

The League of Friends of the Queen Victoria Hospital

Minutes of the Adjourned 72nd Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday, 27 September 2022 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
Brian Rugg
Doug Hunt
Elke Brook
Steve Jenkin, CEO of QVH

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and particularly Steve Jenkin, CEO of QVH.

Action

1 Apologies for Absence

Received from Chris Rae, Bob Marchant and 20 members.

2 Minutes of Previous meeting

The Chairman reported that the meeting held on 6 September 2021 had not been quorate and therefore a second meeting was held on 20 September 2021. The minutes of the meetings were accepted as a true record of the meetings and signed by the Chairman.

3 Election of Trustees

3.1 The following Trustees were due to retire but are eligible for re-election:

Chris Rea
Bob Marchant

The re-appointment of the retiring Trustees was proposed by Judy Busby and seconded by Andrew Robertson.

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 Skinner

The re-appointment of the Officers was proposed by Elke Brook and seconded by Andrew Robertson.

5 Chairman's Report

The Chairman's Report had been circulated to all members and a copy is attached to these minutes. The Chairman pointed out that his report had been written before the hospital's decision not to proceed with the merger with University Hospitals Sussex. He reported that QVH had been focussing on its core activities and there had therefore been very few applications to the League for funding. The Charity had been doing well in raising funds.

The League had been approached by QVH for some financial help for staff in Bands 2 and 3 in the current cost of living crisis. The League is happy to help in whatever way it can. A number of suggestions had been provided to the Chairman by the staff Governors which the League would like to support, including free hot drinks machines and hot food outside of normal working hours

The League had received approximately £0.5m in the past year and its funds now totalled around £750k, which it has a duty to use to support staff and patients.

6 Honorary Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer presented the accounts for the period ended 31 December 2021 which had been independently verified by Richard Place Dobson. The Treasurer reported that the League had received £95k during the period under review from a deceased member and had received further legacies of £118k during the current year for which the League was enormously grateful.

QVH had been slow to invoice the League for past approved funding requests and during the period to 31 December 2021 the League had paid around £121k to QVH to catch up. The League also pays for the maintenance of four aquariums in the hospital.

Since the year end the League had put a further £200k into the M&G Charifund and had benefitted from the rise in the stock market.

The League also supports the Rosemary Wootton Fund at £20k per year, which pays for approved training for staff over and above any mandatory training. In 2019 due to the pandemic this fund had only had minimal use, but in 2021 £19k had been spent. The League was supporting this fund again in 2022 with £20k.

Overall the finances of the League were in a good position. The Chairman proposed that the accounts were accepted which was seconded by the Treasurer.

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 Presentation by Steve Jenkin, CEO of QVH

The Chairman introduced Steve Jenkin (SJ) who made a presentation to members. SJ reported that QVH had stepped up as a specialist cancer treatment centre in breast, head and neck cancer and some skin cancer from other trusts where Covid prevented treatment. The hospital had met the 62-day cancer treatment target for 12 consecutive months and there were no patients waiting for more than two years for treatment. 25% of outpatients were now seen virtually. The hospital also "punched above its weight" in research and innovation as well as developing virtual reality surgery training. 17% of staff had taken part in the SIREN research project on Covid.

Two new theatres have been installed in 2021/22 which will have a beneficial impact on the waiting list and help to secure Elective Recovery Funding monies.

At the May Board meeting the Hospital's Green Plan was adopted and many initiatives have been introduced including using recycled paper in the hospital's printers. Due to its age, QVH is not an easy hospital to operate on a sustainable basis. On 12 October a small orchard of 12 trees was being planted, supported by the League of Friends.

For the 7th year in a row QVH has been rated one of the top rated acute hospitals in the adult inpatient survey. QVH was also one of only three hospitals in the country to score "much better than expected" for patients aged 8 to 15 years and one of eight for 0 to 7 years.

In 2020/21 the hospital finished the year with a £1.9m surplus helped by the block funding payment. 2023/24 will be a very challenging year with no top up funding. The capital plan for 2022/23 is £6.5m and for next year about £4.7m.

It was 400 days since University Hospitals Sussex and QVH agreed to work towards a merger. Operational pressures had delayed the work and the CQC inspectors had raised some issues for UHSx to prioritise. It has now been decided that it would not be possible to get together a business case until 2024 and both boards have now agreed not to proceed with the merger. The QVH Board now meets on 6 October to decide on the next steps. However, the case for change is still very valid. QVH will need to talk to other partners and resolve the challenges to secure the future of QVH.

9 Any Other Business

Doug Hunt asked whether there was still a bursary for specialist nurses. The Chairman responded that the Rosemary Wootton Fund was a grant by the League of

Friends for £20k each year which paid for additional specialist training for staff approved by the hospital.
The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting and hoped to see them at the next AGM.

The meeting closed at 7 pm