

# **Action on Disability Annual General Meeting**

## **Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

Venue: AoD Centre for Independent Living and via Zoom Video Conferencing

### **In attendance:**

Sharon Holder, Co-Chair  
Victoria Brignell, Co-Chair (outgoing)  
Peter Harden, Treasurer (outgoing)  
David Buxton, AoD CEO

23 members in person; 8 online

## **1. Welcome**

- 1.1 Sharon Holder welcomed members and supporters to the AGM and invited all to join in thanking Victoria Brignell for her exemplary leadership as Chair and Co-Chair over the past four years and for her nine years on the AoD Board. Sadly her term comes to an end today under the terms of the Constitution.
- 1.2 There have been a number of great events this year, including the grand opening of the new centre and a visit from a Ukrainian government delegation. In addition, many workshops, training sessions and peer support groups have been able to use the new centre's fantastic conference room.
- 1.3 Sharon thanked AoD staff and volunteers for their work.

## **2. Apologies**

Kate Betteridge and Tara Flood

## **3. Minutes of the last AGM on 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2023**

- 3.1 Amanda Lloyd-Harris asked that her name be added to the apologies.

### **Decision**

The minutes were approved. Proposed by Peter Harden, seconded by Greg Patton, confirmed by a show of hands.

## **4. Chair's Report**

- 4.1 Victoria Brignell thanked Sharon Holder for opening the AGM and reported on some successes and challenges of the past year:

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- The Employment Service provided 187 hours a week of supported employment for 24 Disabled young people, plus 84 hours per week supporting Disabled young trainees, as well as 105 hours a week job support and coaching for disabled workers across Greater London, resulting in paid employment for many.
- After consultations with local Disabled residents, funding from the Lottery was secured for a new three-year Our Place programme.
- Welfare Benefits supported 367 cases on top of 2,880 phone calls and emails providing advice and support. This was made possible with the support of two new volunteers.
- 127 young people accessed 521 Youth Service places. Special congratulations to the four young people who achieved the Duke of Edinburgh gold award.

4.2 Sharon thanked the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham, the Mayor of London and the Wolfson Foundation, as well as other funders, for their support for the new centre.

### **5. Audited Accounts 2022-23**

5.1 Peter Harden, Treasurer, gave an overview of the audited accounts for 2022-23. Profit and Loss show a good year, with an increase in income of 3.9% from £1,072,731 to £1,114,974.

5.2 Expenditure also increased, but this was before capitalisation for the new Centre for Independent Living at £69,913. Therefore, actual income against actual expenditure resulted in a surplus of £96,370.

5.3 The Employment Service income increase is mainly due to late Access to Work claims from the previous year. The small Welfare Benefits deficit will be covered by the Welfare Benefits restricted fund. The Independent Living Service surplus is mainly due to slow recruitment. The Youth Service deficit will be covered by its restricted fund.

5.4 The Balance Sheet shows a new restricted fund of £105,000 and a designated Capital Fund of £45,060. These will ensure there is funding for depreciation over the next five years and any additional work required.

5.5 Free reserves are equivalent to 3.4 months of total expenditure for 2023-24. This has been improving steadily for the past five years.

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- 5.6 Peter said this would be his last presentation after nine years on the Board. Since David Buxton became CEO seven years ago, AoD finances have been transformed into a much more secure and sustainable position and he thanked David for this. Peter became involved in AoD through his son, Tim, and he thanked John McNeely and the Youth Service for all they have done for Tim.
- 5.7 Victoria Brignell thanked Peter for all his work. A new Treasurer is urgently needed. Please pass this on to anyone who may be interested.

### **Decision**

Members noted the Annual Report and Accounts for 2022-23 by a unanimous show of hands.

## **6. Election of the Trustees**

- 6.1 Victoria Brignell introduced the two new Trustees who have been elected: Greg Patton and Naomi Key-Field. Victoria also thanked outgoing Trustee Gabriela Zepf for all her work on the Board.

### **Decision**

Members approved the election of Trustees by a unanimous show of hands.

## **7. Special Announcements**

### **7.1 Coproduction and Disability Equality Training**

David Buxton described new Coproduction and Disability Equality project to train 125 local people in co-production over the next two years and introduced some participants from the current co-production course.

Eury Caldwell: “I am on the course with my fellow co-producers. It is beautiful to be in a room with other Disabled people as we draw understanding from each other and learn together. We also get to work together to control our own lives. It is a brilliant space and the people who work here are amazingly supportive. The funding that has been put in is just the seeds – great trees will grow from it.”

Roger Smith “My name is Rogér Smith and I have lived in this borough for 27 years. I have met interesting, like-minded Disabled people who

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are motivated like myself. I feel I have come out of my shell and that I am on an amazing journey. Thank you to everyone for supporting this.”

### **7.2 AoD Independent Living Members’ Forum**

David announced that AoD is setting up an Independent Living Members’ Forum to steer the work of the AoD on topics such as youth, education, employment, housing. The first meeting is on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

### **7.3 Our Place Project**

John McNeely explained that a three-year lease has been signed on the old AoD offices in Normand Croft School with an option to extend to five years. Grants has been applied for to adapt it, including the building of a studio. Terry King explained the new Our Place project will support peer-to-peer activities. Two members expressed interest in leading groups.

### **7.4 Disabled People’s Housing Campaign**

David announced the Disabled People’s Housing Campaign project will start in the early 20234. Several members showed interest in getting involved.

## **8. Vote of Thanks**

8.1 Victoria Brignell thanked AoD staff and volunteers, as well as funders: Addison Youth Trust, City Bridge Trust, Dr Edwards & Bishops King Fulham Fund, Earls Court Community Fund, Garfield Weston Foundation, GLA Mayor of London Fund, Jack Petchey Foundation, John Lyons Charity, London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, London Community Response Fund, ScrewFix Foundation, Wolfson Foundation, Youth Music.

8.2 She also thanked John McNeely, who has been at AoD for many years and brings great knowledge and wisdom, and David Buxton for his caring and conscientious leadership in a difficult job.

8.3 Victoria concluded expressing pride in the new centre, which the Mayor came to open, and said she will continue to support the work of AoD. She thanked members for being a part of this too.

8.4 Victoria thanked the members for coming and formally concluded the AGM.