

**Minutes of the Leicester City of Sanctuary AGM 2019**  
**Saturday 15 June 2019 | Readson House, 96-98 Regent Road, Leicester**

**1. Attendance & Apologies**

In attendance: Aleks Palanac, Alex Jakeman, David Wigginton, Dickson Chikwizo, Anju Baroi, Peter Baroi, Chris Bullough, Shali Bullough, Sonia Bullough, Eric Nkundomubano, Geoff Woodruff, John Lessels, Nicky Brading, Phil Harvey, Richard Carrol, Amanda Beech, Naveed Shafaq, Danny Myers, Hannah Thomas, Joel Chitsa, Margaret Bonney (Minutes), Cloud Chunga, Jenny Dnes, Mick Walker, Angela Walker, Jenny Westmoreland, Eileen McKellican, Pete Hobson (Chair)

Apologies: Sam Javid, Ajay Aggarwal, Maggie Edgington, Tess Newman, Colleen Molley, Sherri Wong, Linda Harding, Rehana Butt, Nadeem Butt

Special welcome given to Danny Myers, proposed as a new Trustee

**2. Minutes of the 2018 AGM** distributed: no amendments and approved unanimously by members

- 3. Annual Report for 2018-19** distributed: Shali Bullough, Co-ordinator, spoke about her personal journey with LCoS over 5 years, starting as a volunteer in the kitchen, through grant-writing, to her paid role as Co-ordinator. Highlights of 2018/19:
- Move from Holy Cross rooms to The Bridge with good and mutually beneficial partnership with this organisation
  - Trip to Conkers, made possible by grant from LCFC's Community Trust
  - Sarah Hunt's university research project into loneliness
  - Anju Baroi representing us at Parliament
  - Red Cross continuing partnership
  - Margaret Fingerhut's fundraising concert at the Cathedral
  - Arrival of Sarah Jones from LCFC offering more hours of support to LCoS
- Shali stressed that all need a purpose, and 'doing good for others does us good', then introduced several speakers, who shared thoughts on LCoS:
- Dickson Chikwizo: enjoys being a volunteer, giving something back to the community and making a contribution, learning new skills, gaining experience and knowledge
- Anju Baroi: her pride in being a volunteer, has more confidence and feels part of the community, helps her to feel integrated
- Naveed Shafaq: he has found his family – LCoS - and is proud to share his love of photography by taking photos of all our activities. He displayed 2 of his recent albums at the meeting.
- Shali presented her personal awards to Trustees who have made a difference – to Pete Hobson for steering the organisation through to CIO status in the previous year – and to Margaret Bonney who walked the Borders Abbeys Way in May 2019, raising over £1,400 in sponsorship for the Emergency Fund
- The floor was then opened for Questions.

Mick Walker asked how many visitors had come to the Drop In over the year. Shali hasn't got exact figures, but knows that the average is 2 per week, which is sometimes difficult to cope with but shows how important the Drop In has become as a hub for other organisations to make contact with RAS in Leicester.

The report was received unanimously by the meeting.

#### **4. Financial Statement for year ending 31 March 2019 & Independent Examiner's Report distributed**

Alex Jakeman presented a clear visual summary of the Finances for 2018-19.

Starting sum £53,800

Total income £53,993 – highlighting contribution made to funds by Quakers, the 5 Leaves Bookshop, Fingerhut concert

Total expenditure £64,500 – noting outgoings on staff, consultant fees, travel and service delivery

End of year assets £44,622, most unrestricted

Jenny Dnes, Trustee with oversight of finances, explained the Reserves Policy. The aim is to carry forward at least 4 months' running costs, but she also stressed dependence on grant income which is a priority for the Trustees in the coming year.

Nicky Brading asked if money could be made available for a minibus or travel expenses to bring RAS together if they are in scattered accommodation across the county after Serco take over from G4S later this summer. Alex Jakeman (in his capacity as joint chair of MAF) reported that the intention was to keep both staff and accommodation as before, despite change of organisation. Pete Hobson recognised the importance of monitoring the situation.

Anju Baroi asked if we can afford to recruit another member of staff (assistant co-ordinator) given our financial situation, but Alex responded that it was covered in the budget for the year.

Chris Bullough queried the difference in the figures being carried forward, but Alex explained it was the result of the time lag in receiving funds from the Red Cross.

The meeting formally received the accounts for the year and the Independent Examiner's Report.

#### **5. LCoS Strategic Plan, 2019-22**

Pete Hobson explained the need to have a 'route map' for our activities, the Strategic Plan, and slides from his Powerpoint presentation were distributed. He drew particular attention to the Budget set for 2019-20, and our ambitions for the coming year. The growth in numbers participating in football activities on Saturdays had led to the need for a 3<sup>rd</sup> pitch, and Trustees have approved this additional expenditure.

The floor was opened for comments and questions.

Anju Baroi raised the issue of bus fares. These had been increased by 40p overall last year. Could another increase be agreed this year? Pete Hobson

agreed to refer this to the Trustees for discussion, but emphasised that the budget assumes the same level of expenditure on bus fares as at present. Mick Walker highlighted the importance of the Emergency Fund (previously known as the Hardship Fund), with a ceiling of £100 per week set for distribution at the Drop In. It is under great pressure by those in need. The Quakers have made a considerable contribution to this Fund. Anju Baroi stressed how important this Fund had been to her husband for medical expenses. Jenny Dnes explained that Trustees have reviewed the rules to make it clearer what the Emergency Fund will cover, and what it won't, but we are listening carefully to changing needs. £5,000 has been allocated from the General Fund to cover Emergencies. Mick has a lot of discretion over deciding who receives money each week, and how much.

## **6. Appointment of Trustees for 2019-22**

Pete Hobson informed the meeting that no external nominations had been received. Two current Trustees, Sam Javid and Golden Ngwenya, have completed their terms of office, and have been proposed for re-election. Cllr Danny Myers is proposed by the current Trustees as a new Trustee.

Danny was invited to introduce himself, and he outlined his own journey from being an official responsible for implementing policy decisions of others to making the changes himself through his charity work. For the future, he offers us experience in fundraising and the support of the political community.

Several members expressed pleasure that LCoS might be able to re-connect more actively with Leicester City Council, although Chris Bullough urged caution – we have no specific faith alignment, and we should retain political neutrality.

Pete Hobson put the following nominations to the meeting for endorsement:

Sam Javid, Golden Ngwenya, Danny Myers

This was approved unanimously and they were declared elected to the Trustee body.

Ajay Aggarwal, Margaret Bonney, Jenny Dnes, Pete Hobson and Eric Nkundumubano are the other current Trustees.

## **7. Trustee Appointment Process for the future**

Pete Hobson introduced this important document, which has been approved by current Trustees, with reference to the recent difficulties besetting some charities such as Oxfam, and the need for transparency in procedures. The aim is to put safeguards in place to make sure that the right people serve this charity. Previously names could be brought forward informally at an AGM, but now the process will be more managed, with prospective Trustees being interviewed before the nomination procedure and will be made fully aware of the responsibilities of charity governance.

Eileen McKellican and Chris Bullough pointed out some inconsistencies in the text of Section 2: Governing Document, and these were amended.

With these amendments, members adopted the document unanimously.

## **8. Chair's Remarks**

Pete Hobson highlighted the following:

- Thanks to the staff of LCoS, Shali and Alex, the Management Team, with special mention for Mick, Jenny and Maggie who help us to run our service, and all the group leaders of the various areas of activity
- The importance of Adrian Masters and his consultancy work which has guided Trustees and staff and led volunteers through structuring, planning and delivery of LCoS into the future
- The need for a Fundraising group to be set up to help us to our target of £25k to be raised this coming financial year from grants
- Our new post: Assistant Coordinator – we had 20 applications and an excellent shortlist of 5 candidates who visited the Drop In and feedback from RAS volunteers was part of the recruitment process. Shabana Momin has been appointed and will start work this summer.

Comments from the floor:

Jenny Westmoreland: we had a large delegation (5) at the national CoS AGM in Coventry and hearing from other groups helps us realise how much we do in Leicester. Interesting to hear the range of work going on around the country. Margaret Bonney added her thanks to the University of Leicester which does so much to support us locally.

## **9. Any Members' business**

None notified.

## **10. Key Partnerships**

Hannah Thomas, Outreach and Participation Officer from ArtReach, spoke briefly about the importance of the Journeys Festivals, here in Leicester and also in Portsmouth & Manchester. The organisation promotes artists, members from any minority community who may be RAS themselves or inspired by RAS, and supports events such as Margaret Fingerhut's concert. Aleks Palanac mentioned the value of trauma training for both practitioners and participants. Hannah talked about holding music therapy sessions possibly in the autumn.

Eric Nkundumubano gave a presentation on the partnership arrangements with the Red Cross, and the range of support services on offer in Leicester – casework, destitution, integration, social activities, local advocacy etc. He stressed the importance of MAF to bring voluntary and statutory agencies together, to prevent duplication and to share information. The partnership with LCoS runs to 2021. He spoke of future challenges – perhaps the most crucial will be the effects of the Immigration Act 2016, which if fully implemented would remove financial support for refugees. He also highlighted the levels of destitution – 60% of RAS in 2018 – a very serious issue for the future.