



Sway Welfare Aid Group

Registered Charity No. 261220

Minutes of SWAG Annual General Meeting held on 12 November 2019 at 7:00p.m.

Attendees: Jon Hartley (Chair); Jeremy Stevens (Treasurer); Pat Fleat (Trustee); Vanessa Edwards (Trustee and Secretary); Clive Potter (Co-opted Trustee of SWAG); Sally Smith (Co-opted Trustee of SWAG); Nicky Caneparo (Co-opted Trustee of SWAG); Mike Green (Driver coordinator); Jane Pitts (Lunch Club); Deborah Walker (Lunch Club); Sandie Williams (Independent Examiner of Accounts); Charlie Fay; Ted Fleat; Kevin Cripps; Stephen Tarling (Sway Parish Council); Helena Dickens; Richard Walker; Sarah Morris; Richard Dingle; Gill Haynes (Over 60s Club); Colin Denman; Barry Rickman

1) Apologies for absence: David Golby (Organiser); Rev Jane Mitchell; Sue Young; Ian Chislett-Bruce (Hordle VC Group); Brenda Bumstead; Peter Mann; Emily James

2) Approval of Minutes of the Annual Meeting of 12 November 2018 and any matters arising

The Chair referred to the previously circulated minutes and said that there were no action points arising.

The members gave their approval to the minutes, the motion being proposed by Colin Denman and seconded by Mike Green

3) Organiser's Report

In the absence of David Golby, the Chair presented the Organiser's report on the charity's activities and achievements since the previous meeting; this is reproduced in full below.

### **“Achievements and Performance – Organiser's Report**

This has proved to be a “landmark” year for the charity, with growth in our volunteer base, the amount in financial grants disbursed and the number of clients served. As David Golby reported at our May Public Meeting, SWAG was very proud to be recognised by residents of the village at the Sway Parish Annual Assembly for the charity's outstanding contribution to the village, the first time an organisation has been recognised in this way. Additionally, a tremendous amount of time and effort was contributed by the trustees to bring to fruition a merger, resulting in the transfer to SWAG of the assets and undertaking of the former Sway Relief in Sickness Fund. The merger was concluded just prior to the end of SWAG's financial year, and both I and Jeremy in his Treasurer's report will say more on the consequences of it later.

## *Fund Raising*

Thanks to the continuing generosity of the people of Sway, we received donations and legacies amounting to £11,879, including £1,906 of Gift Aid recovery. As Jeremy will comment in further detail in his report, this reflects a decrease compared to the previous year, partly due to a less successful Christmas Appeal and partly to the decision of a local charitable trust, which for many years has sponsored our heating grant activity, to support alternative local charities this time. I would like to take this opportunity to express the thanks of the SWAG trustees for the most generous support we have received from the charitable trust over many years. In addition, I wish to thank the many volunteer medical transport service drivers who generously re-donated their mileage reimbursement payments back to SWAG. Finally, my thanks to the Open House coffee morning group who once again donated the funds raised during their meetings to SWAG.

There seems to be evidence that charitable fund raising has become progressively harder in the last few years, possibly due to economic uncertainty or perhaps to the bad publicity incurred by some national charities. It is more important than ever that the trustees continue to communicate the benefits of the charity's work and the fact that SWAG's long-term ability to continue to provide the current range of highly valued services in the village is dependent on the continuing support of the people of Sway.

## *Charitable Activities*

During the year, we estimate that the charity helped over 150 different residents in Sway, through a combination of our popular medical transport service, the Luncheon Club, and by virtue of our grant making activity. Although total mileage recorded by the medical transport service drivers reduced slightly last year, SWAG undertook 344 drives to convey some 93 villagers to medical appointments at clinics and hospitals in the New Forest and surrounding districts. To that number should be added the 176 trips made by our driver volunteers to convey villagers to gatherings of the Lunch Club. I wish to record here my especial thanks to our Coordinator of the medical transport service, Mike Green, as well as to Colin Denman and Richard Walker, who alternate with Mike in answering calls to our help line and delivering this highly appreciated service.

Our Lunch Club too continues to go from strength to strength, providing a greatly appreciated social opportunity and a nourishing two-course meal twice a month for some 33 members. This is only possible thanks to the wonderful support provided by the Club's 38 volunteer cooks and helpers, led by our two wonderful Coordinators, Deborah Walker and Jane Pitts. All the Club's members look forward to the Club's celebrated three-course Christmas luncheon.

In our grant-giving activity, the charity has seen a continuation of the trend reported on in previous years for our support to be directed towards families with young children. Just to mention a few examples, the charity has supported young families by assisting with the costs of nursery education for under three-year olds, in the provision of therapeutic exercise equipment, and by providing opportunities for greater independence and access to exercise opportunities for children with learning difficulties.

The charity has also involved itself in trying to alleviate hardship resulting from illness, loss of employment, or changes or delays to benefit payments as the roll-out of Universal Credit gained pace in our area.

Jeremy will say more in his report about a number of grants made last year to charities and community groups present in Sway or neighbouring areas which provide essential services to residents of Sway, just to mention one example to the New Forest Basics Bank, for which charity SWAG acts as village agent.

None of this would have been possible without the commitment and enthusiasm of our loyal volunteers, whose numbers grew thanks to the recruitment of 12 new volunteers. It is with great sadness that I also have to report the death during this period of two of our volunteer drivers, John Perryer and Annie Baughan. Our deepest condolences and expressions of support go to John and Annie's families.

No review of the charity's accomplishments last year would be complete without my paying tribute to my fellow trustees for the tremendous support that they have provided throughout this important year in the charity's history, and I take this moment to single out for especial thanks Vanessa Edwards, who has stepped down as a trustee following her house move to London. Vanessa stood for election at our annual meeting in October 2016, and her contribution has been enormous both as Secretary of the board of trustees, and in drawing on her professional background in the legal profession to give trustees practical advice and guidance on numerous matters, including helping us to navigate through the demanding process of ensuring compliance with General Data Protection Regulations.

#### *Merger with Sway Relief in Sickness Fund*

In July of this year, our Organiser David Golby communicated to our volunteers and supporters in the village that following a period of meetings and considerable behind the scenes activity including communications to the Charity Commission, SWAG's trustees and the trustees of the Sway Relief in Sickness Fund ("SRISF") had reached agreement to merge. The practical manifestation of this decision is that the assets and undertaking of SRISF would be transferred to SWAG as the continuing entity while the SRISF charity would be closed. Both sets of trustees voted unanimously for the merger to take place, taking into consideration among other factors that the two village charities had overlapping aims, that they had on numerous recent occasions "teamed up" to support the same charitable causes in the village, and that anecdotal evidence suggested that there may exist in the minds of some villagers and some of our key charitable partner organisations, a degree of confusion about the role and purpose of both charities.

I am very pleased to be able to report that the period of intensive work by a task force comprising trustee representatives of both charities was concluded on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2019 with the transfer to SWAG of the funds comprising the major part of the original SRISF endowment. Jeremy will go into further detail on this shortly.

I am also delighted to report that three members of the SRISF board of trustees communicated their willingness to continue to volunteer for the newly merged charity and have confirmed their willingness to stand for election to become SWAG trustees at today's meeting.

In conclusion, I wish to record my particular thanks to David Golby, Jeremy Stevens, Clive Potter and Jo Cryer who were the members of the SWAG/SRISF joint working group which led the merger process.”

#### 4) Merger with Sway Relief in Sickness Fund (SRISF)

The Chair invited Clive Potter, formerly of SRISF, to say a few words on the merger from the SRISF perspective. His presentation is reproduced below.

“Merger possibilities with SWAG were raised towards the end of 2018. A meeting with both groups of Trustees was arranged and following a lengthy discussion a small sub-group was set up to go into the detail. SWAG was represented by David Golby and Jeremy Stevens and SRISF by Jo Cryer and Clive Potter. The sub-group met a few times to discuss progress. Jo Cryer liaised with the Charity Commission, which eventually agreed that the merger could go ahead as the aims of the two groups overlapped. The proposal was put formally to the two groups of trustees and adopted. The transfer of funds took place in August and SRISF was wound up. With only one charity in Sway we hope that the confusion of the past will be eliminated. I would like to thank my fellow Trustees, Brian Stevenson, Sally Smith, Gwen Meaden, Jo Cryer and Pauline Strain for the support they have given me over the past years. Special thanks to Jo Cryer for her negotiations with the Charity Commission. Nicky Caneparo took over the duties of Secretary/Treasurer from Pauline Strain.

Sally Smith, Nicky Caneparo and myself have offered to become Trustees of SWAG.”

#### 5) Treasurer’s Report and Adoption of Accounts

Jeremy Stevens presented the charity’s Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019 and the Balance Sheet as at the same date. The detailed accounts are reproduced in the Annual Report. Jeremy reported that the accounts being presented had passed inspection by the Independent Examiner of Accounts.

In addition to running through and commenting on the figures and trends set out in the Statement and Balance Sheet (not reproduced in the body of these Minutes), the Treasurer made the following points:

“With regard to income from investments, the figure of £10,368 is 25% higher than the comparable figure for the previous year due to the merger with SRISF. In a full year, investment income is expected to be around £14,400 with capital re-allocation as described in the Annual Report.

Overall, SWAG has an operating surplus of £6,589 but without the injection of SRISF cash this would have been an operating loss of £6,635. It should be noted that SRISF cash is a one-off event. Although funds of £35,769 are available, it must be borne in mind that approximately £10,000 is needed at this time of the year to cover SWAG until the next tranche of income arrives towards the end of the year. In the coming year we will find out the full effect of the merger on both income and expenditure. The indications are that SWAG still needs to raise around £11,600 in donations annually to cover projected expenditure. Your trustees feel that we are in a good position to meet any requests in the year ahead.

The Chair thanked Jeremy for his report and invited any questions from the floor. As there were no questions, the Chair invited the membership to signify their approval for adoption of the accounts. Approval was given unanimously, Clive Potter proposing and Richard Walker seconding.”

#### 6) Election of trustees

The Chair informed the meeting that four of the five current trustees had confirmed their willingness to stand for re-election for a further term of twelve months and that Clive Potter, Sally Smith and Nicky Caneparo, former SRISF trustees, had confirmed their willingness to stand for election for a term of twelve months. There being no other nominations for the role, the Chair invited the members to re-elect David Golby, Jon Hartley, Jeremy Stevens and Pat Fleat, and to elect Clive Potter, Sally Smith and Nicky Caneparo, as SWAG’s trustees for the next financial year. The motion was approved unanimously, Colin Denman proposing and Jane Pitts seconding.

#### 7) Election of Independent Examiner of Accounts

The Chair informed the meeting that Sandie Williams, the Independent Examiner of Accounts, had confirmed her willingness to stand for re-election for a further term of twelve months. There being no other nomination Sandie Cripps was re-elected, the motion being proposed by Jon Hartley and seconded by Mike Green.

#### 8) Transport Coordinator’s report

Mike Green, Medical Driver Service Coordinator, paid tribute to the drivers John Perryer and Annie Baughan who had very sadly passed away recently. He also mentioned that he was pleased to have recently recruited six new drivers, some just over 60.

Charlie Fay asked whether a record was kept of contributions from clients and whether there was any indication that donations were reducing. The Treasurer reported that donations from clients were steady in relation to the mileage driven, some coming direct to him. The great majority of clients make a donation but donations were required to be voluntary as SWAG could not claim Gift Aid relief if they were not. The Chair mentioned that drivers regularly handed clients the privacy notice card which included the information that donations were not required but provided details of how to donate if the client wished to do so. Drivers could also keep a supply of envelopes, available from the Treasurer and pre-printed with spaces for the date and the driver’s name, in the car for collecting cash donations.

#### 9) Lunch Club Report

At the Chair’s invitation, Jane Pitts gave the following report on the activities of the Lunch Club:

“As another year draws to a close, we can report that the Luncheon Club is alive and well and continues to support those in the community most of whom live alone and would benefit from the opportunity to meet with others for a nice meal and pleasant company.

So far this calendar year we have prepared 480 meals, with three more sessions to go. Our numbers have averaged 24 per session, with 8 gentlemen and 25 ladies making a total of 33

members. This year we have extended an invitation to two married couples who, for different reasons, would greatly benefit from the support of the Club.

The Luncheon Club runs because we have the support of 31 drivers, 35 cooks, two welcomers and three organisers. Many thanks to Mike Green for his organisation of the drivers' rota. We have lost one of our cooks this year (movement out of the area) but have also gained a new volunteer for next year. Please pass on to others how much we would welcome anyone who could offer their services – it is most rewarding and support is readily given. This year we are having a small gathering for our cooks on 27th November at Deborah's – just a little thank you for the great support they give us.

Sadly, this year we have lost a longstanding member of our Luncheon Club, Peter Veal. He was a kind, cheerful and helpful man with a very good appetite! He will be greatly missed by us all. It might be useful for members of Swag to know that Deborah and I try very hard to represent the Luncheon Club and SWAG at the funerals of our Luncheon Club members and we encourage other members of the Club to do so as well. We have attended quite a number of funerals over the last 11 years. Our members have become our friends and we are always very sad to lose them.

We are looking forward to our Christmas lunch in early December. It is always a joyous occasion and much loved by all.

Our financial situation is sound. We have been able to offer more expensive meals (fish, lamb and pork roasts) and an excellent three-course Christmas meal with a gift for each member.

Again, we wish to thank our 68 volunteers – cooks, welcomers, organisers and drivers for their commitment and hard work over 2019, and SWAG for supporting the Luncheon Club for the rent of the Church Rooms.”

The Chair thanked Jane for her report and invited any further contributions from the membership before closing the meeting with the mention that the merged SWAG and SRISF trustee group would be deciding on a suitable celebration for SWAG's 50-year anniversary.

There being no other agenda items for the Public Meeting, the Chair thanked members for attending and declared the meeting closed at 8:15 p.m.