

EXETER-ETHIOPIA LINK



Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 24th March 2018 at Exeter Community Centre, 17 St David's Hill, Exeter, EX4 3RG

- 1. Present:** Emma Sarton, Abi Williams, Mark Howells, Şöhret Howells, Penny Pullen, Dick Benn, Ella Huffman, Rupa Chilvers, Chris Pennington, George Dexter, John Rainger, Cathy Kiddle, John Collier, David Scarbrough, Gentian Dyer, Annie Bainbridge-Smith, Steve Smith, Cynthia Palmer, Jill Grainger, Alex Taylor, Richard King, Bruce Hebbard; from Blackawton School; Mrs Tanya Stilwell, Ben, Didi & Tina.
- 2. Opening of the meeting:** Emma Sarton and Abi Williams opened the meeting by providing an overview of the past year highlighting the continued success of the charity despite political unrest in Ethiopia, the embedding of new structures, the recruitment of a new trustee and committee members. Thanks were given to all involved in the operation of EEL, including the staff of our primary partner, DASSC, noting that other charities had withdrawn from Ethiopia due to the unrest, and therefore our support for DASSC was needed more than ever.
- 3. Apologies for absence:** Kirsten Pullen, Mark Smith, Valerie Huggins, David Evans, Alan & Di Cooper; Rachel Jamieson; Anthea Duquemin; Gillian Dale.
- 4. Minutes of AGM of 13th May 2017:** The previous AGM minutes were agreed as correct.
- 5. Annual Report:** Mark Howells (Secretary) presented the Annual Report which was available to the meeting, and reported on progress during the past year, noting in particular the Inclusive Education Project (IEP), funded by DfID & the Libraries and Reading Centres Project (LARC), funded by Comic Relief. It was mentioned that the Annual Report is a required as part of the charities Commission annual reporting requirements.
- 6. Treasurer's Report:** Dick Benn (Treasurer) presented the 2017 Annual Accounts, which have been produced in a format suitable for the HMRC. Dick mentioned that the financial operations of EEL are now managed by a 'Treasury Team' comprised of; Dick Benn, George Dexter and Von Mathieson, but a new treasurer was still needed.
- 7. Approval of 2016 Annual Accounts:** The accounts, which have been 'Inspected' by Von Mathieson of Exeter Community Accounting, as required by the Charity Commission, were approved without dissent.
- 8. Election of Officers and Main Committee:** Prior to the election of officers, time was given for everyone to introduce themselves. It was good to see past trustees in attendance, as well as some new faces. Thanks were given to the current committee for their contributions throughout the year, and in particular to Chris Pennington who has stepped down as membership Secretary after 5 years in the role, to David Scarborough for his work on redesigning the website, and to Mark Smith for his contributions, specifically in securing project funds. The following members were elected as officers and project leaders without dissent.
 - **General Secretary:** Mark Howells
 - **Minutes Secretary:** David Evans
 - **Treasury Team:** Dick Benn (Treasurer); George Dexter; Von Mathieson (external)
 - **Membership Secretary:** Gentian Dyer

- **Fundraising Team:** Annie Bainbridge, Gention Dyer, Ella Huffman
- **Social Media & Publicity Team:** Mark Hodgson, Gillian Dale, Annie Bainbridge
- **Website Manager:** David Scarbrough
- **Inclusive Education Project (IEP) team leaders:** Mark Smith & Ella Huffman
- **School Libraries & Learning Centres (SLLC) project team leader:** Emma Sarton
- **Water & Environment project team leader:** John Collier
- **Health & Welfare project team leader:** Alex Taylor
- **Collective Sponsorship project team leader:** Anthea Duquemin
- **Early Years project team leader:** Valerie Huggins
- **School Linking Coordinator:** Penny Pullen; supported by Sue Rainger & Cathy Kiddle
- **General Committee members:** Cynthia Palmer

9. Election of Trustees of Exeter-Ethiopia Link CIO – Registered Charity No 1154085

- I. Emma Sarton stood down as a trustee, but was re-elected.
- II. Abigail Williams was elected as a new trustee.
- III. Continuing trustees: Valerie Huggins, Rupa Chilvers, Kirsten Pullen
- IV. Ex-officio trustees: Dick Benn (Treasurer), Mark Howells (Secretary).

10. AOB: Richard King enquired about whether further thought had been given to a paid administrator to support the operation of the link; Mark Howells commented that the new funding for the continuation of the IEP project included funds for capacity building that could be used to recruit a paid person to administer the IEP project and support broader developmental functions. Shoret Howells raised the issue that engagement with members regarding updating them on progress with projects needs to be improved and consideration given to those members who are less likely to use a computer.

11. Annual General Meeting Close: The meeting was closed at 1100.

12. Presentations: The AGM was followed by two very interesting presentations:

- **'UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools Award':** With support from Head teacher Tina and Teaching Assistant Tanya Stilwell, two students from Blackawton School, Didi and Ben gave a presentation on what the school has done to achieve a silver award for UNICEF's 'Rights Respecting Schools'; they are now working to achieve a 'gold' award. They also talked about how they have supported their link school, Birka Bekumsa by fundraising to buy books and by making language cards to help Ethiopian pupils learn English.
- **Inclusive Education Project (IEP):** Ella Huffman presented an update on the IEP project, which has now completed after 3 years with some impressive outcomes: 3827 children with disabilities now attending across 198 schools and 150 school disability clubs set up, as well as parent groups.
- **'School Libraries & Learning Centres (SLLC) project:** Emma Sarton gave an update on the SLLC project which has now completed its second year to develop and improve school libraries and learning centres, which are having a measurable impact on improving pupil literacy levels.
- **Vision Aid Overseas (VAO) visit to Nekemte Eye Clinic:** Alex Taylor and Jill Grainger reported on the visit by volunteers from VAO to the eye clinic in Nekemte, which was supported by funds from EEL. The volunteers carried 842 eye examinations at the clinic, as well as a further 516 at outreach clinics, and dispensed nearly 700 spectacles. VAO are considering a further visit in 2018.
