

Redbourn Care Group
Advisory Committee Meeting
10 January 2017



Minutes are 'Draft until Signed'

Members present: Barry Welch (Chairman), Peter Robey (Vice-chair), Dennis Poole (Treasurer), Sally Bartlett (Secretary), Claire-Louise Lawlor (Office Manager), Mollie Williams, Ann Mundy, Connie Crawley, Sheila Seabrook, Margie Johnstone, Bernie Penny and Annie Lowe.

Barry welcomed everyone to the first 2017 meeting and wished a Happy New Year to all.

Apologies were received from Rev. Will Gibbs, Peta Gunson, Dennis Bigham, Steve Lilywhite, Maria Maynard and Podge Fox.

1. **Minutes of the previous meeting** on 4 October 2016 were approved as correct; they were proposed by Connie Crawley and seconded by Dennis Poole.
2. **Matters arising** related to a payment of £1,000 to the village hall of rent for the use of the office. Barry explained that further discussions would need to take place during the coming year to secure the tenancy of the office with some sort of leasing arrangement yet to be confirmed.
3. **Reports:**
 - a. **Treasurer:** Dennis presented the treasurer's report and circulated a summary of income and expenditure to date in the current financial year, together with a statement of current cash reserves. Following the creation of the Care Trust all bank changes are now in place and the restructuring of the finances has been completed. The lease for the minibus garage at the fire station has been transferred from the Care Group to the Care Trust by Herts County Council. The asset value of the garage (£36,000) is now off the books of the Care Group and will appear on the balance sheet of the Care Trust.

Two negative issues to report:

- i. For the first time Herts County Council have challenged our mileage claim of £204 for six months of mileage claimed for journeys to the Day Centre. We await the outcome.
- ii. Because of a problem when changing over accounts and an error by the bank, £148 cash for bus fares cannot be accounted for and intensive efforts to trace it have been unsuccessful. The Trustees have reluctantly decided to write it off.

A number of significant donations have been received since the last meeting and are worth highlighting:

- i. Two donations from Anne Gordon and Mr & Mrs Brasier for purchasing a defibrillator for the minibus. This is now on order.
- ii. £156 from the Methodist Church (coffee morning).

- iii. £466 from the Cricketers pub Quiz Night.
- iv. £400 from the Friends of Saint Mary's from the Santa float.

Barry thanked Dennis for all his hard work and invited questions. The issue of gift aid was raised by Peter - a backdated claim needs to be submitted which may recoup another couple of thousand pounds for funds.

- b. **Office Manager:** Claire-Louise wished everyone a Happy New Year and then informed the meeting of the following:
 - i. We currently have 263 clients on our records and 120 volunteers. The number of volunteers has gone down by two as two couriers have retired, we are also going to be losing two mini bus drivers by the end of next month. As we are going into holiday time now for quite a few of our volunteers, being two mini bus drivers down will have a great impact.
 - ii. Over the last 13-week period, the office has been extremely busy with the staff organising a record 191 car trips alone. In the office, we are currently looking at our processes and we have already made some small changes to give the ladies more time, as some of you will be aware if you pop into the office the phone is always busy. The office has been manned every day except for the December/January bank holidays. A very successful office meeting was held with the staff and Geoff Garrad-Cole attending in December. This is a great way for everyone to share ideas and best practices in the office.
 - iii. One of her goals this year is to start work with organising a website and consider a computer program for the office.
 - iv. We have 55 drivers which remains the same as reported at our last meeting. As previously mentioned we organised 191 car journeys over the last period, this is up by 46 car trips since the previous 13-week period. Pleased to report we have been able to find drivers for every request, even the ones that we receive at short notice.
 - v. It was calculated that each one of our car trips takes on average 1.53 hours. We are still seeing that a lot of our drives are further afield and some of our volunteers will only do short journeys so again sometimes it falls down to the same people doing the further journeys.
 - vi. At the current time we have 19 mini bus drivers however we are sadly losing two in the coming month. Garry Hay is moving away and will be greatly missed and the other Robert Palmer is not renewing the D1 element of his licence. We therefore will be looking again for mini bus drivers, even though we have 19 on our books, it is coming up to holiday time and we may struggle.
 - vii. Our mini bus is out every day except for Tuesdays when it is often out on loan. Over the last 13 weeks the mini bus has been out on 89 weekly bus

trips. Even though the 'Pop In' was not on at the village hall over some of December we still took clients to the village shops and then up to the garden centre for coffee and cake.

- viii. Since the last meeting our mini bus has been loaned out 21 times and this is up twice since the previous period. Lends include, Redbourn Youth Club, RCG outings, W.I, NFP, Woollams, St Marys and U3A.
- ix. We now have 11 clients on our swimmer's Monday morning outing. Our shopping trips are still very popular with 43 clients on our list. Pleased to report that our shopping trips still went ahead over the Christmas period. Tony Pearce continues to transport clients to the Macular Society every week and Stroke Club still has one member.
- x. In partnership with Youth Connexions another successful Christmas Tea Party was held on 4th of December. Thanks again to everyone who assisted with transport on the day.
- xi. Safeguarding - recently sent out an email on behalf of Peta Gunson to all members about safeguarding and encouraged every member who wasn't at the EGM for the training to read the policy. Some members have been kind enough to do so but some still need to comply.
- xii. External meeting. Claire-Louise was sponsored for a ticket to go to the CTA (Community Transport Association) AGM at Westminster conference. Dennis Bigham also attended and it was held at the Civil Engineering building in Westminster. It was an enjoyable conference meeting with other members and contacts.
- xiii. The CVS are now setting up a new group called 'Stronger Together' and CLL will be part of this focus group, which will have regular meetings.

Barry thanked Claire-Louise for all her hard work and asked her to pass on thanks to the office staff for all their hard work and efforts to ensure all requests are fulfilled.

- c. **Minibus Manager:** in Dennis' absence, Sally read his report:
 - i. The bus has been serviced and brake pads / shoes have been replaced.
 - ii. The interior light has been replaced with a new bulb and a spare.
 - iii. We are trying to get a replacement cover for the lift.
 - iv. Training for new volunteers, bus drivers and couriers is arranged as and when needed.
 - v. The minibus was recently taken back to the garage to have wheelnuts checked after running for some time, as requested by the garage.
 - vi. No other problems had been reported.

Bernie raised two points: the side door to the garage has a light which is not working and the lock on the side door itself is very stiff. Bernie uses the side door to collect and return wheelchairs and scooters so he agreed to look at both the light and the lock to see if he could resolve the problems himself.

NB. Both issues resolved by Bernie, many thanks.

- d. **Street Co-ordinator:** unfortunately Steve was unable to attend the meeting due to illness; Barry wished him well and a speedy recovery.
- e. **Wheelchairs/scooters:** Bernie reported that all electric scooters are currently working normally.
 - i. We recently acquired 3 second hand electric scooters: a Pride GoGo to replace the scrapped Rascal Taxi; another Quingo and a Luggie foldable/portable scooter. We also had a Drive ActiveCare powered wheelchair which was donated to the Care Group last year.
 - ii. At the last count (before Christmas) we had 6 wheelchairs on loan. One wheelchair needed a new brake cable! Some of our clients do not seem to know their own grip strength as the previous cable broke under repeated forceful application of the brakes.

Peter asked about the insurance value as the current policy probably needs to be checked to see if sufficient.

Barry explained that a reclining chair was currently on offer to someone who might benefit from having one (a local resident who had recently moved to a care home). Margie and Sheila will make enquiries to see if anyone can make use of it. NB. A Woollams resident is to be the happy recipient.

- f. **Outings:** Annie reported on the very busy year she is planning for 2017.
 - i. The outings resumed in March and April after the winter break with country drives to a variety of locations with garden centres.
 - ii. The canal trip in May was successful and included a plentiful finger buffet. Unfortunately, the trip to the House of Commons had to be cancelled for security reasons (due to the terrorist activities) but Mike Weir and Annie plan to apply for another permit later in the year if circumstances allow.
 - iii. Due to popular demand July's outing is to Southend and Annie invited members of the Advisory Group to let her know if they wish to join this special outing.
 - iv. A summer lunch at Redbourn Golf Club is planned for August; as yet the destination of September's outing is unconfirmed but it maybe to

Whipsnade. Annie expressed her thanks to the Advisory Group for their support.

- v. 5 Special Trips are being planned - the seaside destination is always most popular. This year one of the special trips will be a trip to The House of Commons, currently being organised in liaison with Peter Lilley's secretary. The date is as yet unconfirmed; it could be last Friday in May or first Friday in June but is dependent upon which day the House is sitting. Peter Lilley (MP) will receive the group at the House of Commons and lead the tour. Also included will be a visit to the mews/stables and the stable staff are providing tea and cakes. A maximum of 20 people will be able to go on this trip which may require an additional mini-bus. The regular shopping or swimming trips will need to be reorganised for that particular day, the solution might be to enlist a team of car drivers.
- vi. On average the number of clients going on the Country Drives is 20 and the Special Trips between 6 and 8. Promotion of these outings is always a good thing as new clients are welcomed.
- vii. Annie had been informed that St Albans Special Olympics will charge £1 per mile from January 2017 (was .85p). If RCG adopted the same charge it would mean for example that the cost for a client to join the special outing to Southend would increase to £15. All agreed that this was a reasonable amount, especially as they are 'door to door'.
- viii. Annie raised the matter of extension seat belts for the minibus. Barry suggested she contact Dennis directly to discuss.

g. Chairman:

- i. 2016 was a busy year! In addition to providing our vital daily minibus services and organising over 630 car journeys for clients, we published our first ever 'Redbourn Care News', delivered to every household; we helped with costs in setting up Citizens Advice in Redbourn; formed a new sister charity (Redbourn Care Trust); recruited 5 more minibus drivers, 3 couriers, 8 car drivers and one new trustee. In addition we held a successful volunteers party; submitted a long application for a government funded minibus (hope we're lucky!) and participated in this year's fabulous Redbourn Christmas Market and the Christmas Tea Party for the elderly working with Youth Connexions.
- ii. AGM News: Mollie retired as Secretary and Trustee having served RCG well for 24 years. She was presented with a Long Service Award in gratitude. Mollie was succeeded in post by Sally to serve alongside all other Trustees who were re-elected for another year.
- iii. Minibus Advisory Group. A decision from CTA is expected this month. If the bid is unsuccessful we will revert to Plan 'A'.

- iv. AED for Care Bus. Our appeal in the 'Common Round' for sponsors for the purchase of a defibrillator was immediately successful when two people came forward and we are very grateful to them. We should be able to install it in the vehicle later this month.
- v. Abbey Theatre fundraising event – 11 May. One of our supporters has organised for RCG to benefit from the sale of tickets for the charity performance of 'She Stoops to Conquer'. Sales could realise around £2,000. It will be advertised locally, tickets costing only £12.
- vi. Quilt and Needlecraft fund raising event - 11 February. Edna Lindfield is organising an exhibition of quilts and needlecraft in the Parish Centre on 11 February 10.30 – 12.30. Entry will be £5 (including refreshments) and the proceeds will be donated to RCG.

4. AOB

- a. Annie asked what would happen to the old minibus when the new one arrived – Barry responded by saying it would have to be sold. The main reasons are running costs and garaging. It is likely to be sold for between 5 and 10k.
- b. Mollie raised the issue of clients with walkers/rollators and whether it is an issue in terms of space on the minibus, particularly on the Wednesday Day Centre journeys. Margie responded with details of how many walkers and wheelchairs are brought on each journey and wasn't aware of any issues; however she will look into this. Margie asked if RCG had a walker/walking frame that could be stored in the cupboard in the transept on a long term loan – Bernie responded positively and discussed delivery details.

Meeting closed at 8.40pm

Advisory meetings for 2017 are in New Forge Place at 7.30 on 4 April, 4 July and 3 October.

AGM is 19 October at 7 for 7.30 in the Village Hall.

Signed.....Chairman Dated.....2017

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