

Minutes of The Annual General Meeting Dorset Adult Asperger's Support - DAAS Held at The Retreat, Bournemouth University, Talbot Campus On 15th July 2014 at 6.30pm

Present:

Office Holders

Brian Cox – Voluntary Director/Acting Chairman & Treasurer

Diane Waters – Voluntary Director/Company Secretary

Julia Williams – Voluntary Director (co-opted during the year)

Sandy Teal – Voluntary Director

Carole Driver – Voluntary Director

DAAS Members

23 DAAS Members were shown on the Register as in attendance for all or part of the meeting (including the officers) Five non members also attended.

Items of Business:

1. Welcome & Introduction. Brian Cox chaired the meeting and introduced the Directors present. He thanked the Members for making the effort to attend, especially people who had come from some distance from the west of the county. The proceedings were set out in a power-point presentation.
2. Apologies had been received from Martin Hedley; Maureen Oxford; and from Steve, Mick and Pam Thornton.

The following resolutions were put to the meeting.

3. The Minutes of the last AGM held on 16th July 2013 were formally approved unanimously by those who had attended. The motion was proposed by Pat Cave and seconded by Tazmin Beedell..
4. Annual Report of the Directors. This was presented by Diane Waters who highlighted some of the key points. DAAS is continuing to grow and average attendance at the Bournemouth & Poole meetings is rising steadily, helped by referrals from CAAS. A new Facebook page has been set up, largely administered by Nigel Harris and Polly Ford, and this is for a closed group so it can foster a safe and secure environment. The page features DAAS events and highlights items of interest but we would like to encourage extended use as a means of organising informal social activities. Our meetings now encompass a few social events as well as talks and discussions, in response to requests from members. DAAS continues to play a part in the pan Dorset Autistic Spectrum Partnership Board and we were pleased to welcome to the AGM Allyson Evans who is Development Officer for Service Users/Carers for Dorset County Council and who facilitates the ASCPB. Brian explained that Board membership enables us to work closely with the people responsible for making and implementing decisions relating to the Autism Strategy and Action Plan and to put forward the views and concerns of DAAS members. This has helped to move forward the extension of the CAAS Service across the county. DAAS is entirely run by volunteers and the Voluntary Directors welcome the help provided by group members, most recently Gill and Steve Davis and Irene Harris, but we still need more people to provide cover and share the workload. Our DAAS Ambassador group has grown and we have now identified criteria for the appointments and created certificates to accompany the award. Priorities for the next year are to encourage more volunteers, particularly to try out the role of Voluntary Director, and to seek out more funding to enable us to continue our work. Nigel Harris proposed that the Report should be accepted and Daniel Robison seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

5. The Treasurer's Report and Statement. Brian Cox introduced these in his role as Treasurer. He has continued to achieve the balancing act between limited income and carefully controlled expenditure. Early in the year we were able to provide training from funding received the previous year and we would like to do more training if funds can be found. Expenditure is reduced this year partly because members and Directors have contributed with donations both financial and in kind eg legitimate travel expenses not claimed. The Tesco Community Trust award was very welcome and has enabled us to buy several items of equipment we could not otherwise afford. Brian formally thanked the people who have made voluntary donations when renewing membership. These are always welcome and appreciated. He encouraged others who have not yet done so to join or renew membership to enable us to meet some of our expenditure. In summary, our financial position is likely to enable us to continue for another year but a larger buffer would help us to provide more training and to assist with coping strategies. Allyson Evans informed us about some future funding which may become available, including money for carers projects, and which is open to bids. She has sent out details and may be able to signpost sources of help in making applications. Amy Pickford proposed that the Report be accepted and this was seconded by Pat Cave and agreed unanimously
6. Election of Voluntary Directors & Officers. In accordance with the DAAS Articles of Association, Julie Williams, who had been co-opted during the year, retired as required by the rules but being eligible agreed to stand for election. Julie's election was proposed by Nigel Harris and seconded by Amy Pickford. Julie was elected unanimously. Brian also thanked Julie for taking over the role of Treasurer which he has occupied for 5 years. The meeting showed its appreciation to both incoming and outgoing Treasurers.
7. Appointment of Accountants. The Treasurer recommended that the current accountants, Read Woodruff, Chartered Accountants of 24 Cornwall Road, Dorchester should be re-appointed for the coming year. DAAS is too small an organisation to require the accounts to be audited. Members voted to accept the recommendation.
8. Resignations: Brian Cox informed the meeting that he now stood down as Director as well as Treasurer and that Martin Hedley too was standing down, both from the date following the AGM. Brian spoke about the value of Martin's contribution as a Voluntary Director who is on the autistic spectrum. He has attended a variety of meetings, which are not always comfortable situations, and has helped to steer and focus the group, bringing to our discussions his own experience of living with Asperger's. Both Brian and Martin intend to continue a close involvement with DAAS, including joint presentations to raise awareness. Brian hopes to concentrate on applying for funding. Diane offered her own thanks for the support both Brian and Martin had given her as a Voluntary Director and as Secretary and was grateful that both would continue to be involved with DAAS. Although both will no longer be Directors they will in future be Ambassadors.
9. Vote of thanks: Nigel Harris spoke on behalf of the group and gave a speech of thanks to Brian and Martin noting the significant contributions they had made, despite sometimes battling personal and health problems. The group and individual members have benefitted from their efforts, their advice and their support. Nigel also expressed our appreciation of the support their own families had given them to enable them to carry out their roles. The group applauded the speech and the thoughts it expressed. Amy Pickford presented a small gift and bottle of champagne to Brian and Martin and some flowers and a rose bush for Sue and Rita. Brian thanked the meeting and Sue expressed thanks on behalf of herself and Martin.
10. The Chairman thanked members for their attendance and participation.
11. The Meeting closed at 7.15pm.

*Minutes taken by Diane Waters
Company Secretary*