

# Bedfordshire Advice Forum

## Minutes of AGM

10am - Thursday 24th June 2021 on Zoom

### Present:

Amanda Ryan	BPHA (chair)
Elliott Stephenson	Grand Union Housing Group
Len Simkins	Autism Bedfordshire
Samantha Conder	Macmillan Welfare Rights – Central Bedfordshire Council
Paulette Rennie	Bedford Community Self-Help Group
Jane Owen	CVS Beds (minutes)
Chera Gilbert	Disability Resource Centre
Chiara MacCall	Queens Park Community Organisation
Susanna Fagg	Royal British Legion
Amanda Thaxter	Carers in Bedfordshire
Yasmina Mahmood	Hospital Social Work Team - Bedford Borough Council
Carol Madden	Money Advice at St Andrews
Brian Cunningham	BRASS

### Apologies:

Trevor Moisey	Three Rivers Church, Bedford
Karen Lister	Salvation Army Bedford
Maureen Sheridan	Sight Concern Bedfordshire
Beccy Campbell-Grieve	Project 229
Martin Trinder	CVS Beds

Elliott Stephenson initially led the welcome and introductions until Amanda Ryan was able to join and chair the remainder of the meeting on behalf of BAF's Steering Group.

### 3. Minutes of last AGM and Matters Arising

The minutes of the last AGM (11<sup>th</sup> June 2020) were accepted. There were no matters arising.

### 4. Presentation – Scam Awareness – Sally Schofield and Kym Jones, Friends Against Scams

A presentation was given with statistics and information about staying safe from fraud and scams, which is available to be run for individual groups if desired. Additional information will be shared by email after the meeting.

To request further information or a presentation, please contact: Sally Schofield, Community Banker  
[sally.schofield@natwest.com](mailto:sally.schofield@natwest.com) 07866 124348.

### 5. BAF Annual Report and Finance Report for 2020/21

Len gave a verbal update and the annual report will be circulated in due course.

It is BAF's 24<sup>th</sup> year and whilst the last year has been challenging, BAF has met more often than normal, made possible by moving to online meetings.

- There were 4 Forum meetings and an AGM
- The Benefits Network met 4 times – twice as often as normal.
- CBC Advice Strategy Management Group met twice (despite Covid putting the strategy on hold).

There are currently 24 members, up from 20 last year.

The Financial Statement to 31 March 2021 was shared on screen, explained by Len, and will be circulated following the meeting. BAF made a surplus of £470 in 2020/21, and the closing balance on 31/3/21 was £2,473. With the expected income in 2021/22 (including the £1,000 contribution from CBC), BAF's financial position is strong and there will be enough funds to continue operating for 2 years.

## **6. BAF membership fees for 2021/22**

It was proposed by Len and seconded by Elliott that the membership fees should be kept at the same rate:

- £35 - standard rate
- £60 - higher rate for organisations with over 100 staff
- £10 - lower rate for organisations with only volunteers and individuals

This was unanimously agreed and will be revisited next year.

## **7. BAF elections**

- BAF Officers (Chair, Deputy Chair and Treasurer) and Steering Group members for 2021/22

Following discussions, the following were re-elected unanimously:

- Chair - Amanda Ryan was re-elected
  - Deputy Chair - Elliott Stephenson
  - Steering Group Member - Brian Cunningham
  - Steering Group Member - Paulette Rennie
  - Steering Group Member - Chera Gilbert
  - Treasurer - Martin Trinder
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- BAF Representatives on Advice Strategy Management Group (Central Bedfordshire)

Discussions are currently ongoing as to whether an Advice Strategy is still the appropriate way to proceed in Central Bedfordshire, so this election will be deferred until further information is available.

## **8. Any other business**

None