



Adapt (North East)

Minutes of the 29th Annual General Meeting

Thursday 17th December 2020 at 11:00am via Zoom due to Covid-19 pandemic.

1. Welcome and Present:

Mrs Prudhoe opened the meeting; she thanked everyone for attending and introduced the Trustees.

In attendance:

Trustees:

Lorraine Hershon (Chair)
Annie Bishop (Vice Chair)
Darren Spencer (Treasurer)
Mavis Ostler
Rosemary Theobalds

Also present:

Liz Prudhoe (Director, Adapt NE)
Jean Pearson (Administrator and Advocate) - minute recorder
Derry Nugent (Project Manager, Healthwatch Northumberland)
David Thompson (Chair Healthwatch Northumberland)
Claire Jackson (Communication & Marketing Officer, Healthwatch Northumberland)
Tania Thomas (Living Well Coordination Service)
Emma Richardson
Anne Lyall
Julia Ferguson
R Hull
Julie Perry

Apologies from Trustees:

Pat Maginn
Anita Stevenson
Michael Briggs

2. Minutes of the 28th AGM on Thursday 14th November 2019:

The Chair asked for approval of the minutes of the 28th AGM held on the Thursday 14th November 2019 as a true and authentic record of the meeting. Mrs Ostler proposed & Ms Bishop seconded the minutes as a true record.

3. Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

4. Presentation of Accounts:

Mrs Prudhoe explained there was a delay of the AGM due to the current pandemic situation; the year ended just as the pandemic peaked.

During the year 2019 – 2020, the Trustee board invested heavily into the café to make it a viable operation and become self-sufficient – feedback had been very positive.

March 2020 shows a slight decrease in finances with £716,000 income and £730,000 expenditure – a shortfall of £15,000; the depreciation showing on assets for the café.

The site has been re-valued.

Copies of the Report of financial statements were available to view on request.

Mrs Prudhoe asked for acceptance of the accounts and agreement on keeping the same auditors; the Trustees agreed.

5. Nomination of Trustees:

Mrs Stevenson, Mr Briggs and Mrs Ostler are due to re-stand for re-election; they all agreed to serve a further three years term.

Mrs Prudhoe extended an invitation to anyone who may be interested in joining the board to speak directly to her or contact Adapt NE.

6. Annual report 2019/2020:

The Chair spoke about this very strange year, personally and at Adapt NE, which has really built on past successes in a year where more services have been offered for Northumberland County Council (NCC), due to Covid19 related issues. As a result finances have been received and have kept Adapt NE in a fairly solid position. Staff members working from home has worked well.

Adapt NE have done a lot of good in terms of goodwill, with NCC and other partners, which will prove beneficial for next year and the year after. Adapt NE is solid and ticking over, with nothing alarming to be of concern.

7. Director's report:

Mrs Prudhoe described Adapt NE services using slides, including Healthwatch Northumberland, Enterprise Hub, Café at Burn Lane, Core Services, wheelchair hire and the use of rooms for meetings in the main building and the resource centre – these were all doing well until the start of the pandemic. DBS services were discontinued as there were not enough being processed to retain this service. Wheelchair hire service continues on a voluntary donation basis. There has

been new relations with organisations including a knit and natter group, where mental health services were provided with space free of charge and was promoted through Facebook and leaflets. Also the café was able to provide a meeting place for young mums, where children and equipment could be accommodated.

Transport operated up until the first lockdown on 21 March 2020. A couple of runs have continued for Priory School, plus thirteen Dial-a-Rides pickups across the West and Morpeth areas; this has been well used as members appreciated the service. Get About service provided information and advice for journeys and helped provide a car scheme, which worked very well.

Advocacy continues to be contracted through NCC, to provide statutory advocacy in Northumberland. An office in Pegswood remains as a main office for staff with clients detained in St George's Park and Northgate hospitals in Morpeth. There have been 430 cases received in the year; numbers have not gone down and are actually rising.

- Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA), provides an independent voice for people with no capacity who would benefit from involvement of an advocate.
- Relevant Persons Representatives (RPR), have provided 150 cases, of help where residents in care homes have no family/friends to support them.
- Independent Complaints Advocacy (ICAN), a service to help and support people to make an NHS complaint.
- Also, a pilot of children in need, to help process information for parents with a disability or mental health problems, where their child is going through child protection or a child in need process; Adapt NE do not have capacity for this service currently. This is an issue which will not have any different outcome with advocacy support but will help a parent to understand the process.

Healthwatch Northumberland (HWN) – the annual survey increases yearly with over 800 responses received; the annual report can be viewed on the website.

A specific piece of work around audiology was very well received.

'Enter and view' at Castleview Care Home was another piece of work provided for the care home providers.

An example of work achieved by HWN, highlighting how services are linked together within Adapt NE, was a case at the start of the pandemic of an elderly gentleman living in Berwick of 93 years of age and his son who is 72 years old, both of them no longer driving; the father required surgery for potential cancerous growth of the ear - North East Ambulance Service removed their

service, therefore the case was directed to PALS, who forwarded the issue onto HWN, who in turn forwarded the case to Getabout, who provided a taxi – the family kindly made a small contribution for this service.

Café – was going from strength to strength pre pandemic.

Two young women with learning disabilities joined Adapt NE, working a few hours in the office and the café, becoming real valued members of the team.

The café re-opened in September 2020 but closed again to comply with government pandemic regulations.

Last year the café managed to provide forty Christmas meals, proving very successful.

Living Well Service/Social prescribers – the service started in January 2020. Adapt NE were approached by the Primary Care Network(PCN) in the west, to deliver a service. The PCN looked at various models but decided to follow Gateshead's model, which had worked with the VCS through the NHS. It is now fully up and running, taking referrals throughout the pandemic to help 2,500 – 3,000 people who were on shielding lists; staff have coped extremely well as a small team, working from home.

The post is to link those referred into the service into activities that may be available in the voluntary sector; however, there is little to link into currently, so the caseloads have continued to operate and support people on an informal basis.

Adapt NE were keen to share data with others, not just back into the NHS; the PCN agreed to using Adapt NE systems to collect data and a report has been produced of the service up to September 2020.

A lot of referrals received are to housing, CAB and benefits, plus emotional support; a bereavement service commissioned by the CCG and has also been very helpful.

Liz Prudhoe thanked all staff who have been working from home, and have continued to work confidentially through testing times but have just got on and done it; Transport and café staff were furloughed.

At the start of the pandemic, Adapt NE worked with Northumberland Communities Together and Hexham Communities Together and Hexham Partnerships to help with the initial stages of the pandemic.

Phone lines were offered to Hexham Communities Together Partnership to take calls coming in. People who use transport services were offered a shopping service, if they did not feel confident to go out but there was only a small uptake, presumably as people had family support; transport

staff were able to provide the shopping service before lockdown as they were not furloughed at this point. There were cases of family members phoning Adapt NE from down the country, concerned about relatives being alone.

As restrictions eased Transport and Dial – a- Ride restarted, members were eager to go out.

It has proved to be a good year for Adapt NE who are looking to develop new services with working partnerships going forward.

Mrs Theobalds thanked Mrs Prudhoe on behalf of the Trustees for a comprehensive report and commented on how amazing the work is.

8. **Mrs Emma Richardson, Senior Manager Specialist Services, Northumberland County Council, was invited to speak.**

Mrs Richardson talked about relationships with Adapt NE and how it was a reliable and strong partner for NCC, especially as it is flexible and dynamic, which she feels NCC took for granted a little ahead of the pandemic.

When the pandemic hit it was challenging in the first 2-3 months and a really anxious time; organisationally, the partnership and expertise Adapt NE were able to offer, especially for reaching into communities as the Local Authority (LA) could not travel in and could not deploy items, they had to be really careful with what they could do, especially when they were required to support 18,500 people who were on the shielded and vulnerable population; Mrs Richardson extended a thank you to Adapt NE for a service which was appreciated during this time and if they did not appreciate the service enough before the pandemic, they certainly do now.

In terms of NCC and Northumberland Communities Together, at the start of the pandemic there was a statutory responsibility around the shielded population in Northumberland to support residents. Things that were emerging first was the shopping etc. with the shortage of toilet rolls and flour etc. which was quite scary at the time, especially for people living alone or who could not bulk buy due to financial difficulties, plus changes in peoples financial circumstances with the LA receiving 40% of calls relating to prescriptions - approximately a total of 300 calls per day at that point. Mrs Richardson felt a responsibility to showcase the work and how it was about building a future and therefore working together.

Northumberland Communities Together have done amazing work, which has lead the LA to think about post covid and how reflecting on this time and how things would work for the local council to stop and listen to communities, what a partnership could really look like and what was in the

way; going back to Adapt NE there have been many conversations around the different barriers, i.e. little things such as sharing documents and getting on Zoom meetings etc. at the start. Zoom became a threat to the LA as there was some Zoom infiltration, therefore council colleagues were not allowed to access Zoom meetings. When things finally settled they found there were some amazing things going on and began to think about moving forward and replacing themselves in and around the local communities where their role could be about building a shared understanding of what they are trying to do and support communities to work together with the LA and develop their own places in a way that they would like. It is about ultimately finding shared ambition and one thing Covid has given the LA is a collective ambition that Northumberland would be safe and well.

Mrs Richardson spoke about values and how they became really important; she constantly looks at the employment figures for Northumberland and she feels managing that power is really important, as well as all the other figures. The LA are people focused, asset based and community lead, which is easy to say and difficult to do for lots of reasons. The level of development in Northumberland across the communities is varied and the LA have a common ambition to respect local identities and work where people are, looking at priorities and working out roles.

Moving forward the plan will be based on partnerships, which is not always easy. Focus has been on hardship and food partnerships – where Adapt NE were able to provide lunches in the café for pop ups in the summer, which was successful in engaging with families, with a lot of learning and listening in that area.

There is no food shortage in Northumberland due to good food partnerships providing access to food and food nutrition. The LA talk about no one using a food bank and managing waste food plus the surplus food across the county; the LA cannot make this decision but need to look at where opportunities are together.

Similarly with Hardship funding, how to carry this out with discretion, choice and support that builds prevention moving forward, who to bring together and the challenge of what is already being done and what can be built on.

Also thinking about early years and holiday activity provision to allow all children across communities to have a great summer – how to use the food partnership to work with financial areas, to work with the schools and the community assets, to work with the green spaces and the activity providers, to ensure children do not have to put their hand up and say ‘I am a poor

person' can I have help, so it just happens locally for them and is of high quality. Therefore the partnerships are evolving through dialogue but with a strong emphasis on collective impact but locally delivered response with that community

That is NCC direction of travel.

Mrs Richardson reiterated her thanks saying there are so many things she has personally asked of Adapt NE as they always come back with not only something but with challenge and opportunity and broader thought and that is exactly what NCC need and is really appreciated. It has been a difficulty year but a lot of accelerated successes in some ways.

Mrs Prudhoe thanked Mrs Richardson and asked if there were any questions – there were none.

9. AOB:

There was no other business.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending, hoping next year we are sitting back in Burn Lane enjoying the coffee.

The Chair closed the meeting at 11:50am.

Signed as a true record:

Lorraine Hershon, Chair

Date: