**SNAPS Annual General Meeting**

**MINUTES**

**PERIOD: April 2023 – March 2024**

**DATE: Saturday 30 November 2024 / 10.00**

**LOCATION: Pennyfield SILC**

**Present**

Lora Bedford, Chris Eatwell, Debbie Hingerton, Paul Rowson, Tom Wake (Trustees). Also in attendance – Lucy Owen, Asma Khanum, Dan Tynan, Serena Dale, Atia Hussain, Val Wake, Dominique Belgrade, Christina Pollard.

NOTE – The Chair and 2 Trustees is the minimum number required to attend the AGM, as documents are required to be proposed as accurate and seconded, therefore the meeting was quorate.

1. **Welcome and apologies**

Chris welcomed everyone and gave apologies received from Alex Firth. The meeting opened at 10.08.

1. **Minutes from last Annual General Meeting on 27 January 2024**

The minutes from the last AGM were reviewed and accepted as accurate. Proposed by Debbie Hingerton, seconded by Tom Wake.

1. **Report and accounts for the year ending 31st March 2024**

Prior to the meeting attendees and the wider group of stakeholders were given access to a pack with the following papers, which were also posted on the SNAPS website;

* Notice of the AGM being held today, including the Agenda
* A copy of the minutes of the AGM held 27 January 2024
* Nomination paper for nominations to Board of Trustees
* Report and financial statement for the year end 31st March 2024
* In addition, a summary of the key financial data from the Accounts was made available

**3A. Review of the year 2023-2024 by the Chair**

**Achievements and Performance**

The past year has been one of significant progress for SNAPS, particularly in fundraising; improving our profile in Leeds and West Yorkshire; and in preparing for further growth in the future. Recruiting qualified paediatric physiotherapists continues to be a challenge. This review looks at four specific areas – Operations, Finances, Trustees, and the future of SNAPS.

**Operations**

This has been another period of challenge for many of our children and families, faced with declining public services, increasing costs and generally uncertain times. It is clear that many services and charities are continuing to struggle in the post-pandemic period. The SNAPS’ team has been working at full stretch to meet the burgeoning need, as shown by the extensive backlog of children and families on our waiting lists. Many of the recipients have expressed their thanks for the positive support received and the continuity provided by our on-going presence. We have also shown creativity through the provision of animal therapy and expanding to include support for older children.

Our quality has been recognised through winning several awards during the year. We have also focussed on ensuring that our team of employees and volunteers, and in particular, their mental health, is supported at all times. SNAPS has continued to be able to successfully recruit new team members, who have then been fully trained and are delivering our services to the required standards. We have continued to review and improve our management and policy structures, such as business and financial planning, and strategic development, and have invested in planning for further growth, both for this financial year, and beyond.

We continue the search for new sites and other alternatives to enable SNAPS to deliver a more extensive range of supportive therapies and meet the identified need across the region. We have also maintained our support for the West Yorkshire Children’s Additional Needs Network, now 108 organisations strong, which SNAPS co-founded in 2016, to improve the flow of information and communication between charities and statutory bodies from education, healthcare and Local Government across the region.

**Finances**

Although raising funds has continued to be challenging in a market place which has been stretched ever tighter by the tough financial and economic conditions prevailing, our fundraising team has significantly outperformed expectations and delivered a strong result. As a result of the generosity of our many supporters and a lot of hard work from the team, SNAPS ended the current year in an excellent financial position, and stronger than ever before, which helps the charity become as sustainable as possible, and grow our services in the future. Amongst our contributors, it is important to mention the Alerce Trust, which continues its generosity, along with an increasing number of corporate supporters. SNAPS has a good story to tell and we tell it well, and have shown that we can competently manage the steady growth required to build a successful organisation and expand the provision of service to the families of Leeds and West Yorkshire.

SNAPS is an independent charity, not an agency of social services or Leeds City Council, and we take no financing from local or national government in any form other than grants of £27,500 per annum in respect of Leeds Parent Carer Forum, for whom SNAPS acts as the host organisation following their re-establishment . In the current economic climate, and with cuts to government grants so prevalent, our independence has been seen by our funders as a strength.

**The Board of Trustees**

We are fortunate in having a group of talented volunteers with widely differing backgrounds and skills to be the current Board of Trustees, including hard pressed parents, to help set strategy and provide oversight of our work, and I would like to acknowledge their hard work and contribution in the last year in helping to deal with the issues facing the charity. During this period, we have managed to retain the invaluable services of 9 Trustees which has helped to provide stability, certainty and continuity.

**The future of SNAPS**

The challenges facing small and medium sized charities cannot be under-estimated, but as Chair, I am confident that we will continue to develop and grow, supported by the good will and contributions of our many families, supporters and stakeholders. Since 2015, SNAPS has grown by a factor of between 8-10 times in terms of provision of services, income and reserves, which is a tremendous performance in a demanding market place, and an excellent advertisement for the hybrid business model which we have adopted, developed and used to such advantage. The new development strategy offers promise of further expansion and an even more exciting future. The good news in this Review is down to the hard work and determination of the team and the family that is SNAPS.

**Some brief comments on the period April 2024 to November 2024**

I am pleased to be able to say that our progress has continued strongly over the last 8 months, and our finances are in an excellent position. There have been several positive fundraising efforts, including the Superheroes Challenge and Stranded for SNAPS, both of which have improved our public profile. We were very sad to hear of the death of our long standing Treasurer, Howard Pickles, in June - his contribution, common sense and good humour will be missed. In his honour we have started an annual photography contest, based on the Superheroes Challenge event, named the Howards, and were delighted that Howard’s family kindly agreed to judge the excellent and large number of photos taken on the day, with the 3 winners receiving prizes.

**3B. Financial Report**

**3B1. Presentation of Accounts**

The Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 were reviewed by those present and agreed as being correct. Proposed by Debbie Hingerton, seconded by Lora Bedford.

**3B2. Appointment of Independent Examiners**

The Chair informed those present that the SNAPS accounts had been audited by WYCAS (West Yorkshire Charity Accountancy Service). SNAPS has appointed WYCAS over recent years and we have found the service and support beneficial. Debbie Hingerton proposed that SNAPS appoint WYCAS as auditors for the year ending 31st March 2023. This was seconded by Lora Bedford.

1. **Election of the New Board of Trustees**

Before we get on to new elections, I would like to mention our volunteer Trustees on the Board. We have retained the services of an excellent group of talented and committed people, which speaks volumes about the quality and dedication of the Trustees, and we thank them for their invaluable service to SNAPS.

Ross McWilliams, Sunjay Chauhan, Victoria Moss, Tom Wake and Paul Rowson have all contributed significantly during what has been another very busy year. Paul and Ross have both continued in the role of Vice Chair, Howard continued his support as our Treasurer, and I must mention Anne Gait, who as our President, continues to provide sterling support. Ross has stepped down as a Trustee from November 2024, having completed his legally permitted service periods but has accepted the request to remain as an advisor to the Board.

We have also been delighted to have 3 other Trustees who are also parents of children using our services – they are Lora Bedford, Debbie Hingerton and Shelley Sheridan – their contribution has been crucial because they have given the Board the authentic voice of lived experience which is so valuable.

The Officers’ positions are the Chair / Vice Chair / Treasurer. There are up to 8 further Trustees’ places and we currently have nominations for 6 positions. If anyone else is interested in attending a Board Meeting, we can accommodate them as an observer. We love to have parents involved, as it is crucially important to have that voice from the front line. If a potential candidate is not sure what’s involved, they can have a chat with one of the Trustees, and come along to a meeting as an observer (when we are able to) or zoom, and see what we do as a ‘taster’. We are also delighted that both an internal advertisement along these lines has produced 2 responses from parents, and that Hannah Naylor has joined the Board, and an external search to fill the role of Treasurer has also produced an highly qualified applicant, who we hope to be able to confirm as a Trustee in the near future.

The following nominations have been received to date:

 **NAME OF PROPOSED NOMINATED SECONDED**

Chair Chris Eatwell Paul Rowson Debbie Hingerton

Vice Chair Paul Rowson Chris Eatwell Debbie Hingerton

Treasurer To be confirmed

Trustee Lora Bedford Chris Eatwell Paul Rowson

Trustee Sunjay Chauhan Chris Eatwell Paul Rowson

Trustee Victoria Harris Chris Eatwell Paul Rowson

Trustee Debbie Hingerton Chris Eatwell Paul Rowson

Trustee Hannah Naylor Chris Eatwell Debbie Hingerton

Trustee Shelley Sheridan Chris Eatwell Debbie Hingerton

Trustee Tom Wake Chris Eatwell Debbie Hingerton

No further nominations have been received. All candidates were duly appointed.

1. **Any Other Business**

During the various presentations of items from the agenda, a number of questions were posed by attendees:

How are new sites developed? - We covered briefly the history of SNAPS adding to its sites and trying to expand to a third site, and included an outline of Project TOBI. A suggestion was made by Asma (Managing Director of Chatterbug, a speech and language therapy provider) to visit their accommodation in Killingbeck – Lucy to cover this.

Where does our income come from? – In reply we made the point that only 8% of our income is from charged fees, with the rest from funders and grant makers. We have a large and successful fundraising team, who work hard to bring in new money.

Lucy Owen thanked our staff team at this point. We couldn’t do what we do without the continuing support and encouragement provided by our team of hard working staff, so many thanks to them. They have been a joy to work with over this last year. Lucy also thanked the Trustees for their excellent contribution and ongoing support.

There was no other business.

1. **Close of Meeting**

Chris Eatwell thanked everyone for attending. I would like to say thank you again to everyone involved in SNAPS. The meeting closed at 10.43

**Date of next meeting of the Board of Trustees–**

Wednesday 15 January 2025 at 19.00, at Irwin Mitchell, 4th floor, 4 Wellington Place, Leeds, LS1 4BZ.