



Sway Welfare Aid Group

Registered Charity No. 261220

Minutes of SWAG Public Meeting held on 29 January 2018 at 7:00p.m.

Attendees: Pat Fleat -Trustee; David Golby- Organiser; Jeremy Stevens -Treasurer; Jon Hartley- Chair; Vanessa Edwards – Secretary; Clive Potter - SRISF; Deborah Walker- Lunch Club; Charles Fay; Sue Young- Open House; Ted Fleat – SPC; Mick Monaghan; Sandra Monaghan; Tony Oakhill, Trevor Astbury; Colin Denman; Dick Bugg

SPC: Sway Parish Council

SRISF: Sway Relief in Sickness Fund

1) Apologies for absence: Mike Green – Driver coordinator; Barry Rickman- SPC; Rev. John Pawson - St. Luke's; Jane Pitts- Lunch Club; Margaret Whitney; Derek Whitney; Peter Mann; Jennifer Clark – Over Sixties Club.

2) Approval of Minutes of the 2017 Annual Meeting and any matters arising

The Chair explained that the minutes would formally be submitted for approval at the next Annual Meeting, but invited any comments or questions, given their publication and circulation in advance of the meeting.

There were no questions or comments from members.

3) Organiser's Report

The Chair invited David Golby to present his report on the charity's activities and achievements during the first four months of the charity's financial year, which is reproduced here in full:

Firstly a belated but sincere happy new year to you all. Thank you for braving such a cold evening to attend our public meeting tonight. I must admit that last week I thought that we would need to hire boats both for our drivers and to get you here tonight!

I've reached an agreement with Jeremy, in exchange for allowing me to present first, not to steal all of his numbers this time, so I will concentrate on adding background to our activities and leave him to proving the actual figures [or at least most of them] in his Financial Report.

Fund Raising

The charity remains indebted to a local charitable trust that has again sponsored our heating grants for the fifth consecutive year. This has enabled us, in the light of recent and very significant increases in utility costs, particularly electricity, to increase the amount of the annual grant per household from £450 to £500, as previously promised.

We have continued to invest our endowment funds wisely which has helped significantly in generating income to provide operational funds for the year ahead.

It is also gratifying that many of our medical transport clients continue to donate generously for what is a free service. This shows how much this service is valued throughout the village.

The Christmas Appeal yielded better results than last year but remains below levels achieved in the past. Whilst the appeal, in total, including gift aid, increased by 43% over last year there are a couple of trends that are worthy of both note and discussion:

1. The results from our collection boxes distributed throughout the village were very disappointing, down 62% on last year. This represents less than 2% of the appeal total. Clearly part of the problem is the ever increasing competition for counter space at retail outlets. On several occasions it was difficult to actually see the SWAG box on display. Additionally the continuing growth in cashless transaction with the increased use of contactless card transactions means that fewer people have that loose change in their pockets to donate. We are, next year, considering going back to the old fashioned way of shaking boxes in the streets over a couple of week-ends to see if this might improve the donation levels. Please note that we will be looking for volunteers!!
2. We are becoming more and more dependent on a handful of very generous donors who donated part of their Winter Heating Grant or indeed more to our appeal. This year 21 donors accounted for 98% of our appeal total. This is both a gratifying but frightening statistic.

Charitable Activities

During the last 3 months we have provided heating grants or other forms of financial support to twenty individuals or families. This includes, in the case of one client, a direct payment to Robin Nursery School to provide a place for a child beyond the level that the Government presently provides funding. As a side note here it is worth mentioning that the charity, wherever possible, makes payments directly to 3rd party providers rather than giving money directly to the client.

We also distributed over the Christmas period 4 food hampers from the Lymington Basics Bank to deserving clients and also one emergency food parcel.

Clearly there is a continuing trend of young people and families requiring the support of the charity within our village.

We have also recently offered £1250 towards the cost of installing a disability ramp to provided wheelchair access to the Pavilion at Jubilee Field. This money is yet to be paid and is subject to the Parish Council being able to raise the remaining funds from other sources.

SWAG's twice monthly Lunch Club continues to provide, as you will hear later from Deborah, a much loved and valued services to the community. Their Christmas Lunch was, as predicted, yet again an outstanding occasion enjoyed by all those who attended.

Our medical transport service continues to provide an invaluable service to people who need help in getting to their hospital and doctor's appointments. We are, as always, extremely grateful to our coordinator, Mike Green and his two fellow coordinators, Richard and Colin, who manage this service so admirably. As Mike is unable to be with us tonight let me give you a few statistics and a flavour of what has happened over the last 3 months:

1. We have undertaken 123 drives compared to 97 for the same period last year.
2. We have driven 2239 miles in delivering 40 clients to their appointments using 48 different drivers.

Despite the NHS reducing and/or cancelling outpatient appointments during this period to ease pressure on their resources, we recorded a near 27% increase in demand over the same period of last year.

Fortunately, the ever resourceful coordinators also over this period added a further 8 drivers, 7 of whom are now active having received their DBS clearance documentation. We now have over 50 drivers who are available to transport our growing number of clients. Clearly however we do have volunteers who retire. On this occasion Sue Young has decided to "hang up" her driving gloves after several years of service. I would particularly like to thank Sue who was our inspiration to increase our service offering to include transport to the local surgeries. This has been an outstanding success and there are many people in the village who really appreciate this.

The growth and success of our medical transport services has however brought with it problems that we need to address. Historically we have taken great pride in not turning away any requests for transport even at very short notice. Regrettably this may need to change going forward. Over the last couple of months we have "close calls" on a 3 separate occasions with clients who have become beyond the scope of our capability.

Whilst our drivers will always offer to provide a helping/steadying hand they are not trained in patient handling or lifting or have medical knowledge to judge if a client is in a fit condition to travel. In view of these cases we are reviewing our procedures and, as a result, we will need to decline clients whose needs we judge to be beyond what can or could be expected from a non-medical volunteer driver using a regular passenger car. To do otherwise would put both our driver and/or client at risk of potentially serious injury, breach our personal accident insurance conditions and thus put the Charity and its volunteers at legal risk.

The Future

We remain well placed, as a small charity, to help and serve those who are most vulnerable in our village.

It is however unfortunate but necessary for your Trustees to spend considerable time and effort in keeping up to date in reviewing and implementing where necessary ever increasing changes in law and policies in respect of the way SWAG must operate in today's world.

We have already put in place many additional processes as demanded either by Government or the Charities Commission in the way that we both operate and report. Just as one example of this we now, by law, must obtain signed permission, under Data Protection legislation, from not only clients but also volunteers, concerning any and all information we hold on them. Additionally we also needed a separate policy regarding the safe storage, the length of time, and under which conditions we remove these records from our files.

In one area currently we are questioning with the GNN, our umbrella association some central work that they been undertaking regarding both DBS clearance processes and reference taking. Should these discussions continue unchallenged we could be faced with:

1. Having to take out formal written references for all of our potential volunteers before they are permitted to actually volunteer.
2. Having to re-apply for DBS clearance every 3 years rather than the 10 years that the current certification permits. Additionally based on a constant "line of sight" ruling, we would need to obtain DBS clearance for many more of our Lunch Club volunteers in addition to the clearances we presently have for our two co-ordinators.

We have formally written to the GNN expressing our concern regarding these centralised discussions without the involvement or input from the actual charities they represent. In our opinion these proposals, if implemented, would be not only be "overkill" for small charities such as SWAG, but also deter people from volunteering. Our concerns have been noted so Watch this space at future meetings.

Finally, as Organiser, I must again express my thanks to my fellow trustees, coordinators and all of our volunteers without whom SWAG would not exist.

David Golby
Organiser

The Chair thanked David for his report and invited any questions.

Sue Young raised a question regarding medical drive clients who didn't offer a donation or contribution. It was accepted that this is unusual. David Golby noted that if the charity asks for payment, it forfeits Gift Aid. In response to a follow-up question from Trevor Astbury, the Chair indicated that the Trustees would discuss the issue with Mike Green, but noted that a generous Christmas donation had been received from one client from Gracewell who didn't in general contribute per drive, so assumptions could be mistaken.

Charlie Fay asked whether it would be helpful for drivers to undertake training in lifting etc. The Chair noted that the Trustees had discussed this issue, but had concluded that better practice was for drivers not to try and lift clients – those who needed intervention of this sort really required medical transport.

Clive Potter noted that under forthcoming new data protection rules, reflected in GNN guidance, drivers had to satisfy further requirements regarding data privacy. The Chair reported that the Trustees had discussed this issue. Pending further advice from GNN, the policy adopted by Trustees is that Medical drive clients, who by definition will have contacted the charity to request assistance, can be regarded as having given implicit consent to the storage for their non-sensitive data (name, address and phone number), while they remain active clients.

4) Financial Report, including Christmas Appeal results

Jeremy Stevens presented the charity's Financial Report for the period 1 October 2017 to 26 January 2018. The complete report is attached to these minutes.

Fund Raising Activities for the period amounted to £8,808, compared to expenditure on Charitable Activities of £5,482.

The main component of charitable activities were Christmas heating grants, made to 16 individuals and families, totalling £4,000, and special hardship grants to three families, totalling £691.

Of major importance to fund raising was the annual Christmas appeal, which raised £4,716, of which £1,000 was donated by an extraordinary donation and £87 was donated via collection boxes. 98% of the total came from just 21 donors (17 last year). Last year's total for comparison was £3,310.

Other Donations during the period amounted to £4,969 (compared to £4,677 for the same period last year), the most significant items being £3,000 from the charity's heating grant sponsor, for whose continuing support the charity is most grateful, and a total of £1,592 (compared to £993 for the same period last year) from various medical transport clients, including one donation of £300 and one client who donates £50 per drive.

Investment income for the period was £2,561.

Colin Denman asked if the number of Heating Grant clients had varied much. JS confirmed that the number was relatively stable, with two clients leaving the list, and two joining it, over the past year.

5) Lunch Club Report

The Chair invited Deborah Walker to present her report on the Lunch Club's activities and achievements during the last year, which is reproduced here in full:

It has once again been a very successful year for Sway Luncheon club.

We presently have 33 members on our register, having welcomed three new members during the year. Sadly, we lost Bill Granger and two of our ladies have moved into care homes.

We have served 547 delicious meals during our 23 sessions with an average attendance of 24.

Our most popular meal is our Christmas party, when we serve a traditional turkey lunch with all the trimmings, home made Christmas puddings, mince pies and chocolates. On this special occasion we serve wine which is donated by a very generous couple from the village. A real treat for our members. With the crackers pulled and the meal served we were then entertained by the choir from St Luke's school. Our members really enjoy listening to the young voices singing traditional and modern Christmas tunes. The party ends with every member receiving a gift.

Over the past few years we have charged £3 for each meal and we do ask our members to contact us if they are unable to attend so that our wonderful cooks do not prepare too much food. Over the past year Jane and I felt that it was time to put up the cost of the lunch to £4. We did discuss it with the members and they all felt that it was still extremely good value for money at £4. Some even were prepared to pay even more. So as from January this year our lunch is costing £4. Food costs have certainly gone up recently and we want our cooks to be able to produce good quality, nutritious, wholesome food without having to penny pinch.

This year we also have been given a couple of donations from groups in the village. The Drama group kindly gave us £30 towards our turkey and the Carnival committee gave us £100.

Many of our members are now becoming extremely frail and we must bring them into the Church Rooms by wheelchairs from the car park, having been brought to the lunch by Swag drivers. One day there were no wheelchairs to be had in the Church at all and it became extremely difficult to get these members to lunch.

Therefore, when the offer from the Carnival came regarding a donation, Jane and I decided that we would purchase our very own wheelchair.

I went along to New Forest Mobility and was able to obtain a second-hand, self-propelling wheelchair for £65.

The chair now remains in the Church Rooms with a large yellow label letting others know that it is for our members use on the first and third Wednesday of each month but the rest of the time anyone can use it. We are very grateful to the Carnival Committee for their generous donation and the remaining £35 is in our kitty to use towards our members lunches and maybe special treats.

This year we also welcome some new cooks to our team and we hope that they will get as much pleasure preparing the meals as the rest of the team do.

Before closing Jane and I would like to say a huge thank you to our team of helpers, without you there wouldn't be a lunch club. Your dedication to preparing the meals is wonderful and so much appreciated by members and of course Jane and myself.

However, there are three people who we feel deserve an extra thank you. Our welcomers, Angela and Jill, who between them cover the 23 sessions, setting up the tables, welcoming the members, taking their money and serving the meal.

The other is our very own Man Friday. Bertie. He contacted me a couple of years ago to see if he could help and wow, he is a real treasure. Bertie spends most of the lunch club in the kitchen rinsing and washing up and during 2017, Bertie attended all 23 of the lunch club

sessions. Bertie if Sway had an Oscar night you would be on the receiving end of an award. A massive thank you to you.

As with most clubs in the village it's the people that make it all worth while and so finally if any of you know of a neighbour, friend or person that might just benefit from coming along to lunch club then please let Jane or me know and we'll go and visit them so that they too can enjoy a delicious meal in the company of friends.

6) Sway Relief in Sickness Fund (SRISF)

Clive Potter kindly presented a report on SRISF's activities:

One of the SRISF Trustees attended the GNN meeting regarding changes to data protection and storage which come into effect in May 2018.

Grants have been made to:

- Brockenhurst and Sway Day Centre
- Jubilee Field (Pavilion ramp)
- Friends of Lymington Hospital for a new CT scanner

No request for aid from individuals was received in the period.

There being no other agenda items for the Public Meeting, the Chair thanked members for attending and declared the annual meeting closed at 8:20 p.m.

SWAG

INCOME & EXPENDITURE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1st OCT 2017 TO 26th JAN 2018

Charitable Activities - £5482

Christmas Heating Grants: £4000 (16 families at £250)
Special hardship grants: £691 (3 families)
Special grant to Robin Nursery School: £126
Lunch Club: £1009
Lunch Club Subscriptions: -£583 (offsets food costs in above)
Room hire for Over 60's Club: £40
Transport service costs: £152 (£85 Telephone, £48 ID Cards)
Other costs: £46 (postage)

Fund Raising Activities - £8808

Christmas Appeal	This Yr	Last Yr	
		Totals	
Appeal raised:	£3839	£2650	+45%
Of which Collecting Boxes raised:	£87	£230	-62%
Gift Aid to be reclaimed:	£877	£660	+33%
Bringing total for Appeal to:	£4716	£3310	+43%

98% of the total came from just 21 donors (17 last year), including one donation of £1000.
91% of the donations attracted Gift Aid.

Other Donations – Total £4969 includes:

£3000 – Heating Grant sponsor
£1592 – From transport clients. (£993 last year)
£172 – Regular Donations by Standing Order
£135 – Open House Coffee Mornings
£70 – Lunch Club

Fundraising costs of £62 were incurred for printing of the appeal leaflets and lottery licence renewal

Other Income

We received Interest and Dividends from our investments of £2561 in the period and paid £20 in bank charges.

Situation at 26th January 2018

Cash & Bank: £629
Deposit Account: £17,990
Lunch Club Fund: £129
Corporate Bond Fund: £11,431 (December 31st)

J R Stevens - Treasurer