

**SNAPS Annual General Meeting**

**Saturday 18 March 2017**

**Penny Field School, Tongue Lane, Meanwood, North Leeds**

**Present**

**Parents/Carers:**15 parents and carers, and children

**Staff**: Dean Sanderson, Sam Grundy, Heather Halstead, Meryl Johnson

**Trustees:** Scott Courts, Chris Eatwell, Clare Jackson, Jean Maston, Ross McWilliams, Rebecca Pearey

1. **Welcome and apologies**

Chris welcomed everyone and gave apologies from Anne Gait, Marjorie Frank and JannekeElferink

1. **Minutes from last meeting**

The minutes from the last AGM were reviewed by persons present and accepted as accurate by Jean Maston, seconded by Sam Lambert.

1. **Report and accounts for the year ending 31st March 2016**

Prior to the meeting attendees were given access to a pack with the following papers, which was also posted on the SNAPS website;

* A copy of the Agenda
* Copies of minutes of AGM held 19 March 2016
* Nomination paper for nominations to board of trustees
* Report and financial statement for the year end 31st March 2016

**3a.Review of the year by the Chair**

My name is Chris Eatwell and I am the current Chair of the Board of Trustees of our very special charity, Special Needs and Parent Support Yorkshire. This section of the AGM is my review of the last year, which continues to be a period of significant change for SNAPS.

Let’s look briefly at what SNAPS is and does. SNAPS has been in existence for nearly 13 years now, and has managed to survive, despite challenges with funding and with operations, problems which are common to many small charities. In fact next Monday it’s the 13th anniversary of our founding in 2004, and everyone should be very proud of that achievement.

SNAPS has always managed to meet its core objective – to deliver the Saturday hydrotherapy and rebound therapy, along with a wide range of social activities, music and movement, and soft toy play, taking place in the Hall, which also give the opportunity for the whole family to participate and for the parents to socialise and have a breather, while our staff and volunteers look after the children!

I’d like to take a few minutes of your time to look at 4 areas – our operations, our finances, our Trustees, and the future of SNAPS.

Firstly, our operations – we have continued to grow and implement radical changes in how SNAPS operates over the last year. We have increased the number of days on which we operate each term from 5 at our low point in 2014, to the maximum available in the recent Autumn term of 12 out of the 14 Saturdays from September to December 2016, and 10 out of the 12 Saturdays in this Spring term 2017, with the exception of the half terms.

Overall this means an increase from around 100 slots to nearly 400 in a term, quadruple the provision from 2 years ago, which is great news for families. We are now maxed out at Penny Field and cannot expand any further on this site.

Our new website is continuing to work well, and we’ve added a new social media presence, using Facebook and Twitter to communicate more regularly with our increasing number of families and other interested parties.

Key to these changes has been the operations and management team we have working with us – from Lucy Owen, our new Project Manager, Dean Sanderson our Manager, and the team of staff, physiotherapists, instructors and volunteers working tirelessly to deliver our services – we can’t thank you enough for all your hard work.

Secondly, our finances – I am pleased to be able to report that our finances have continued to improve. In summary, our reserves are well covered and we have additional funds to support our continued expansion and development.

I should emphasise a fact that is sometimes missed by our newer families – SNAPS is an independent charity, not an agency of social services or Leeds City Council, and we take no financing from local government in any form.

We are completely funded by our families, and by the wonderful and generous funding organisations which support us. We currently charge our families a bargain £7 per session – it actually costs SNAPS over £40 to run each session, and that is the gap for which we raise funds.

The strategy which we have adopted in the past year has been to continue to focus on smaller funders and grant givers, but also to talk to a number of larger funding organisations, and that has paid off very well. Our intention was to start to make our charity sustainable and move away from the often dramatic financial ups and downs which so many smaller charities experience, and which are so damaging to longer term prospects. And we have managed to do just that, which is great news for our future.

We have a good story to tell and we’ve shown that we can competently manage the steady growth required to build a successful organisation and expand the provision of service to the families of Leeds. Several of our funders have provided us with funding over a 3 year period, which means that we can contemplate a continuing and expanding service, and sustainability.

The additional news in Finance is the appointment of our first Finance Manager – Alex Firth – who has joined us here today. Her role is to handle our increasingly complex finances, and make sure all of our staff and invoices get paid on time, as well as designing our annual budget, and ensuring the Trustees have up-to-date financial information upon which to base their decisions. Welcome Alex. We are still very keen to appoint a Treasurer as a Trustee on the Board, and it will not be a heavy work load now that we have a Finance Manager, so if anyone is interested please see me.

Thirdly, the Board of Trustees - The role of the Board of Trustees is to set the strategy for the organisation and provide oversight to ensure that everything that is done to achieve that strategy is completed legally and according to the stated aims of the charity.

We are lucky in having a group of talented people with widely differing backgrounds and skills to be the current Board of Trustees and I would like to acknowledge their hard work and contribution in the last year in helping to deal with the issues facing the charity, and continue our successful journey. I am particularly pleased that over the year we have had Parent Trustees on the Board as they bring an invaluable view from the ‘front line’ of caring for a child with additional needs.

I’ll name all of our current Trustees if I may – in alphabetical order – Anne Gait (our Vice Chair), Jean Maston, Malcolm Hall, Ross McWilliams, Rebecca Pearey, Chris Tolson, Nicky Tolson and Becky Wilson. There are 3 people whom I would like to also mention – the first is Scott Courts, our former Treasurer, who stepped down earlier in the year, and Clare Jackson and JannekeElferink, who supported us on the Board as Parent Trustees. Many thanks to all of them for their contributions.

I am pleased to welcome Malcolm Hall, and Nicky and Chris Tolson who are joining the Board as new Trustees – reflecting the obvious challenges that our parents face in stepping up to be Trustees, we have adopted a new and more flexible approach by saying that either of the parents / carers can be the Trustee on the day, so in this case, if Chris isn’t able to come to a meeting but Nicky is, then that’s fine, or vice versa. We hope that this flexibility will encourage more parents to feel able to step forward and help – we have vacancies on the Board so please feel free to speak to myself or another of the Trustees today. There is full training and support available as well.

I should briefly mention 2 other points – we are fortunate to continue to receive great support from Irwin Mitchell, the leading law firm, and that has been and continues to be enormously valuable.

And secondly we have recently put in place what is called incorporation, a process which reflects the recent growth of SNAPS, and is a sign of our maturing as an organisation. This means that we will be known as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation or CIO. That has no effect on our operational delivery.

And lastly, the future of SNAPS – We have just drafted a new Business Plan for the year ahead, having successfully completed all of the actions and proposals in the 2016-2017 plan.

I want to share five exciting elements from the Plan:

Firstly, we have been in negotiations with a second site, Broomfield School in Belle Isle, South Leeds, to start operations there. Broomfield is the Southern Special Inclusive Learning Centre, or SILC, for Leeds, as Penny Field is the North Western SILC. We have recruited a new team, led by Emma Vickers, and will be starting Saturday sessions after the Easter break. Having achieved the maximum number of sessions at Penny Field, we intend to expand our operations to other areas and other families, and Broomfield is our first new venture. Check out our website for the details on dates.

Secondly, we will be running a series of 3 Information and Discussion groups in June for parents to meet up, hear experts talk about some relevant topics, and to network with other families. That’s a new offering from us.

Thirdly, we are founder members of a new organisation called Leeds Children’s Additional Needs Network or Leeds CANN, which is a new venture bringing together 21 children’s charities across the Greater Leeds area with the aim of creating a more effective information and resource sharing market place supporting families – there will be more news on progress later this year.

Fourthly, we will be running 3 sessions during the Summer Holidays, where previously we have shut down operations because the School has been closed. Keep your eyes on our website and social media sites for more details, but it will probably be day time activities for parents and children.

And lastly, SNAPS is pleased to announce that it will be providing financial support for a campaign to help families fight back against the recent communication from Leeds City Council to inform parents of 16 – 18 year olds with disabilities that they would only be funding 3 days of school rather than 5 from September. The fact that SNAPS is independent and takes no public funding enables us to step in to support the group, led by Beth Hughes, who was one of the founders of SNAPS in 2004. The group includes a number of families and children who have been SNAPS users in the past and we are proud to help.

That’s the end of my review of the year – the good news at this Annual General Meeting is down to the hard work and determination of the team and the family that is SNAPS. Thank you for your support during the year and thank for listening.

**3b. Appointment of Auditors**

Chris informed the attendees that the SNAPS accounts had been audited by WYCAS (West Yorkshire Charity Accountancy Service).SNAPS has appointed WYCAS over the last couple of years and we had found the service and support beneficial.Anne Gait proposed that SNAPS appoint WYCAS as auditors for the yearending 31st March 2017. This was seconded by Jean Maston.

1. **Election of the new Board of Trustees**

There are 4 Officers’ positions and up to a further 8 additional Trustees can be elected. The following nominations have been received to date:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Position** | **Name** | **Proposed** | **Seconded** |
| Chairperson | Chris Eatwell | Anne Gait | Jean Maston |
| Vice Chairperson | Anne Gait | Chris Eatwell | Jean Maston |
| Hon. Secretary |  |  |  |
| Hon. Treasurer |  |  |  |
| Trustee | Malcolm Hall | Chris Eatwell | Anne Gait |
| Trustee | Chris Tolson | Chris Eatwell | Anne Gait |
| Trustee | Nicky Tolson | Chris Eatwell | Anne Gait |
| Trustee | Jean Maston | Chris Eatwell | Anne Gait |
| Trustee | Ross McWilliams | Chris Eatwell | Anne Gait |
| Trustee | RebeccaPearey | Chris Eatwell | Anne Gait |
| Trustee | Becky Wilson | Chris Eatwell | Anne Gait |

1. **AnyOther Business**

A query was raised as to whether tuition could be arranged for parents in macron, as there seemed to be limited support for parents through the various schools. One of the new staff at Broomfield is a trainer in delivering macron for adults, so this was responded to positively.

**6. Close of Meeting**

Chris thanked everyone for attending. This was the largest turnout of parents and supporters ever!

**Date of next meeting of the Board of Trustees -**Wednesday 10 May 2017, Irwin Mitchell, 2nd floor, 2 Wellington Place, Leeds, LS1 4BZ.