



Members' Forum Notes
17 April 2019
11:30 – 13:00
Millbrooke House

Millbrooke House,
137 Carisbrooke Road,
NEWPORT, Isle of Wight, PO30 1DD
01983 522205
enquiries@iwsb.org.uk
www.iwsb.org.uk

PRESENT:

Chris Biles (CB), Danielle Burgess (DB), Matthew Cleave (MC), Ruth Hollingshead (RH), Miriam Tong (Chair) (CEO), Liz Tuckwell (LT)

NOTE TAKER:

Chris Cane

APOLOGIES:

Chris Amy, Helen Tunley-Smith

1 Welcome & Introductions

The CEO welcomed everyone to the Forum and asked if they would like her to read through the notes of the last meeting which they did.

CEO informed the meeting there would be another AGM on 26th November 2019.

LT asked about yoga as the teacher was, apparently, under the impression that she would be coming on a regular basis. CEO said if there was regular demand then we could offer this on a more frequent basis. Perhaps we could advertise again? Transport is the usual issue getting people to Millbrooke House but it does make sense to advertise the classes around



The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service

the Island. Member Services Manager to make contact with the yoga teacher regarding advertising classes.

CEO was keen for members to contribute to the Newsletter and CB said he has an article to send to the Member Services Manager.

CEO asked CB about his research into other sports; goal ball in particular. CB has heard from Ryan Agius at Thompson House who wants to arrange a meeting with him. CB thought it would be prudent if several members were to attend the meeting. CEO felt it would be useful for the Member Services Manager or assistant to also attend. CB and RH to speak with Member Services Manager about some provisional dates and then contact Ryan.

ACTION: MSM to contact yoga teacher regarding advertising classes

ACTION: CB & RH to speak with Member Services Manager regarding dates for meeting with Ryan Agius

2 Sight for Wight Future Plans

The Member Services Manager is currently working on the next Newsletter which is due for printing in the next week.

There will be another low vision day on Wednesday 22nd May at Millbrooke House between 10:00am and 3:00pm. Dolphin, Professional Vision Services and the Macular Society are hoping to attend. LT asked if Cobalt were attending but CEO didn't think they were but will ask the Member Services Manager to make contact with them. If they can't attend our major event then we might be able to arrange for them to attend one of our low vision drop in mornings.

ACTION: Member Services Manager to contact Cobalt

The CEO shared with the meeting an Accessible Travel & Customer Assistance leaflet from Wightlink who help customers with disabilities, reduced mobility, medical conditions or just those that need some extra help and can rely on Wightlink to make sure the journey meets their needs. The Accessible Travel Freephone number is: 0800 093 8236 or visit www.wightlink.co.uk/accessibletravel

Discussion was had about Sight for Wight delivering My Guide training to external organisations on a commercial basis but it transpires that Guide Dogs like to deliver such training themselves.

The CEO shared an email she received from the CQC and Healthwatch Isle of Wight regarding a Focus Group on Wednesday 22nd May from 11:00am – 12:30pm at the Riverside Centre inviting people to give input. CEO said this can go in the Talking News

On the HR front, the Volunteers' Manager will be retiring from her role. LT wanted to know why members hadn't been informed of this. The CEO stated that such operational matters are not things that directly impact on members, however, the planned retirement was referenced in the CEO's report at the last AGM. The advert and job description are now on the website and there have been a couple of applications. The closing date is Tuesday 23rd April.

Other changes to Member Services – the Member Services Manager is reducing her hours to thirty per week as the Member Services Admin Assistant can pick up some of the admin jobs. This will be monitored for a

couple of months and revisited to ensure we are providing enough admin support for the role.

To support fundraising efforts and provide practical support with routine administration, the CEO and MC&FM will be interviewing for an apprentice and, all being well, they will join the team once references have been approved. This will be thirty hours a week including one day at the Isle of Wight College. LT was concerned the charity was getting more staff and using more money but the CEO assured LT that the staff hours have not been increased. A cost benefit analysis shows we could generate more than the £3.90 an hour the apprentice would receive with additional resources devoted to fundraising.

Legacies – LT asked about this and the CEO said this was a long-term campaign. To develop a good strong legacy campaign we would be looking at a ten year plan. Looking to get involved with another free Will writing event. There is no easy way for small charities to break into that campaign but the CEO has identified which solicitors on the Island are supporting this and will approach them to see if we can become associated with the campaign. If participating solicitors are interested then Sight for Wight could offer free braille copies. It's about getting our name out there and part of the longer term strategy so there won't be any significant difference for at least five to ten years. We can only achieve this by maintaining a professional image, good communication, website and presence.

We are in the process of sending a mailshot to primary schools highlighting the damage to eyesight that sunlight causes and encouraging pupils to participate in a fundraising day wearing sunglasses and bright clothes and donating £1.00 each to Sight for Wight. The event will be

called 'Bright for Wight'. The CEO is planning a similar event for secondary schools in the autumn term.

MC wanted to 'put a rumour to bed' about selling Millbrooke House. The CEO stated that a working party had been created last year to discuss what was best for the charity in terms of relocating or staying put and produced a full and detailed report with recommendations for the Trustees. As reported in full at the AGM, the Trustees accepted all of the recommendations of the Working Party. Millbrooke House will be retained and spare rooms will be let to secure rent. We will increasingly offer more services, not at Millbrooke House, but around the Island. The report will be reviewed again in five years.

3 Responses to any Advance Questions Submitted by Members

There were not questions submitted as such apart from a document from RP which didn't have a particular question; more general observations but the CEO referred to her address at the AGM which covered all points.

4 Open Forum

DB said she had listened to the MC&FM when he was a guest with Sunshine Radio and thought it was really good and wondered whether we could do something similar with the Talking News; perhaps a Desert Island Discs type thing? The CEO said she would check we do have the licence to play songs which she thought we did. DB said she would be happy to be the first interviewee. Only need to play ten percent of each track depending on how many songs are played.

DB asked if we are still looking at other venues for activities as she thought the Winter Gardens might be a suitable venue for the south side of the

Island. MSM to investigate this. Could do a coffee morning at The Eight Bells and Wetherspoons is also a popular venue for some of our members.

ACTION: CEO to check legalities with playing songs on the Talking News.

ACTION: MSM to contact the Winter Gardens regarding possible venue for South Wight activities.

LT wanted to know why the Member Services Manager was picking up members from Sandown and driving them to Freshwater for the new swimming activity and also, why is she attending coffee mornings. The CEO said it was important, given the full range of services we now offer, the MSM would periodically attend and whilst we are setting up new groups it's equally important she is there to attend and support, plus having the reassurance of a familiar face. Until such time they are running smoothly and suitable volunteers can be found, the MSM will continue to support these activities.

LT thought it might be a good idea to have a Talking News forum and ask people what they would like to listen to.

CB shared with the meeting his experience of travelling to Scotland from West Cowes and how the driver of the Red Jet Shuttle was extremely helpful. The CEO asked CB if he would like to write an article about this for the next Newsletter and perhaps on the Talking News.

The sunflower lanyard was discussed which indicates the special assistance when used in shops and other public venues. MSM to investigate this.

ACTION: MSM to find out more about the sunflower lanyard.

LT asked how we things were progressing with the new outreach vehicle. LT feels the best way of raising awareness is having a member with a guide dog who can speak from their experience. The CEO stated the vehicle will serve to deliver outreach to smaller communities on the Island who may not have suitable venues nearby. This decision has been made and is going forward. LT asked about the future of the minibus. The CEO said that a transport working party is being set up for this and will operate in the same way as the Millbrooke House Working Party and would like to have members involved. Dates for the working party are in September, November and late January. The CEO is keen for us to consider if people can speak from personal experience who receive PIP allowance as she feels this needs to be included in any future report as to what extent we should be offering transport as other independent charities no longer provide this due to using their PIP. The May Newsletter has an invitation for those wanting to participate in the Working Party.

Meeting finished at 13:00

Date & Time of 2019 Meetings:

Wednesday 17th July (11:30 – 13:00)

Wednesday 16th October (11:30 – 13:00)