**AGM**

**2.00pm 18th October 2020 (via Zoom)**

Trustees Present: Duncan Nash, Acting Chair (DN)

Tony Russell, Treasurer (TR)

Clive Brooks (CB)

Dave Twine (DT)

Ruth Taylor (RT)

Alison Tucker (AT)

Ben Stokes (BS)

In attendance: Sue Snell, Operations Director (SS)

Secretary: Dinah Darby, Administrator/Communications Officer (DD)

**Others attending:** Bev Harris, Colin McSherry, Pauline McSherry, Robert Simons, Kathryn Spackman

Helen Spackman, Josephine Forsley, Anna Robinson, Nigel Young, Brian Marlow, Marian Marlow, Tom Riley, Elizabeth Riley, Lily Gaynor, Sarah Couchman, Jess Thompson, Jieun Lee, Susan Kyle, Uriel Renton.

The meeting started with Robert Simons opening in prayer.

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| **1.** | **Apologies for Absence**  Apologies were received from Bass Aldred and Aimee Corbett. |
| **2.** | **Minutes from the last AGM**  Minutes of the last AGM 2019 were brought to the attention of the meeting and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chair. |
| **3.** | **Appointment/Retirement of Trustees**  Retirement: Colin McSherry retired from his ten-year term of office as a Trustee. DN thanked CM for his hard work, particularly in risk management, health and safety and grant applications.  New term of office: Dave Twine and Tony Russell agreed to continuing their terms of office as Trustees.  Welcome and approval of new trustees: Alison Tucker, Ben Stokes.  All Trustees voted to appoint AT and BS, with additional agreement from all present at the meeting.  Plans/vacances for future Chair and Treasurer: DN confirmed that there continues to be spaces for new Trustees and thanked TR for continuing as Treasurer until a replacement can be found (TR has now moved to Cambridgeshire). DN asked for everyone to think through these vacancies and to speak to any of the Trustees with their suggestions which can then be followed up. |
| **4.** | **Looking back - celebrating the achievements of the past year 2019-20. Presentation by Sue Snell (SS)**  **Achievements over the last year**  Barn Development  SS confirmed that our activities have continued, even since the Covid crisis emerged, with lots of positive things happening. During 2019-20 it was recognised that not all spaces at the Barn are automatically filled and that there was potential to use the Barn on additional days as well as develop new group activities sessions. To develop this Tom Riley (TER) has made links within the community e.g. Fosse Way School, Three Ways School and Bath City College. It had been intended that pilot activities would launch Spring 2020, though this naturally has gone on hold due to the pandemic. However, Tom has been able to launch an extra day (Tuesday) at the Barn since September 2020 despite social distancing requirements.  Parent Carer Group  The group has continued to be a relaxed place for parents and carers to come and numbers were increasing significantly before lockdown, in particular with more parents feeling able to bring their pre-school children. When lockdown occurred Fiona and Rachel continued to keep in touch with the group via their WhatsApp group chat and had phone conversations with some individuals. Thankfully the group has started again this autumn though with very different arrangements: parent carers now book onto designated café-style sessions to control numbers and manage social distancing.  Fellowship groups  Mini Springs was attracting more families in early Spring 2020 but sadly had to stop due to the lockdown in March 2020. With current Government restrictions a restart has not been feasible but there are plans to relaunch in Spring 2021.  K-Team: A new Springs fellowship group was launched in February 2020 under the leadership of Jenny Otero. Again, this had to be put on hold during lockdown but the group has been able to join in with the fortnightly Springs Zoom calls and have recently had a socially distanced walk together in the park.  Web development  In 2019 the Life Project received a grant to enable us to up-date our website. This has now been launched and DD has worked hard to use this as an outreach tool, together with our Social media channels and newsletter. Additionally, we have been able to make significant use of video as a tool with thanks to JL and DD.  Community fundraising  On the cusp of lockdown the Bath Half still went ahead despite a few days of uncertainty. However, our LP team still participated and raised an amazing £12,500. Since then, we have had other successful community fundraising projects such as the virtual cream tea, in June which raised £4,000.  SS thanked all members of staff and our volunteers for the amazing work they do for the Life Project, often beyond the call of duty.  The meeting then watched a video featuring the Makers during lockdown: ‘Three little birds’. |
| **5.** | **Financial report and appointment of the Independent Examiner**  TR gave a summary of the accounts for April 2019 to March 2020. They look like this:   * Income £94k * Expenditure £90k * Surplus of £4k over the year * £51k carried forward at end of year * St John’s Grant to fund Parent / Carers (year two of three) * New grants for Barn Development Worker and the website rebuild   The Trustees have been concerned about our past reliance on grants and TR confirmed that we are now working at broadening our income streams. This now demonstrates a percentage increase in our fundraising income from last year.   * Barn income 31% * Grants £38% * Fundraising 20% * Donations 11%   TR confirmed a Strategic Finance group has been convened to look at how we can make our income streams more sustainable. This is a look at how the money was spent in 2019-20:   * Central staff 36% * Parent/Carers 14% * Barn/Allotment 38% * Other central 8% * Fundraising 2% * Professional fees 2%   TR reiterated the activities that have been happening since April 2020 and which will continue through this financial year. He also noted that Covid-19 emergency grants totalling £22K had been received and that fundraising would continue mainly online for the foreseeable future.  CB asked if the LP is optimistic for the forthcoming 2020-21 financial year. TR confirmed that the current financial year has been positive, despite the difficulties of Covid restrictions. He is glad that there is a move to make things more sustainable in the long term, as the pursuit of grant funding in particular is currently very competitive in the charity sector.  SS noted that our success in receiving specific Covid-related grants has enabled us to pay for extra staff hours and the purchase of PPE equipment to enable us to re-open and function as well as we possibly could.  TR reminded the meeting that the External Examiner for 2020-21 is Mr Colin Goater (CG). It was unanimously agreed by all present that he should continue in this role. |
| **6.** | **Looking forward – your dreams and aspirations for the Life Project**  SS confirmed that we will continue in our mission, in hopeful expectation and with the aim of providing the much-needed extra activities for those who are socially isolated. We are now able to take forward the lessons learnt during Covid lockdown. SS thanked RT for all her hard work in ensuring that the Life Project is now working to strict Covid safety measures by assisting with our risk assessments and checking Government Guidelines to ensure that all our people are safe. Whilst it has to be acknowledged that the challenge of raising more income has left us with some feelings of insecurity, God has been faithful in sustaining our needs. SS confirms that we will continue working hard to become truly sustainable, making good choices with our new developments and ensuring that we have adequate finances and resources.  SS handed over to our new Chaplain, Marian Marlow (MM). Marian was appointed earlier in the year and brings lots of experience in pastoral work to the Life Project.  MM gave a short talk, opening with Romans 12 v 12-13: *Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.* MM spoke of the wonder of God’s love and the power of Grace. For some of us life can be a challenge, but the beauty and challenge of this love is the expectation of Gods love travelling with us. If we get lost we can ask Jesus to come and find us. All of his promises are true.  A video of Uriel singing Amazing Grace was played.  DN thanked all staff and vols for all their hard work over the recent months and thanked all the Makers and group members; for all that they are and all that they do. |
| **7.** | **Closing words**  MM closed in prayer. |