

Chairman's Report to General Meeting of 26/5/2011

The General Meeting of May 26th was cancelled at short notice because by coincidence most members had holidays or other appointments. It was clearly a bad choice of date.

In place of minutes, here is a report of activities since the General Meeting of February 24th which includes outcomes from the Trustee meeting of May 12th.

Staff Changes

Sarah Frenett had resigned the role of Chief Executive Officer on February 17th and I have been acting as Chief Officer since then, in order to more clearly understand the job requirements. Your trustees are now ready to appoint a replacement.

Due to ill health, Sue Collins has worked reduced hours and will leave us at the end of this month. Sue has given much to the character and popularity of the day centre and her presence will be dearly missed by staff, clients, volunteers and friends.

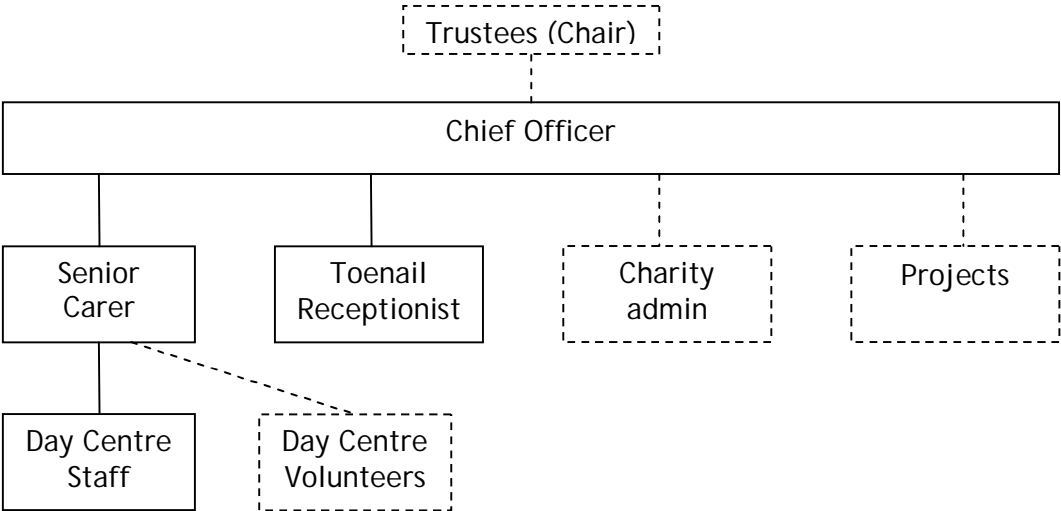
However our senior carer Kim Dawson is now working full time and has proved very capable of taking over the day to day running of the service in Sue's tradition. Jane Parker will also work full time in order to make up the level of cover we need.

The newly defined role of Chief Officer will oversee the management and administration of the Day Centre but will not directly involve in the provision of care.

Sadly we had to make Jo Wigmore redundant. Jo was originally employed as assistant to the Chief Officer and her role evolved to be insurance sales and information and advice service provision. Jo has always done her utmost to assist people. However, insurance commission is so low that it is not cost effective to continue sales and we do not have adequate office space or funding to supervise a regular advice service. Volunteers will continue to provide information and advice on an ad-hoc basis but mainly by referral to Age UK Berkshire.

Hence we are concentrating on strengthening administration of the core services being day care and toenail clinic during the transition to personalisation.

The revised organisation is as follows, with dotted lines for voluntary roles.



Financial situation

The exact financial position is unknown while the annual accounts are still being processed. However it is expected to be stronger than recent years because we have saved money by reducing the total salary bill, increasing fees for day care, and deferring maintenance and refurbishment.

The net effect on 2011-12 budgets will be reviewed when 2010-11 figures are available.

Financial decisions continue to be frustrated by the established approach of accounting in arrears. An in-house management accounting system is being implemented to give earlier visibility of the financial status.

BFBC has confirmed a grant at the same level as last year but the same cannot be assumed for next year, when personal budgets are fully established.

Strategic priorities

- Concentrate on more efficiently managing the core day care and toenail clinic services
- Prepare for personalisation
- Raise the profile of ACBF within the borough
- Resolve future relationship with Age UK (deadline October)
- Develop new activities to complement the core services

Day Care

Occupancy is usually about 95% but it fell to 87% in March and April due to an unusually high level of attrition in recent months. On the other hand it means we now have over 25% of new placements paying the full £17 fee (and that was not a factor in reduced occupancy).

I have ongoing discussions with BFBC to pave the way ahead for personalisation. We believe it is necessary to look more closely at how the various services fit together, have guidelines on fees, and promote relative benefits in such a way that personal budget holders and self-funders will have informed choice of their options.

Toenail clinic

The service remains popular and effective. The PCT warned that podiatry grants were being reviewed and were at risk but our grant has been continued for this year.

Open morning

This took place at Coopers Hill on April 6th. It was a very successful event, well organised by Jo Wigmore. Twelve service providers were represented and over 80 visitors took advantage of the information and advice offered. It would be highly desirable to repeat this formula elsewhere within the borough.

Spring walk

May 15th was a fine day and the event was successful but not so well attended as usual. About 29 brownies took part but no sponsored adult walkers. I recognise that the trustees must review and act on lessons from this, notably the need to plan much further ahead with more attention to detail and discussion with volunteers and supporters. I am grateful to Cllr Adrienne Jones who has subsequently explained the origins of the ACORN walk.

Outings

Janet Thomas did a splendid job of organising this year's programme of six escorted outings. They are proving more popular and successful than last year - especially the October visit to the site of the 2012 Olympics.

In-house developments

Refurbishment of bathrooms and toilets has been on hold until the funding situation was clearer. Whereas previous estimates were for complete refurbishments I now intend to move this forward on a piecemeal basis using voluntary effort to reduce costs.

It is more urgent to replace carpets with a washable covering and this must be by external contract because of the difficulty of lifting the old carpets.

Upgrading the computer system must also be expedited because client records are now computerised and need to be handled more reliably and securely. This will use in-house expertise.

Fundraising

A fundraising committee has been set up with Diane Goodchild as rapporteur and Allan Emmett and John Tobin as members. If any member would like to be co-opted they are very welcome to contact us.

Annual report and AGM

This year we aim to have the annual report and accounts audited by July 1st and approved by trustees on July 7th, well in advance of the AGM on July 21st.

Bob Pennell
20.5.2011