



**MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
HELD TUESDAY 17 MARCH 2020 AT VINE HOUSE, PRESTON**

**Apologies**

M O'Donoghue, D Anderson, J Robinson, I Pickup, S Buckley, C Jackson, J Craven

**Present**

J.D. Gorick (Chair)	J Smalley
R Mallett (Hon Treasurer)	R Rose
J Standing (Independent Examiner)	R Glascott
H Patterson (Co Secretary)	
M Swift	

**Introduction**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to Cancer Help's AGM and thanked those present for their support, particularly given the circumstances surrounding the meeting. He noted the growing concerns regarding the Covid19 pandemic and its likely implications for the country and the charity.

The Chairman then offered his particular thanks to

- John Standing – Independent Examiner, James Todd & Co
- Rachel Mallett – Honorary Treasurer
- Hyllarie Patterson – Company Secretary

He informed the meeting that there were other officers of the charity present, including himself. Members were invited to discuss any matters associated with the charity with those officers present after the meeting.

The Chairman then went on to explain that due to concerns surrounding Covid19 members had been offered the opportunity to vote by proxy. Many members had done so and provided the Chairman with their voting preferences which he would discharge through the course of the meeting.

He concluded the introduction by confirming that, due to circumstances, the presentation on the use of CBD Oil (a cannabis derivative) in treating the symptoms of chronic disease had been cancelled.

**1. Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting**

At this point the Chairman referred to procedural matters that had arisen following the Annual General Meeting held on 20 March 2019. He reminded those present that the meeting of 20 March 2019 had not complied with the statutory requirements for notice in the calling of the Annual General Meeting. The Trustees had taken a decision to continue with the meeting on the understanding that the decisions of the meeting would have to be ratified at a future date. This was to be done by calling a General Meeting to which members will be invited and asked to ratify

Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting (continued)

the decisions of the Annual General Meeting. The General Meeting was duly held on 22 May 2019 and the decisions taken on 20 March 2019 were ratified.

The Chairman asked those members present if there were any other matters arising from the previous meetings. There were no other matters arising.

- Based on the votes of the members present and those who had voted by proxy the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 20 March 2019 and the General Meeting of 22 May were approved unanimously.

The minutes were duly signed and agreed, as true copies of the meetings.

## **2. Chairman's Report**

The Chairman provided the meeting with an overview of his Report that can be found in the Annual Report for 2019.

For several years, the Trustees and Senior Managers have worked hard to address the charity's financial performance; reducing expenditure and increasing income. The result has been a gradual return to a financial equilibrium and last year I was able to report that the charity had broken even at an operational level and, after additional one-off income, made a small surplus.

Sadly, that improving trend ended abruptly in the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019. The accounts for the year, to be presented by John Standing, will show that the charity made a significant loss.

Whilst the charity continued to control its running costs and expenditure the accounts show a significant reduction in income. Of most concern was the significant decline in voluntary income such as donations and fund raising, the lack on any meaningful legacies and the negligible income generated from grants. There are of course exceptions; the Friends Group and Barton Ladies continued, once again, to provide the charity with regular and much-needed income streams.

I believe Cancer Help will continue to struggle for funding whilst it is caught between two large and efficient local charities, namely Rosemere and St Catherine's Hospice. Over the course of the year I believe the charity failed to raise its profile, explain its value within the local community and help those who access its services to understand Cancer Help is indeed a charity. Until the charity addresses those issues income generation will remain a problem.

Fortunately, the sales and net income the charity generated from its shops remained strong. Despite significant problems in the charity's retail operation, that I will refer to later in my report, the shops delivered a surplus of over £95,000. The charity is indebted to the many volunteers that both manage and operate the shops.

As you would expect the significant loss has impacted on the charity's reserves which fell to circa six months of running costs, still in line with the Trustees' policy and Charity Commission guidelines.

## Chairman's Report (continued)

In concluding the financial element of this report, I must record the loss of theft of just over one thousand pounds of shop takings, in June 2019. The facts of the case are contained in a detailed investigation report, compiled by the Trustees, though the whereabouts of the monies could not be established. The incident resulted in disciplinary action and changes to procedures for handling donated monies. The matter will be reported to the Charity Commission in Cancer Help's Annual Return.

Through the course of the year the charity has had to deal with the loss of several senior members of staff. Firstly, the charity's Head of Adult Services stepped down from the role for personal reasons though continues to provide counselling support from Croston House. Due to the ongoing financial situation the Trustees took a decision not to recruit. On reflection this placed additional pressure on the charity's General Manager and remaining counsellors. The decision also impacted on the development of services and to a certain extent service provision stagnated during the year. In recognising the impact, the Trustees agreed the situation needed to be addressed and initiated the recruitment of a new Head of Adult Services.

Secondly, the charity's Head of Retail resigned from the post undoing much of the progress that had been made at the charity's shops. Much work had been done to improve stock rotation within and between shops, extend opening hours, improve the quality of donated goods, and move redundant stock. This program was not without its issues in the shops and several volunteers were lost during the year.

I could not write this report without recognising the charity's former Head of Income Generation, Laura Stephenson. For much of the year Laura was fighting cancer and, at the end of the year, stood down from the post. Sadly, in December she lost her battle with cancer, leaving a husband and young family. Laura's positive attitude, faith and combative approach to her cancer will be remembered by all those who worked with her.

The loss of these three senior managers in one year is unconnected and unprecedented. There is no doubt that the loss has impacted on the activities of the charity from income generation to service delivery and management. It is thanks mainly to the efforts and commitment of the staff, service providers and volunteers of Cancer Help that the charity's primary purpose, the delivery of services, has been maintained. Indeed, an increased number of people accessed the charity's services over the course of the year; the number of new service users increased by more than 20%.

The charity has several challenges to address and the Trustees and Senior Managers are intent on doing so. Those challenges are apparent – addressing the charity's financial situation, recruitment to key management roles, raising Cancer Help's profile and supporting its personnel. The measure of that intent will be the continuing ability of cancer patients, their families and the bereaved to access the professional and much needed services offered by Cancer Help.

Success will be dependent, as it has been for thirty years, on Cancer Help's greatest strength - its people; staff, volunteers, fund raisers and donors.

It is therefore appropriate that I end this year's report by offering my gratitude to all those people who have supported Cancer Help over the last twelve months.

### 3. Annual Report, Independent Examiner's Report & Accounts

John Standing (the Independent Examiner) of James Todd & Co, presented the Annual Accounts for the year ended 30 September 2019.

He reported that the charity's annual income was £314,946, down £89,701 from the previous year. Over the same period expenditure had risen by £22,243 to £400,462. This meant the charity generated a deficit of £85,516 in the year compared to a surplus of £25,428 in the previous year. The main reason for the deficit was a fall in Donations & Legacies of £71,748.

The members attention was drawn to note 15 on page 22 where it was explained that the charity had once again received funds from dormant client accounts held by Marsden Rawsthorn. Under SRA rules the charity may have to repay all or some of the funds should clients be traced. Trustees had to sign an indemnity such that if some or all the missing clients turned up, the charity would have to repay some or all of those funds.

John Standing referred to Note 16 on page 22 which highlighted Related Party Disclosures regarding donations received from an organisation with connected Directors. He pointed out though that the donations were received without conditions.

The subject of Restricted Funds (Note 18, page 22) was considered. Restricted Funds are those funds for which the donor has expressed a particular use e.g. the provision of support for children. John Standing noted that the charity was carrying forward £3,450 of Restricted Funds into the following year.

John Standing noted the salient points of the Annual Accounts were covered and contained in the accounts notes which can be read separately.

Due to the deficit incurred, Unrestricted Reserves (cash at bank, plus debtors minus creditors) were £196,868 which represents 6 months of running costs, only just within the charity's reserves policy. This situation will have to be monitored closely by the Trustees during the coming year.

A statement for the shops was presented by John Standing which showed a decrease in revenue of £8,890 over the last twelve months. With total takings from the shops at £144,931 and total expenditure £53,681 the shops generated a surplus of £91,250 compared to £98,644 in the previous year. The surplus generated by Plungington Road shop fell from £10,358 to £2,489. The Garstang shop remains the charity's best performing shop, generating a surplus of £64,710 or 70% of the total surplus for all four shops.

The charity has little control over the legacies it receives yet they can have a significant impact on the charity's performance. In the previous year, the charity received one legacy totalling £44,500, within a legacy total of £47,441. This year the accounts recorded a deficit of £1,689 on legacies due to an over-accrual in the previous year, a swing of minus £49,130.

Decreases in income were noted in all areas – donations, legacies, grants, fundraising events, and shop takings.

- Based on the votes of the members present and those who had voted by proxy the Annual Report, the Independent Examiner's Report and the Annual Accounts for the year ending 30 September 2019 were accepted and approved.

#### **4. Trustee Appointments**

The Chairman noted that three Trustees (Rachel Mallett, Mike Swift and himself) were to retire from the Trustee Board by rotation and had offered themselves for re-election. Each Trustee's re-election was put to the meeting

- Rachel Mallett - based on the votes of the members present and those who had voted by proxy Rachel Mallett was re-elected to the Board of Trustees.
- Mike Swift - based on the votes of the members present and those who had voted by proxy Mike Swift was re-elected to the Board of Trustees.
- Jonathan Gorick - based on the votes of the members present and those who had voted by proxy Jonathan Gorick was re-elected to the Board of Trustees.

#### **5. To appoint Mr John Standing (James Todd & Co) as Independent Examiner.**

The Chairman once again thanked John Standing for his continued support for the charity as Independent Examiner. He went on to note that John Standing's support for the charity went significantly further than that inferred by the role of Independent Examiner and had done so for many years.

The chairman asked the meeting to appoint Mr John Standing as the charity's Independent Examiner for a further year.

- Based on the votes of the members present and those who had voted by proxy John Standing of James Todd & Co was appointed as Independent Examiner for a further year.

#### **6. Any Other Business**

Coronavirus Covid19 – the Chairman informed the meeting that it was beyond doubt that the growth of Coronavirus Covid19 epidemic was going to have a profound effect on the charity's provision of services and finances. To this end the Trustees had met prior to the Annual General Meeting to discuss a range of measures to mitigate the impact and to protect the charity, its staff and service users. He said that once measures had been agreed and discussed with those affected a further statement would be issued.

Electronic Transmission of Data – the Chairman informed the meeting that he had written to all members of the charity to seek their approval to provide data in an electronic form or via the website. The purpose of the change was to reduce the charity's costs, such as printing and postage, and reduce its environmental impact by significantly reducing the amount of paper it uses. A significant majority, either by responding or not by the date specified, supported the change. Therefore

- Based on the votes of the members present and those who had, or had not by the specified date, voted by post the charity will in future supply documents and information, such as the charity's annual accounts and reports, in electronic form or via the charity's website.

#### **Conclusion**

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance.

**J D Gorick**

Chairman 17 March 2020