

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Somerset Court Autistic Trust Held at Somerset Court on Saturday July 2 2016

Present: Mr N.Sugden(Chairman)

Mr G.de Groot (Secretary)

Dr M. Allison

Mrs I. Burnell

Ms L. Crockett

Mrs I de Groot

Mr & Mrs D. Hinckes

Mrs M. Lushington

Ms P. Mullinder

Mr & Mrs R. Smith

Mr & Mrs M. Burnell

Mr & Mrs J. Bussell

Ms C. Chamberlain

Mr. B.Harris

Mrs. S. Horack

Mr & Mrs J. Morris

Mrs J. Sugden

Mr G. Williams

1Apologies:

Apologies were received Mr & Mrs French and from Linda Rhead

2 Reappointments and New Appointments

Mr N.Sugden and Mr G.de Groot were reappointed as Chairman and Secretary respectively

Chairman announced that he and the Secretary had though the time had come to invite siblings to become trustees in order to secure continuity for the charity. They had invited the following to serve and all had agreed: Martin Burnell, Miles Allison, Nikki Lushington and David Sugden.

These appointments were proposed by the officers and seconded by Mrs Burnell. They were carried unanimously

:

3 Minutes of last meeting: Were approved as a correct record.

4 , Matters arising

Under matter arising Chairman pointed out the SCAT funds had been allocated to , among other projects, the purchase of a twister bike which would been show during the rest of Partnership Day, and the purchase of some exercise stepping stones.

In response to a question from mR. M. Burnell Chairman explained that the Brain in Hand pilot had proved disappointing and therefore the project had been dropped.

4. Accounts

Chairman circulated copies of the latest accounts. Chairman pointed out that we had received a donation of £1500 during this financial year but that our long term finances were still vulnerable and that we should attempt to encourage more fund raising like tombola stalls , collecting boxes for coins etc. He was taking advantage of an open garden day in his area to collect all funds from the selling of cakes and teas fro SCAT

The accounts were adopted , proposed by Mrs. I Burnell and seconded by Mrs S.Horack

Chairman referred to John Price's resignation from the trustees, and emphasised how much SCAT owed to John's contribution over the last few years He proposed vote of grateful thanks to John which was carried unanimously

He also explained that Mr. D. Sugden would take over the data base which had hitherto been kept by John Price.

AOB

The question of the problems in Mendip House which had now got into the public domain through local and national media was raised. Secretary said that this should be held back for discussion when the meeting would be joined by the CEO of the NAS and the South West Area Manager.

Mrs Horack asked what had happened to The Yurt project and it was felt that this too should be held over for discussion with the Area Manager

A separate minute would be supplied on the meeting with the CEO and Area Manager

The SCAT AGM ended at 11.50 am

The meeting was joined at noon by Mark Lever CEO of the NAS and Michelle Payne South West NAS Area Manager.

The main topic addressed was the **Mendip House situation**. ML explained that as soon as an alarm was raised the NAS invoked its standard system which was to involve four authorities:

The NAS itself which appointed an independent outside , experienced, inspector to look into the allegations

The Police who have not yet begun their investigation - see below

The CQS who wish to do care reviews on ALL Court residents

The lead Safeguarding Authority - in this case Somerset County Council

There were thus four separate investigations being undertaken or about to be undertaken.. The police would not commit to an investigation until they had studied the information from the other three. ML explained that because the case was in effect sub judice there was at this stage very little that could be made public, but he wanted to reassure parents , relatives, and carers that despite some media coverage the evidence from the NAS appointed inspector was that there was insufficient evidence to justify criminal proceedings

Given the need to integrate the approaches and keep an open flow of information ML hoped to get all four parties together at a meeting in the next week

ML emphasised that the NAS was an open organisation and positively encouraged whistle blowing

GdG said that in his view instances of this kind would have been picked up more quickly had there still been some body similar to the old service support committees. ML responded by saying that times had changed a great deal since then including the nature of the work force , but that the NAS wanted to be challenged and that he would welcome a parent being present at future Quality Monitoring Visits. This was welcomed , but the question as to how to choose the representative parent would have to be settled,.

Mary Hinckes suggested that consideration be given to the installation of CCTV cameras in each house - although this did raise the issue of privacy,

MP reported that Mendip House was now being restaffed and managed by an experienced manager from an established house. Behavioural Support Plans were being prepared for each Mendip resident and parents' input would be welcomed

The other topic discussed was the **Yurts**. Sarah Horack pointed out that she had been involved in discussions about the Yurts and had raised a number of issues and queries, particularly to do with their use for respite care, but had had no response for some time.

ML apologised for the lack of communication but explained that there had been major amendments to the initial plan. The Yurts had been moved from the cricket field, where there was a problem of noise from the motorway to the six acre field and were currently being constructed. They could be viewed that afternoon

The meeting ended at 12.50 pm