**SNAPS Annual General Meeting MINUTES**

**PERIOD: April 2018 – March 2019**

**DATE: Saturday 19 October 2019**

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

**Present**

Lora Bedford, Chris Eatwell, Alex Firth, Debbie Hingerton, Lucy Owen, Sophie Moody, Paul Rowson, Jenny Sellers, Margaret (parent).

1. **Welcome and apologies**

Chris welcomed everyone and gave apologies received from Anne Gait, Ross McWilliams, Sam Lambert and Laura Storey.

1. **Minutes from last Annual General Meeting on 13 October 2018**

The minutes from the last AGM were reviewed by persons present and accepted as accurate. Proposed by Debbie Hingerton, seconded by Lora Bedford.

1. **Report and accounts for the year ending 31st March 2019**

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

* Notice of the AGM being held today, including the Agenda
* A copy of the minutes of the AGM held 13 October 2018
* Nomination paper for nominations to Board of Trustees
* Report and financial statement for the year end 31st March 2019
* In addition, a summary of the key financial data from the Accounts was made available

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

Achievements and performance

2018 to 2019 has been a year of consolidation, as well as further changes. It has been said that change is the one constant, and that is especially true for small charities in these turbulent times. My review looks at 4 specific areas – Operations, Finances, Trustees, and the future of SNAPS.

Firstly, Operations – We have continued to deliver our high quality therapeutic support to the many children coming to SNAPS, along with very valuable support for parents and the extended family. The level of need has continued to grow and we have had to adopt a more stringent session allocation policy to ensure that new families are able to benefit from our services. Operating at the maximum number of sessions available to us on our two sites means that, inevitably, there are unmet needs – we strive to help as many families as possible. The research for a third possible site is on-going although we are very aware of the financial impact of such a plan. SNAPS has experienced staff changes during the year, but our processes and teams have proved to be robust enough to cope with departures and arrivals. This included managing for a period without a Chief Executive before returning from Maternity Leave, the appointment of a new Site Manager for Broomfield, and the expansion of the fundraising team by adding two Community Fundraising Managers. We have continued to review and improve our management and policy structures, such as handling the implementation of GDPR, and the introduction of a Performance Review Programme for all employees. There were three specific highlights during the year – firstly the opportunity to present to Leeds City Council through a Deputation in July resulted in a brilliant speech by a Parent Trustee followed by a standing ovation from the Councillors, and crucially enabled SNAPS to be offered a presence on key decision making bodies in the city. Secondly, SNAPS was nominated for and won the group section of the prestigious Yorkshire Children of Courage Awards – a fantastic recognition of our work. And thirdly we were accepted as an Ambassador for Child Friendly Leeds. This capped a year of recognition for the charity. Key to the quality of our work this year has been the performance of the operations and management team, including the physiotherapists, instructors and volunteers, who have worked tirelessly to deliver our services – we can’t thank you enough for all your efforts.

Secondly, Finances – This has been a challenging year, with funding increasingly difficult to access from across a market place which is being stretched ever tighter by the tougher financial and economic conditions prevailing. Four years of managed growth means that we have some credit and experience built up in managing the ‘ebb and flow’ of funding, and the charity has been strong enough to cope with a planned deficit and a short period of losses. SNAPS is an independent charity, not an agency of social services or Leeds City Council, and we take no financing from local or national government in any form. In the current economic climate, and with cuts to government grants so prevalent, our independence has been seen by our funders as a strength. Sustainability now becomes the primary concern for the Trustees. We have shown that with sound fundraising, budget management, and some luck, we can push back the ‘sustainability horizon’ (i.e. the date at which our present funds run out) towards 12 months. But in reality it is very hard to maintain that level, which will always make the further expansion of SNAPS a challenging objective. The only proven path to sustainability is to develop income streams from outside of our client and immediate supporters’ base, and this is a long term objective. SNAPS has 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.

Thirdly, the Board of Trustees - We are fortunate in having a group of talented people with widely differing backgrounds and skills to be the current Board of Trustees, including hard pressed parents, to help set strategy and provide oversight of our work, 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. Continuing our journey, SNAPS is still drawing in new Trustees with wide ranging experience. There was an excellent Strategy Day mid-year, which both helped the Board members bond, and involved everyone in developing our plans.

And lastly, the future of SNAPS – To help ensure careful management of our situation, the Board agreed amendments to the Business Plan and we are now broadly back on track. The challenges facing small charities cannot be under-estimated, but as Chair, I am confident that we will continue to develop and grow, supported by the good will and contributions of our many families, supporters and stakeholders. The development of the Leeds Children’s Additional Needs Network or Leeds CANN, a venture which SNAPS co-founded, continues apace, with 40 children’s charities and statutory bodies across the Leeds area now working more closely together with the aim of creating a more effective information and resource sharing market place supporting families. The expansion of the Network to include all of West Yorkshire is in hand. The good news in this Review is down to the hard work and determination of the team and the family that is SNAPS.

We are open to hearing additional new ideas and suggestions from parents and carers, although we clearly cannot provide everything that our families might want. But please come forward and talk to any of the Trustees here today with any questions, ideas or comments you may have.

In particular we want to welcome more parents and carers to see what we do as a Board. Even if you decide not to become a Trustee, please come to a Board Meeting so that you try the experience.

Thank you for your continued support during the year.

**As additional information, the Chair added an update as follows:**

The review of last year which I read to you earlier is in the Annual Report for you to read as you wish. So I will give you a short update on what has happened since April – I’ll just highlight 4 items:

1. Having welcomed our Chief Executive, Lucy Owen, back from maternity leave, she rapidly settled into the role again, and has brought stability, enthusiasm and innovation to SNAPS. Two examples of innovation are the launch of our football activity on Sunday mornings at the Hunslet Club, and the Superhero Zoom event at John Charles, which was brilliant, and we look forward to that event being repeated next year.

2. Further to last year’s Deputation to the Council, where our ambition was to get representation on the key Leeds City Council committees, where decisions were being made which affect children with additional needs and their families, I can confirm that we have managed that outcome. This helps your voice to be heard where it is most relevant.

3. Our plan to continue to diversify our fundraising activities has proven to be wise, and we now have good results coming from grants (through Lucy Owen and others), trust funds (through Sam Lambert), corporate fundraising (in this year, through our friends and supporters at Irwin Mitchell), and community fundraising (through our Community team of Jenny Sellers and Eve Holdsworth).

4. And lastly, our role in initiating the Network of charities and other involved parties which started as Leeds Children’s Additional Needs Network, has expanded to cover all of West Yorkshire, and now comprises 57 organisations. This Network has 3 primary objectives – to enable parents and carers to access as much information as possible through a single website – westyorkshirecann.org, to help charities swap resources, material and ideas, and to encourage all organisations involved in the care and support of your child to communicate more and network together for the greater good. WYCANN as it is known is an excellent addition to the support available in the region.

**3B. Financial Report**

**3B1. Presentation of Accounts**

The Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2019 were reviewed by those present and agreed as being correct. Proposed by Lora Bedford, seconded by Sophie Moody.

**3B2. Appointment of Independent Examiners**

The Chair informed those present 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. Debbie Hingerton proposed that SNAPS appoint WYCAS as auditors for the year ending 31st March 2019. This was seconded by Lora Bedford.

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

Before we get on to new elections, I would like to mention our volunteer Trustees on the Board. Malcolm Hall, Jean Maston and Rebecca Pearey resigned during the last financial year, and we thank them for their invaluable service to SNAPS.

We were fortunate during that year to recruit 3 excellent replacements in Kathy Louca, Victoria Moss and Paul Rowson, bringing a range of skills and experience to help us.

Anne Gait, Ross McWilliams and Howard Pickles have all contributed significantly during what has been another very busy year. Paul Rowson and Ross McWilliams have both accepted the role of Vice Chair. Howard continues his support as our Treasurer.

We have also been delighted to have 5 other Trustees who are also parents of children using our services – that’s Lora Bedford, Simon Featherstone, Debbie Hingerton, Nicky McVennon and Becky Wilson – their contribution has been crucial because they have given the Board the authentic voice of lived experience which is so valuable.

Now two of our Trustees, Anne Gait and Simon Featherstone, have stepped down since last April, and again we thank them for their contribution. Anne is our longest serving Trustee and one of the Founders of SNAPS back in 2004, and we didn’t want to lose her, so we asked her to take on the honorary role of President, and we are delighted to say that she has accepted. Simon is also staying around to support us with any issues around safeguarding.

In addition, further to our advertisement for new Trustees earlier in the year, I am also delighted to confirm that we have asked Laura Storey and Sophie Moody to join the Board, both bringing valuable external experience to further strengthen our decision making.

The Officers’ positions are the Chair / Vice Chair / Treasurer. There are up to 8 further Trustees’ places and we currently have nominations for all 8 positions. If anyone else is interested in attending a Board Meeting, we can accommodate them as an observer. We love to have parents involved, as it is crucially important to have that voice from the front line. If you’re not sure what’s involved, have a chat with one of the Trustees here today, or talk to me after the meeting, and come along to a meeting and see what we do as a ‘taster’.

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

**NAME OF PROPOSED NOMINATED SECONDED**

Chair Chris Eatwell Paul Rowson Ross McWilliams

Vice Chair Paul Rowson Chris Eatwell Ross McWilliams

Vice Chair Ross McWilliams Chris Eatwell Paul Rowson

Treasurer Howard Pickles Chris Eatwell Paul Rowson

Trustee Lora Bedford Chris Eatwell Paul Rowson

Trustee Debbie Hingerton Chris Eatwell Paul Rowson

Trustee Kathy Louca Chris Eatwell Paul Rowson

Trustee Nicola McVennon Chris Eatwell Paul Rowson

Trustee Sophie Moody Chris Eatwell Ross McWilliams

Trustee Victoria Moss Chris Eatwell Ross McWilliams

Trustee Laura Storey Chris Eatwell Ross McWilliams

Trustee Becky Wilson Chris Eatwell Ross McWiiliams

No further nominations have been received.

1. **Any Other Business**

Lucy Owen thanked our staff team at this point. We couldn’t do what we do without the continuing support and encouragement provided by our team of hard working staff, so many thanks to them.

Penny Field – I would like to pick out and slightly embarrass someone who has worked for SNAPS for a couple of years now, and has radically improved the flow and quality of information available to the Trustees. Alex Firth has been a tremendous addition to the team and lifted a lot of weight off of our shoulders with her work as our Finance Manager. So here is a small token of our appreciation Alex – many thanks.

The Board had planned for there to be 2 AGMS, one on each site. However, due to an outbreak of illness at Broomfield and the consequent closure of the school, the AGM was only held at Penny Field. A separate update meeting will be held at Broomfield at a later date in 2019 to help ensure that all parents have had the opportunity to hear and discuss the progress being made.

1. **Close of Meeting**

Chris Eatwell thanked everyone for attending.

**Date of next meeting of the Board of Trustees –**

Wednesday 13 November 2019, Irwin Mitchell, 2nd floor, 2 Wellington Place, Leeds, LS1 4BZ.