

# Annual General Meeting

**Date:** 26 November 2020

**Time:** 12.30-1.30pm

**Venue:** By Zoom

## Minutes

### Welcome and apologies

#### Present:

**Directors and Company Secretary:** Leo Starrs-Cunningham (Convenor), Andrew Mason and Sally Witcher (Company Secretary).

**Full members:** Agnes Hadden (Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living) Kim Dams (DG Voice), Peter McDade (East Dunbartonshire Access Panel), Lyn Pornaro (Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living), Heather Hall (The Usual Place), Jackie Maceira (Clyde Shopmobility), Mike Harrison (SATA), David Weir (South Lanarkshire Access Panel) and Jane Moncrieff (Centre for Inclusive Living Perth and Kinross).

**Apologies:** Jim Elder-Woodward.

Leo welcomed everyone to the Annual General Meeting (AGM). He explained that Terry Robinson had to stand down as convenor for personal reasons. Leo is the acting convenor. Leo reminded everyone that this AGM covers the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 30 March 2020. A lot has happened since then with lockdown. The staff have done a superb job in highly pressured environment with a very quick turn-around. Most of this will be covered in next year's AGM.

For voting, the people eligible to vote are representatives of our member, Disabled People's Organisations.

There are currently 46 Full Member organisations and the minimum required for the AGM to be quorate is the lower of 10 per cent of them or 10. There were 9 present, so the AGM was therefore quorate.

## **1. Minutes from Annual General Meeting 2019**

The minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2019 were presented. Leo Starrs Cunningham asked for corrections to the minutes or queries about them.

Leo proposed that the minutes be accepted as an accurate record. This was formally proposed by Terry Robinson and seconded by Michael Greaves McIntosh. The minutes were accepted as an accurate record.

## **2. Convenor's Report**

Leo Starrs-Cunningham read the trustees report written by Terry Robinson. This was for the year of 1 April 2019- 30 March 2020. Terry was very proud to introduce Inclusion's Scotland's Annual Report. This had been another very successful year for Inclusion Scotland.

Key Points Included:

- Established a Scottish Just Law Centre with Just Right Scotland. This is a real opportunity to take legal action and set legal precedents to have our basic rights recognised.
- Our We Can Work internship programme and work with private sector employers continued to flourish.
- We had success in Social Security with the introduction of the winter fuel payment and additional carer's payments.
- The Disability Research into Independent Living and Learning, (DRILL) which will be drawing to close, sets an outstanding example of co-production by disabled people and researchers.
- The People-led Policy Panel continued to play an important role in developing Scottish government policy and the reform of adult social care support delivery.
- The Lived Experience Leadership and Public Appointments projects promote and support disabled people's leadership.

Terry was very proud to serve as convenor of Inclusion Scotland for over four years. Terry will be handing over to his successor and wished them all the best for the future.

Leo and the Board said thank you to Terry for his long service on the Board. He will be greatly missed. The Board thanked him for his role as convenor over the past year. Leo thanked Derek Kelter, who has been on the board on and off for about 20 years. Leo thanked Irena Patterson has been a very loyal member of the board for many years. Leo said they would be missed and wished them luck in their future endeavours.

Derek and Irena are standing down, due the changes we proposed at the constitution last year. This amendment limited the length of service to directors to 3 years per elected term, for a maximum of 3 terms. They can stand for election again after a one-year break.

Leo and the Board thanked the staff for the huge amount of work they have been doing. Thank you to Sally and Phyl for leading on this.

### **3. Chief Executives report**

Sally presented the Chief Executive's report. Looking back at the work we did in the year to March 2020 reminded her of how things were before Covid-19 arrived and how the world has changed. We continued during that year to work on promoting participation, social security, employment, access to services, and rights and justice, as we pushed towards our goal of inclusion and equal citizenship for all disabled people across Scotland.

We began to look at how we can get our rights in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) into Scots Law. If our rights are not in law, it is hard to enforce rights in a United Nations (UN) convention. If you cannot enforce rights, they are not really rights. We have been looking at the Disability Discrimination act on its anniversary and we question - to what extent it has made a difference? It has made a difference, but it is not necessarily easy for disabled people to enforce their rights. The set-up of a Scottish Just Law Centre is very important. This can be a way that the rights that people have can be enforced.

We have new projects on Lived Experience Leadership and on Public Appointments. They really have progressed during that year along with our work with employers, particularly in the private sector.

We supported a group in the Highlands to establish a new Disabled People's Organisation (DPO).

The innovative People-led Policy Panel on adult social care support was heavily involved in co-producing a programme of adult social care reform with the Scottish Government.

There was success in devolved Social Security with the winter fuel allowance and additional payments for carers.

The DRILL programme was nearing the end of its 5 years, we turned our attention to promoting its findings and securing its legacy.

Three weeks before the end of the financial year, everything halted with the arrival of Covid-19. We took rapid action to review our work. We will talk more about this in next year's annual report.

Sally thanked the Board for their support and guidance. She offered her personal thanks to Terry Robinson who has been convenor for 4 years. She thanked him for his personal support and his support to the organisation. She thanked Derek Kelter who has been a rock for the organisation. Sally commented, "We will find a way for Derek to be involved in our work. The same goes for Irena Patterson, who has been supportive and loyal to the organisation. She has contributed to the perspective of another part of Scotland rather than the central belt. You will be all very much missed". Sally offered her personal best wishes to them.

Sally thanked the staff and expressed that all the organisation has achieved is because of our staff. Sally commented, "They have done amazingly well!" Sally wanted to close with a particular thank you to Sue Kelly, who has been with the organisation for a long time. Sue in the past led on the annual conference. Sue retired very recently. Sally wanted to tell Sue how much we miss her and we hope Sue will maintain links with us.

Our final thank you was to our members and partners for their contributions, "We hope to do more work with you and involve you more over the years to come".

## 4. Treasurer's Report

The report was presented by Gillian Lawrence, Inclusion Scotland's Treasurer. A representative from the auditors, Chiene and Tait, was present to answer any specific questions arising about the audit.

To put the accounts into context, most of our funding does not align with the financial year. Gillian pointed out that the funding year for most of our funding runs from July 2019– June 2020. This is different from the financial year which runs from April to March. We have considered changing our financial year to match our funding year. However, as we have different funds operating to different periods, we did not think it was appropriate. This does mean that there are sometimes significant funding or expenditure falls on the financial year end. This can give the impression of a large variance of money coming in and money going out.

The figures in the audited accounts tell you is the position up to March 2020.

Our **total income** for the financial year was £912,042.

Our **total expenditure** was £1,180,370. On the face of it, this reads like a deficit of £268,328. At the year-end we were awaiting receipt of £191,913 from funders or funding partners. Taking these figures into account, the end of year position came to an **overall deficit** of £76,415.

You will notice that our figures from last year showed a surplus of a similar size. Some of these relate to the mismatch of the financial year and funding year. In addition, this financial year covered the period where we moved into our new Edinburgh office and committed significant reserves to equip the office and carry out necessary decoration, alterations, and improvements. We expected an operational deficit for that reason. We planned to recover this investment in our premises through income generation. We were looking to develop the business by charging a fee to other organisations for using our accessible meeting rooms space. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic this has been on hold since March. However, we will renew our strategy and look at next steps.

We want to reassure members that action has been taken to respond to the interruption of generating income from meeting room hire. We have secured a 15% discount on rent for our Edinburgh office, as well as having some savings from our office spaces in Glasgow and Inverness. There is no immediate concern relating to our office premises, but we will continue to review and monitor the situation.

We are grateful to our funders The Scottish Government and The National Lottery Community Fund for swiftly putting in place the flexibility to use the funds differently during the pandemic. Allowing us to reallocate budgets and carry over underspends arising due to cancellation of activities. In the case of The Scottish Government, most of our main funding has been extended until September 2021, three months longer than we would have expected. In the case of The National Lottery Community fund, an extension was granted for our Lived Experience Leadership Project to allow us to deliver the project. These actions have helped to assure the financial security of the organisation. It has allowed us to work on diversifying our income sources for the future. We are in a more stable financial position than might have been the case thanks to the extended funding period granted this year. Our Board and Resources Sub-committee members have been paying close attention to our financial position. Replacing and increasing our reserves remains a top priority and we hope to make progress on this in the current year, despite the difficult circumstances.

Gillian thanked our funders and our auditors Chiene and Tait for their work and support over the last year. Gillian thanked the Inclusion Scotland staff for a tremendous amount of work over these last few months. A huge thanks to Phyl Meyer and finance staff for working on the finance reporting systems.

Yvonne from Chiene and Tait confirmed that the audit report came back clean. For many organisations that has not been possible; Covid-19 has resulted in restrictions in income and funding. Inclusion Scotland have been lucky as the Scottish Government and National Lottery community funding has been extended, further than it normally would, and on that basis, we were happy to give a clean audit report. Chiene and Tait would like to give their thanks to Phyl and Samantha for their help during the audit.

Dr. Fiona Kumari-Campbell acknowledged the difficulty of keeping the organisation afloat during a difficult time and said, "Thank you to the staff, it is much appreciated."

The accounts were approved. Kevin McGoldrick from Self Directed Support Network South Lanarkshire proposed and Kim Dams from DG Voice seconded.

## **5. Agree Auditor for the next year**

Leo presented the resolution that we re-appoint: **Chiene and Tait, 61 Dublin St, Edinburgh EH3 6NL**. Remuneration of the auditors will be delegated to the Board. This is expected to be much the same as last year. This was **approved** by the AGM.

## **6. Election of Directors to the board**

Leo explained we have 4 vacancies for elected directors and we had 2 nominations by the deadline.

The elected directors are:

- Jim Elder-Woodward nominated by Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living who will be re-elected
- Balkishan Agrawal nominated by Lothian Centre of Inclusive Living who be joining the Board for the first time.

Leo formally welcomed them to the Board for the year 2020-2021.

## **7. Any Other Business**

Fiona Kumari-Campbell spoke about the UK supreme court decision on legislation regarding positive action measures on equalities. We need to be aware of it. Leo asked her to pass the information on to the Board.

Denis Shovlin has been approached by Stirling City Radio to offer to organisations training to be a radio presenter. The disability movement could start their own radio station. It may be a good opportunity for an internship or a partnership. Leo asked Denis to pass the information on to Inclusion Scotland.

Kirstein Rummery wanted to record for the minutes her sincere thanks to the staff and CEO of Inclusion Scotland. Kirstein is incredibly proud of how this organisation has dealt with Covid-19. She had taken our approach back to the organisation she works with as examples of good and inclusive practice. Kirstein said, "This has been unusual circumstance, and everybody has risen to the occasion."

Leo thanked everyone for contributing to the AGM and drew the AGM to the close.

**Convenor's signature of approval:**

**Date:**