**The League of Friends of the Queen Victoria Hospital**

**Minutes of the 73rd Annual General Meeting held on Monday, 11 September 2023**

**at the Surgeons’ Mess, Queen Victoria Hospital, East Grinstead**

**Present:**

St John Brown, Chairman (SJB)

Alexandra Durrant, Honorary Treasurer (AD)

Linda Skinner, Honorary Secretary and Registrar (LVS)

Judy Busby

Andrew Robertson

Chris Rae

Bob Marchant

Penny Fisher

Anthony Fisher

**In attendance:**

 Clare Pirie, Director of Communications

 Michelle Wheeler, Chief Financial Officer

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Clare and Maria for attending on behalf of the Hospital. He explained that in the two previous years the AGM had not been quorate according to the Constitution of the League of Friends and had to be reconvened. The number of members which constituted a quorum had therefore been reduced to seven (including the Trustees) which was approved at the meeting in 2022 and this meeting was therefore quorate according to the Constitution.

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|  |  | **Action** |
| **1** | **Apologies for Absence** |  |
|  | Received from twenty members. |  |
| **2** | **Minutes of Previous meeting** |  |
|  | The minutes of the meetings held on 27 September and 13 October 2022 were accepted as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman. |  |
| **3** | **Matters Arising** |  |
|  | There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda. |  |
| **4** | **Appointment of Bob Marchant as President** |  |
|  | SJB reported that Derek Pocock, the President of the League had sadly died during the year. It was therefore proposed that Bob Marchant, who is well known for his long service at the Hospital and the town’s Museum, should be appointed as President. SJB said that he was the Hospital’s most loyal friend and there was not better person to fill the role. This was unanimously agreed and Bob Marchant was duly appointed. RM said he was honoured to stand and expressed thanks to Derek Pocock for his service over the years. |  |
| **5** | **Election of Trustees** |  |
| 5.1 | The following Trustees were due to retire but are eligible for re-election: StJohn Brown  Andrew RobertsonThe re-appointment of the retiring Trustees was proposed by Penny Fisher and seconded by Anthony Fisher. |  |
| **4** | **Election of Officers** |  |
| 4.1 | The following Officers were required to retire but are eligible for re-election and happy to stand again: Chairman St John Brown Treasurer Alexandra Durrant Honorary Secretary and Registrar Linda SkinnerThe re-appointment of the Officers was proposed by Penny Fisher and seconded by Judy Busby. |  |
| **5** | **Chairman’s Report** |  |
|  | The Chairman’s Report had been circulated to all members and a copy is attached to these minutes. The Chairman said that the Hospital provides an excellent service to its patients despite the challenges it has faced in recent years and there have been many distractions for the management team. There was now a new management team in place with the new CEO starting on 18 September, three new Non-Executive Directors and a new Board of Governors |  |
|  | In answer to a question from SJB regarding the new NHS Sussex which was formed last year, Clare Pirie (CP) responded that QVH already had an established framework with Sussex and there was therefore no impact on additional meetings as a result and QVH was good at networking within the area. The hospital had a capital challenge for 2023 and it was likely that there would be some applications to the League for more expensive items coming from the new management team.Maria Wheeler (MW) reported that the hospital did not believe that it had an RAAC in its buildings, but an independent review was being carried out to confirm this. |  |
| **6** | **Honorary Treasurer’s Report** |  |
|  | The Treasurer reported that the accounts to 31 December 2022 had been displayed on the QVH website. 2022 had been a good year for the League in terms of legacies and had received in excess of £400k during the year. Expenditure during the year had only amounted to £80k to support the hospital, including £15k for the Rosemary Wotton fund which supported non-mandatory training for employees. The League had paid £24k to provide tea, coffee and hot chocolate for all staff for a year and would be prepared to extend this for a further year. It had also provided a grant of £20,100 to the hospital which had distributed a £50 voucher to all bands 2-4 staff. The League would have done more but the hospital decided not to extend the vouchers. The League continues to pay for the maintenance of four aquariums in the hospital. |  |
|  | During the year the League had put an additional £200k into the M&G Charifund and had invested a further £100k since the year end. At the year end the value of the League’s holding was £561k, it now stood at £617k. The League also has £121k cash in its bank accounts. |  |
|  | There were no expenses in running the League, the only expenditure was for the Independent Examiner.SJB expressed his thanks to AD for her services during the year.  |  |
| **7** | **Appointment of Independent Examiners** |  |
|  | The Treasurer reported that Richard Place Dobson had been Independent Examiners to the League for some years and it was proposed that they should be reappointed. This was agreed by all present. |  |
| **8** | **Secretary’s Report** |  |
|  | The Secretary reported that the membership of the League now stood at 477 and had diminished significantly in the past few years, largely because of the increasing age of the membership generally. There were no new members joining the League and there would come a point at which the Trustees would need to decide on its future. It did not operate in the same way as Leagues of Friends at other hospitals as QVH had taken over all the activities previously conducted. However, the League continued to receive significant levels of donations in the form of legacies and other donations and therefore the money available for distribution was not inconsiderable. This was a testament to the affection with which the hospital was held in the local community. There was however some confusion amongst the community as to the role of the League and the League does not compete against the QVH Charity by actively fundraising. CP reported that this had not been a good year for the QVH Charity and the hospital was currently reviewing the focus of it. |  |
| **9** | **Any Other Business** |  |
| 9.1 | CP thanked the League of Friends for their continued support for the Hospital which was much appreciated. |  |
| 9.2 | The Chairman reported that following the death of the previous President the Trustees had considered whether the role of Vice President, as stated in the Constitution was really necessary and had concluded that it was not. The current incumbent, Ben Brittain, had moved away from the area and was happy to relinquish the post. It was agreed by all present that this role should be deleted and the Constitution amended accordingly. |  |

The meeting closed at 6.30 pm