

## **Retirement Education Centre (Bedford) Ltd.**

### **Minutes of 14<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 10th November 2011 at 6 Rothsay Gardens, Bedford.**

#### **1. Introduction**

The Chair welcomed all those in attendance and introduced the members of the Board of Directors:

Roger Cornwell  
Mark Chamberlain  
Norman Kirby  
Jenny Dods  
Caroline Bowdler  
Kate Jacques (Vice Chair)  
Elizabeth Goddard  
Dick Wilkinson (Chair)  
David Jones  
Michael Airs  
Caroline Bacon (Centre Manager)  
Tony Brown (Finance Director)

#### **2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Di Weedon

#### **3. Minutes of 13<sup>th</sup> AGM held on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2010**

The minutes were accepted as a true and correct record.

There were no matters arising.

#### **4. Chairman's Report – Dick Wilkinson**

The Chairman reported that it had been a very successful year which was remarkable as the year had been a financially difficult one for many people. There was no sign that levels of demand were easing.

He stated that this situation was achieved through the hard work of many. In particular he cited the work and commitment of Caroline Bacon (Centre Manager) and Jacky Hall (Office Manager), the Staff in Reception particularly for their humour and courtesy, the tutors who did a splendid job and produced courses of remarkable quality, the catering staff for their excellent service and the student members all of whom combined to produce the excellent ambience that was to be found at the REC.

The Chair referred to the issue of the Management Committee's continuing existence stating that if it was decided to dispense with the Management Committee it would need to be replaced with an effective means of communication between the Board of Directors, the Centre manager, the students and the tutors.

In particular the Chair noted that there about 900 members who the Centre needed to encourage to a greater involvement with the life of the Centre.

The Chair noted, with regret, the death of Board member Michael Dandy.

He confirmed that the sole title of the Board would be The Board of Directors.

The chair reminded the meeting that the REC was a business and it needed to operate in a business like manner. Decisions that needed to be taken should have in mind the need to ensure the future success of the Centre. The Board met five times a year and that there was a budget report presented at each meeting..

Overall numbers were up on the previous year following a sluggish start at the beginning of recruitment.

A major focus during the past year had been the production of risk registers.

The following members of the Board were responsible for:

Kate Jacques, Remuneration and Human Resources Committee including Equal Opportunities and strategic fund raising.

Norman Kirby, Company Secretary, leads the Audit Committee.

Dick Wilkinson leads on issues of strategy and associated fund raising.

The Chair confirmed that papers for the AGM would be available at an earlier date

**5. Annual Report and Financial Statement to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2011 ( attached) – Tony Brown**

The Statement is prepared by GB Accounting Solutions Ltd.

The Annual Report and Financial Statement were presented and accepted.

**6. Strategic Plan (attached) – Dick Wilkinson and Caroline Bacon.**

The Strategic Plan was presented to the meeting by the Chair. Members were encouraged to read and respond to the Plan during the consultation period. The Chair referred to the lease on the Centre and informed the meeting that initial discussions were taking place with interested parties; the lease ends its present period in 12 years' time. A strategic Plan together with a Business Plan are required before negotiations can begin with Bedford Borough Council.

The Chair acknowledged the major contribution to the production of the Strategic Plan by Caroline Bacon. Caroline thanked all those who had completed the student survey and those who had been members of the focus groups. There was an

overwhelming desire for the Centre to remain in its present premises. There was a clear feeling that the present ethos should be maintained. She reported on the summer courses that had run for the first time this year and the future consideration of an extension to the week-end courses as well as the possibility of promoting twilight and evening courses. She talked of exploring the possibility of using alternative premises and moving into some rural provision. Finally Caroline talked of the need to upgrade the Centre's IT provision with the provision of such facilities as chat rooms and intranet provision for tutors which had the potential to lead to the provision of distance learning.

In conclusion Caroline emphasised the need for members to respond to the strategic plan.

The following issues were raised from the floor:

- a) Support for online access especially for people who were isolated in their homes.
- b) The low percentage of men involved in the Centre was attributed to the fact that for men the Centre provision was more of a marginal activity
- c) There was a need to monitor demographic changes
- d) Need to develop outreach activities
- e) The possibility of using satellite facilities to expand capacity
- f) The need to explore the issue of the way in which the fee structure operates for individuals.

#### **7. Appointment of Directors under Article 29 of the Company Articles of Association.**

The Chair thanked Tony Brown and Di Weedon for their contribution upon their retirement.

The following were formally elected: Caroline Bowdler, Jane Smith, Apu Bagchi

#### **8. Appointment of Officers**

The following were appointed as Officers:

Chair: Dick Wilkinson

Vice Chair: Kate Jacques

Finance Director: Jane Smith

Company Secretary: Norman Kirby

**9. Appointment of Accountants**

GB Accounting Solutions Ltd were to be retained as the Centre's accountants

Meeting closed at 7.20p.m.

Minutes kindly prepared by Jenny and Martin Ward Fletcher  
J and M WF 11/11/2011

# **Retirement Education Centre (Bedford) Ltd.**

Minutes of the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Management Committee held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2011 at 6, Rothsay Gardens, Bedford at 5.30 p.m.

## **1. Welcome**

The Chair, welcomed the Management Committee and the 61 members in attendance.

**Management Committee members present:** Graham Birchmore, Bill Meredith, James Biggs, David Jones (Chair), Caroline Bacon (Centre Manager), Jenny Ward Fletcher, Caroline Bowdler, Bill Gardiner.

## **2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from: Margaret Badley, Carol Rose, Sandra Parsons and Felicity Scott, student member.

## **3. Minutes of 13<sup>th</sup> AGM held on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2010**

The minutes were accepted as a true and correct record.

There were no matters arising.

A student member raised the issue of distribution of the minutes and associated papers which were not received in time for them to be read and considered. It was agreed that minutes and associated papers would be distributed in good time in future.

## **4. Chairman's Report – David Jones**

The Chairman, David Jones, presented the report, a copy of which is attached.

## **5. Centre Manager's Report – Caroline Bacon**

The Centre Manager, Caroline Bacon presented the report, a copy of which is attached.

## **6. Annual Reports of Sub-committees and Pastoral Group (attached)**

- a) Development and Property – presented by Chair Graham Birchmore
- b) Social Sub-committee – presented by David Jones on behalf of Chair Sandra Parsons
- c) Pastoral Group – presented by Group Coordinator Jenny Ward Fletcher

## **7. Questions from the floor**

- a) A question was asked concerning the withdrawal of the courses validated by Cambridge University. It was explained that changes in Government funding for Higher Education had caused the cost of the courses to rise and as a result they were withdrawn. However, the centre had been fortunate enough to retain a number of the courses and their tutors.
- b) A question was asked concerning the reports from the focus groups not being presented at the meeting. These reports had been completed and were incorporated in the strategic plan.

## **8. AOB**

Veronica Sims and Philip Carey announced the launch of a website called REClass. The aim of the site is to show the varied lives members of the REC have lived to the rest of the world and through advertisements raise money for the Centre.

Meeting closed at 6.20 p.m.