**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of**

**ECHO for Extra Choices in Herefordshire**

**Held at The Leominster Sports & Social Club Hall, Leominster**

**On Thursday 7th December 2023**

**Attendance**

101 Members and Guests were present including Nat Hone, His Majesty’s Deputy Lieutenant of Herefordshire and Patron of ECHO and Hilary Hall, Corporate Director, Well Being, Herefordshire Council. Apologies for absence were received from 17 people – see attached list.

The AGM was presented by Radio ECHO – Louis Baker, Nick Haines, Dan Wall, Leroy Riches and Nick Baker (Project Manager).

**Welcome and introduction**

1. Mand Hamblin, Vice Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting.
2. Nick Burt, Rep Group Member gave a Health & Safety briefing.
3. Marianne Simpson, Rep Group Member read out the list of apologies.

**Minutes of last year’s meeting**

The minutes from 2022 were put on our website and copies were available at the meeting. It was proposed by Tracy Crum and seconded by Marianne Simpson that the minutes were a true record. The vote was carried unanimously.

**ECHO’s Annual Review**

The Annual Review is available to view on our website and there were some printed copies to view at the meeting. Nick Burt, Rep Group Member ran through some of the highlights and his favourite bits of the Annual Review.

**Treasurer’s report and appointment of Auditor**

Mike Cook, Chief Officer told us about the annual accounts with a powerpoint presentation featuring the cyclists Nick Baker, Louis Baker and Chris Blum (who raised money for ECHO via a sponsored ‘All the Threes’ Cyclathon) to demonstrate income going up and down.

During the financial year, from April 2022 to March 2023, ECHO managed its finances carefully. A big difference this year is that we received a legacy from Janet Smart and this generous gift in her Will meant that we were able to increase our reserves.

This year we started with £292,281.

Our income for the year was £1,247,782.

Our expenditure was £939,997.

This leaves us with reserves of £621,394

**Management Accounts**

Kevin Stuchbery, Participant Volunteer introduced the management accounts for 2022-2023 explaining they were available to view on our website for everyone to see and there were copies available at the meeting. It was proposed by Rebecca Downs and seconded by Bev Davies that the Management accounts be accepted. The vote was carried unanimously.

**Appointment of Auditors**

Jeanette Reid, Participant Volunteer explained the appointment of auditiors. Godfrey Wilson Ltd are our financial examiners of our annual accounts. It was proposed by Bev Davies and seconded by Dan Walker that Godfrey Wilson Ltd. be accepted as the auditors for next year for ECHO and the vote was carried unanimously.

**Chief Officer’s Report**

Mike Cook, Chief Officer welcomed everybody and thanked them for coming to the 2023 AGM.

ECHO was 33 this year and we had great support from participants, volunteers and staff to help celebrate this and fundraise for us at the same time. We’ve had singing, running, cycling and alpacas!

We’ve received great feedback from everyone who has visited our projects and seen the brilliant work that they do.

Mike thanked all of our staff, volunteers and supporters who help to make ECHO the wonderful place it is.

This year we have made new friends, but sadly also lost friends like Erica Hammond, Ian Waterfield and Angela Jauncey.

We have been working with Herefordshire Council at improving services for participants and ensuring that social care provision is sustainable.

The lottery funded volunteering programme came to an end, but we are pleased that we have received another 4 years funding for the StEP Project. This is to continue to support our volunteers but also develop new opportunities out in the community for those who want to volunteer or work.

We will be repeating the Colour run and another challenge will be an abseil off of St Peter’s church in Hereford.

We have been reviewing the property we use and there was a meeting in November with trustees, volunteers staff and participants to look at what was important to us in choosing where we work and we are looking to apply this when securing new buildings.

We want to keep delivering high quality activities and will also look at what can be improved to attract new participants to ECHO.

**Election of trustees**

Bev Davies, Trustee explained the process for the election of trustees. Every year 25% of trustees have to stand down. This year it was the turn of Caroline Arthur, Matt Jones and Chris Blum. Caroline and Matt agreed to stand again. They stood up in turn and the meeting voted as follows:

Caroline Arthur – Proposed by Paul Scott and seconded by Shane Bland. The vote was carried unanimously.

Matt Jones – Proposed by Nick Burt and seconded by Steph Hooper. The vote was carried unanimously.

Chris Blum has decided to stand down and we thanked him for all his hard work.

There were three nominations – Judith Haines, Clare Cathcart and Hanna Woodall. Each nominee was asked to stand up and wave to the meeting.

Judith Haines – proposed by Jeanette Reid and seconded by Steve Levett

Clare Cathcart – proposed by Carl Stuchbery and seconded by Caroline Collins

Hanna Woodall – proposed by David Cross and seconded by Lindsey Evans

The votes were carried unanimously for each nomination.

**Vote of thanks**

Matt Jones, Trustee thanked everyone for attending the meeting and encouraged everyone to stay and dance and catch up with friends.

Other Matters

During the meeting there were videos and performances from various ECHO projects

* Priory Centre Video
* Hereford Projects Video
* Clever Betsy – A poem by Lyndsay Maples read out by Lindsey Evans
* Storytelling Video
* Presentation of Fundraising certificates
* Our News Our Views Video and thank you presentation.
* About Face Video
* Eaton Barn – a lantern parade around the hall to samba music

There were display stands situated around the hall from ECHO projects as below:

* Weaving
* Studio Mirai
* Eaton Barn
* Consultation
* About Face
* Fundraising (Raffle)

**Apologies received for the AGM 7th December 2023**

Jenny Bartlett

Edward Harley

Robert Robertson

Sarah Jenkins

Sir Bill Wiggin

John Stuchbery

Wendy pridie

Jody Gorle

Claire Tolley

Melvyn Gardener

Paul Burgess

Tom Fleming

Cllr Alan Williams

Cllr Gill Murdock

Cllr Roger Phillips

Andrew Thompson

Gilly Cradduck