q & A session with Claire:

Talk to me about life before being referred to Home-Start?

“Before Home-Start I was referred to the Bridge Centre & Perinatal but I felt very alone and lost. Life was stressful, lonely and hard struggling with mental health, not an easy journey. I agreed to find out about Home-Start and Claire visited me.”

What was it like to have strangers come and visit you at home and ask you personal questions about your life?

"I do struggle meeting new people and opening up, if I don't like them I won't open up and was scared that I wouldn't connect with Claire. When I met Claire, I felt I already knew her, it felt very informal and I didn't feel like she was digging.

How did you feel when your Co-ordinator brought the volunteer to your home for the first time?

I was very anxious before she arrived with Claire but as soon as she walked through the door Thea, my volunteer acknowledged me and my son straightaway making me feel very comfortable. It felt natural and normal meeting her, Thea is my "Voluntary Friend" but has become my Friend. She visits once a week and goes above and beyond, doesn't mind me texting her, she cares about me as a person. Thea has helped me with budgeting, making me a spreadsheet to help with my finances and she offers to Hoover! If I need a safe space to open to I go to Thea, she does not judge and just cares.

What difference has having a volunteer made to your life?

"Its given me time to enjoy being a mum to Saxon who turned 1 yesterday. Having Thea has given me more freedom, she plays with Saxon giving me a chance to just be me. She gives me emotional support and if I have felt lonely know that at the end of the week there is someone there to talk to and go for walks."

What advice would you give to other parents who are having a tricky time?

"Ask for help, we all have pride but its important to admit when you are struggling."

Flowers were presented to Emily & Shirley thanking them for sharing their journeys.

5 AOB

In reply to Volunteer Shirley's question whether requests for volunteering with HSNWH are still coming in Jools replied yes quite a few requests for volunteering have been received and are planning on running another Volunteer Training Course at the end of September. She explained that Volunteers do not stay forever much as we would like them to and some have used volunteering as the first step before moving into paid work – this year has received the most requests for references from volunteers going into jobs. However, we do need to ensure that numbers of Volunteers do not exceed the level of staff able to support.

6 Closing remarks

In her summing up Janette explained that Volunteers give up their time for free but are not free to the organisation as there are still training, expenses and support cost implications. This all comes under core costs in managing and supporting volunteers which is why it is so important to continue applying for unrestricted funding.

Janette ended the AGM by thanking everyone who attended and hoped they found the meeting interesting and found out a little bit more about the work that Home-Start is involved in.

The meeting was declared closed at 11:30pm.

Janette Hewitt
19/7/2024