

AfSFH AGM Meeting Minutes

12 March 2017, 10.30am – 12pm - Location: Clifton Practice, Bristol

Present: David Newton (DN), Chair Alex Brounger (AB), CEO
 Trevor Eddolls (TE), Head of IT Polly Hawkins (PH), Membership Secretary
 Duncan Little (DL), Head of Media Dorothea Read (DR), Ethics Officer
 Sacha Taylor (ST), Finance Officer (took minutes)

Agenda:

- (1) Welcome and Opening Report - AB
- (2) Financial Report - ST
- (3) IT Report - TE
- (4) Communications & Journal Report - DL
- (5) Membership Report - PH
- (6) Ethics Report - DR
- (7) Voting and Proxy Voting
- (8) Closing Remarks - AB

No.	Minute	Action
	<p>Apologies for Absence Susan Rodrigues (SR), Trustee Matthew Cahill (MH), Trustee</p>	Accepted
(1)	<p>Welcome and Opening Report AB expressed his pleasure at taking over as CEO from David Mclean in September 2016. Since then the Executive committee has seen some changes in personnel. Both Denis Counce (former membership secretary) and Lara Lewis (Head of Marketing) have chosen to step down, both of whom have worked hard to help leave the Association in a better place than when they joined it.</p> <p>AB was very pleased to say that the Association's various recruitment drives have unveiled a new Head of Membership, Polly Hawkins, a new head of Finance, Sacha Taylor, and a new Head of Ethics, Dorothea Read. He is confident that this team of people, with perhaps a few further additions in the future, can together continue to grow the Association and continue to improve the support that we provide our members.</p> <p>AB was extremely pleased to see a significant number of people willing to offer their services to the Association during these recruitment drives and it just goes to demonstrate what a talented pool of people the Association has in our membership.</p>	
(2)	<p>Financial Report ST began by explaining that there was no official handover available when she began this role in November 2016, as the last Finance Officer, Denise Barkham, stepped down in June 2016. As a result, ST has been working hard with AB, and with the help also of David Mclean (the former CEO) to</p>	

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	<p>piece together the accounts for the financial year 01Nov15-31Oct16. She has gone through all invoices available, cross-referenced with all cheques issued in the period and will carry on cross-referencing with the bank statements to be as accurate as possible when she comes to file the accounts formally before the deadline of 31 July 2017. ST presented Abbreviated Unaudited Accounts to those present (<i>see separate report</i>), explaining the figures are still subject to change as her ongoing investigations continue.</p> <p>ST will communicate with the Exec team and the rest of the AfSFH membership when the final accounts are prepared and submitted.</p> <p>Since starting her role, ST has created a new spreadsheet for tracking income and expenditure, and is in the process of recruiting a new Accountant to support the Association. She has also communicated with the Exec team on what is required on invoices submitted to improve the ease of accounting in future.</p> <p>Moving forward, ST is working hard to ensure a system is in place for accurate and quick accounting, as well as working with AB to set up internet banking to speed up invoice settlements and move towards online membership payments/refunds as well.</p> <p>AB expressed his thanks to ST for all her hard work putting the Association's finances back on track.</p>	<p>ST</p> <p>ST/AB</p>
(3)	<p>IT Report TE explained his report covers the website and social media – and anything else that is IT-related.</p> <p>He clarified that our website comes in two parts - the public-facing part on Wordpress that tells the world about Solution Focused Hypnotherapy and the members part on Wild Apricot, which contains PDF copies of the magazine, press releases, offers, and other things that members might want to know about.</p> <p>Wild Apricot specialise in membership sites for clubs and other organizations and they create the Register which allows members of the public to search for our hypnotherapists on the public facing website, and the data is pulled from Wild Apricot.</p> <p>In terms of social media, we have a Facebook page, which is public-facing and searchable from Google. We also have a closed Facebook group, which is just for qualified members of the AfSFH. In addition, we have an AfSFH Twitter account – @afsfh.</p> <p>At the time of this AGM, numbers were as follows: Public AfSFH Facebook page - 557 likes Closed AfSFH Facebook group - 260 members* Twitter account - 625 followers</p>	

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	<p>*The closed Facebook group is due to be checked in April to remove non-members and invite existing members who are not already there. DR suggested we should message any members due to be removed to check if they may still be considering renewing their membership before we remove them. TE said he would put a post on the page when the time comes.</p> <p>TE explained that he posts news in the Facebook page and gets plenty of people re-posting the information. He also puts the newsletter into HTML and sends it out (DL writes it). And he puts the magazine and press releases on the website. In addition, he sends out any adhoc emails to the membership and moderates the closed Facebook group discussion.</p> <p>Most recently, we changed the ruling about supervision questions in the closed Facebook group. Obviously, we did this with the caveat that people who asked the question must ensure themselves that the person answering has the specialist knowledge to give a useful answer. The change was made to make life easier for members and to utilise the skills of members outside of hypnotherapy. And this seems to have gone down well with our members.</p> <p>We have asked developers to produce AfSFH verified badges for members to put on their websites – so far without success but ongoing.</p> <p>We have ceased working with the company that was helping with search engine optimization for the AfSFH site and will explore more cost-efficient ways of doing this moving forward. TE will check they have deleted all their files from the website.</p> <p>TE showed those present a dummy website he created which is very user-friendly and this was met with universal approval. TE will continue to develop this as we are looking to make changes to the public-facing website to make it easier for the public to find out about Solution Focused Hypnotherapy and to find a therapist near them. We want to make it more welcoming and easy to use. (<i>afsfh.atspace.co.uk</i>)</p> <p>TE added that we also plan to add a regular blog to the site and will encourage AfSFH members to contribute. The blogs will have their author's name and contact details, so it will help with their own website SEO while helping with the AfSFH site's SEO too.</p> <p>AB highlighted that TE is the longest serving member of the Exec team and continues to work extremely hard to support the Association and his contributions are very much appreciated by AB and the rest of the team.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TE</p>
(4)	<p>Communications & Journal Report</p> <p>DL explained his ongoing key achievement is the production of the quarterly, high quality, well presented Hypnotherapy Today magazine. He sees the breadth of topics covered together with its glossy finish as a real testimony for the small team which produces, designs and dispatches it to members in the UK (and overseas). The magazine is produced to an</p>	

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	<p>exceptionally high standard and on a restrained budget platform. He is currently working on the Spring 2017 edition.</p> <p>DL expressed his gratitude to the AfSFH members who kindly dedicate a huge proportion of their time, for free, to research and write such excellent material. He added a further key achievement being the ongoing monthly newsletter and press release which TE kindly uploads onto the AfSFH's member site.</p> <p>Currently DL is writing a 5000 word article on small business marketing for the next edition of Hypnotherapy Today before compiling the magazine to ensure all articles fit neatly into the 20 page publication. Within the next few weeks, all content will be sent to AB, DN and MC for their initial approval before it is proof read. It will then be dispatched to our design team at Excel Design and Print, Plymouth where, together with DL, they will discuss layout, photographs and basic design before producing an initial template (which will be further proofed and tweaked accordingly). The final design will then approved by AB, DN and MC before it is printed. DL will collect the finished magazine and pack it into envelopes (address labels kindly provided by Polly) before posting it to members hopefully before Easter.</p> <p>The increasing membership means an increase in cost in terms of volume of magazines printed and posted. Currently, DL still manually applies labels and postage stamps, which is very time consuming. ST said she would work with DL to explore other possible options (such as investing in a franking machine or discussing options with Royal Mail or another delivery provider) to improve the process for him.</p> <p>DL highlighted that Royal Mail postage rates are due to increase soon, and ST asked whether it was prudent to move to 2nd class postage to save on costs. DL & ST will explore this in time for the next edition mailing.</p> <p>DL will also be producing the next newsletter and press release over the course of the next few weeks.</p> <p>Moving forward, DL will continue to produce the magazine to the same high quality and to continue with the newsletter and production of press releases. He is keen also to introduce awards for the Association (which could be reflected within the magazine's content) and this will be discussed by the Executive Committee in due course.</p> <p>AB thanked DL for all his hard work and diligence since taking on this role, regularly producing such a high quality magazine in addition to the newsletters and press releases, all on a limited budget.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">DL/ST</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DL/ST</p>
(5)	<p>Membership Report</p> <p>PH began by highlighting the change in membership levels since last year's AGM:</p>	

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	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	
Full members	269	342	
Student	62	131	
Total	331	472 (+2 admin)	
<p>PH explained that, once we go over 500 members, there will be a cost increase with Wild Apricot. She will be speaking to them in a few days and will report back accordingly.</p>			PH
<p>There are 4 lapsed members that PH is checking on at the moment.</p>			PH
<p>There was a general consensus that the growth in membership was excellent, particularly in student membership.</p>			
<p>PH's key achievement in the short time she has been in the post has been to significantly simplify the renewals process making it quicker and easier for the members to renew and this is working really well so far with people transferring membership funds directly online instead of paying by cheque. PH has also set up both Associate and International membership levels on the database with applications for each membership in the pipeline.</p>			
<p>The handover from Denis Counce to PH was a smooth one. AB added that the Association is very grateful to DC for his previous hard work and for helping ensure the handover was so smooth. Moving forward PH is looking at improving the search option on the website so that both Association members and members of the public can more easily and accurately find an Association Member in particular geographical locations. PH is also exploring the option of allowing members to pay online through the AfSFH website.</p>			PH
<p>PH also added she will discuss with Wild Apricot about having access to an online form for member applications/renewals/payment. She would also be interested in having pop-ups on the database to alert her to information she needs to know, for example if a new applicant has been a member before.</p>			PH
<p>PH is also working through a list of members who have overpaid their membership since cancelling. She will check with them if they wish to use the overpayment towards membership renewal and, if not, refund them accordingly.</p>			PH
<p>ST suggested creating a form to be sent out to all members (and onto closed Facebook page) explaining the basic functions of the AfSFH member website so they have a reference on how to check their details are correct and/or update them.</p>			ST/PH
<p>AB expressed his gratitude to PH for doing such a great job since starting in December and getting on top of things so quickly after the smooth transition from DC.</p>			

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(6)	<p>Ethics Report DR started by saying, as a growing organization, we want to be leaders in our field and ethical difficulties can damage the Association.</p> <p>Her full report is supplied separately and highlights of the discussions are as follows:</p> <p>Regarding consent, DL asked whether practice managers need to be involved for those based in clinical premises (related to the practice's insurance). DR said consent for therapy goes on in the room between therapist and client and that it shouldn't be relevant to the practice. ST added it is our responsibility to check with our own insurers and practice owners/managers to ensure we are complying with their requirements.</p> <p>Consent for children – in the case of 16-18 year olds, if a therapist is concerned at their maturity or ability to fully understand the notion of consent, they should get parental consent</p> <p>Code of Conduct – DR & the ethics subcommittee recommended employing a professional ethicist to work with the subcommittee to assist with issues of clarity and to add the pathway and candour aspects for example. They have received a quote from Julie Stone, an ethicist who has worked on codes of conduct for similar associations and organisations. ST to investigate whether we have the budget available and the Executive Committee will decide on this as necessary in due course.</p> <p>Ethics moving forward – DR suggests that each journal should have a page long article written by alternate members of the ethics subcommittee on subjects they feel would be useful to members (For example work place relationships, therapist client relationships, when to break confidence (candour protocols, Gillick competence.) DL asked if an article could be provided in time for the next edition of the magazine and DR confirmed Jade de Snyder could write an article.</p> <p>AB concluded this part of the meeting by pointing out that DR has been extremely hard working since taking on her role in December and he thanked her for her contributions towards Ethics, but also in challenging our thinking on many different issues which has been immensely helpful.</p>	<p>ST</p> <p>JdS/DR</p>
	<p>Updates from DN DN highlighted that over 60% of applicants for training in SFH are referrals from graduates and that we are seen as supportive. He added that Intake 70 has a total of 30 students, so demand for training is still growing.</p> <p>DN informed those present that the course is currently being translated into German and Polish as they look to set up schools in Austria and Warsaw.</p> <p>Singapore and Hong Kong satellites have got off to a slow start due to the</p>	

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	<p>different culture. DN pointed out that malpractice insurance doesn't exist in those areas so the schools are struggling to get deals with UK based insurers who are quoting £600-800 annual premium payments.</p> <p>DN explained NCH were okay about it at first, but have since moved the goalposts, and GHR make no mention of insurance. DN would like AfSFH to take on members from Asia without requiring details of their insurance and added that the GHR don't ask for insurance details from members. Currently this affects just 6 members at the moment, but they are expecting 15 in Singapore and 15 or more in Hong Kong moving forward. Dubai might also be the same as malpractice insurance doesn't exist there either.</p> <p>DR pointed out it must be made clear that those members would not be permitted to practice in the UK on their international membership which was agreed by everyone. DR asked PH to add 'I agree to adhere to the AfSFH Code of Ethics' to international membership forms.</p> <p>The Executive Committee unanimously agreed to DN's request.</p>	PH
(7)	<p>Voting & Proxy Voting</p> <p>There were 67 postal responses to the invitation to vote at the AGM – 12 who voted independently and 55 who opted to vote with the CEO.</p> <p>Therefore, including the 7 people present at the meeting, there was a total of 74 votes available for each category – an increase of 23 votes from the 51 members who voted in 2016.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To receive and adopt the Annual Report & Accounts of the Directors of the Association for the financial period ended 2016 – For: 74, Against: 0, Carried. 2. To appoint David Newton as Chairman of the Company – For: 74, Against: 0, Carried. 3. To appoint Susan Rodrigues as Director of the Company - For: 73, Against: 1, Carried. 4. To appoint Matthew Cahill as Director of the Company – For: 74, Against: 0, Carried. 5. To appoint Alex Brounger as CEO – For: 74, Against: 0, Carried. 6. To appoint Sacha Taylor as Head of Finance – For: 74, Against: 0, Carried. 7. To appoint Polly Hawkins as Head of Membership – For: 74, Against: 0, Carried. 8. To appoint Duncan Little as Head of Comms & Journal Editor – For: 74, Against: 0, Carried. 9. To appoint Trevor Eddolls as Head of IT – For: 74, Against: 0, Carried. 10. To appoint Dorothea Read as Head of Ethics – For: 74, Against: 0, Carried. 	

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(8)	<p>Closing Remarks</p> <p>AB concluded by saying he is very much looking forward to continuing the work of previous executive teams, especially in continuing to move the Association forward to be a welcoming place for all Solution Focused Hypnotherapists who want to be the very best they can be in this amazing profession.</p> <p>The Association is currently on a sound financial footing, with reporting and record keeping to improve in the future, thanks to the reintroduction of a Finance Officer and an external Accountant. The new and continued focus on Ethics, simplifying membership processes, as well as the continued provision of the high-quality journal and marketing assistance for our members and an open and supportive Facebook page and web presence will help move us towards our goal of being the Association to be a member of.</p> <p>Collectively, we look forward to continuing to build on a philosophy of welcome, support and guidance. We certainly have some exciting times ahead of us.</p>	