

Voluntary **Action** Islington

Annual General Meeting 2021

Date: 15 December 2021

Venue: Online

Apologies

VAI Trustees	
Jorge Ilorens	Treasurer
Jo Langdale	Vice Chair
Phil Kelly	Trustee
Barbara Ludlow	Trustee
Ken Hettiarchi	Trustee
Non-Members	
Councillor Asima Shaikh	
Councillor Nurullah Turan	
Councillor Una O'Halloran	
Members	
Ann Reynard	CEO, Downright Excellent
Emma Whitby	CEO, Healthwatch Islington

Attendees

Voluntary Action Islington Staff Members & Volunteers

Navinder Kaur	CEO, Voluntary Action Islington
Marta Aparicio	Volunteer Services Manager
Yvette Ellis	Development Officer
Meera Jobanputra	Resource Centre Manager
Louie Mears	Information and Communications Officer
Nadine Johnson	Volunteer
Tim Adams	Volunteer
Jeremy Stone	Management Accountant

Voluntary Action Islington Trustees

Joe Irvin	Chair
Emma Hutchins	Vice Chair
Colin Adams	Trustee
Santa Gascoigne	Trustee
Hussain Ahmed	Trustee

Voluntary Action Islington Members

Attendees	Member Organisation
Katie Skea	Age UK Islington
Synnove Kershaw	Age UK Islington
Sally Miller	Age UK Islington
Carmen Alcovedes	Age UK Islington
Aisha Rehman	Age UK Islington
Elgi Gashi	Age UK Islington
Natalie Richter	Angel Shed Theatre
Judith Shankleman	ARC Foodbank
Michael Goldman	ARC Foodbank
Josiah Obeng	Arising Tutoring
Iman Achara & 2 colleagues	British Black Anti Poverty Network
Mireille Kosanga	Children Hope For Ever
Mireille Kasonga	Children Hope For Ever
Mike Sanderson	Eagle Recovery Project
Dollis Galvis & 3 colleagues	Elfrida Society
Nikki Chivers	Elfrida Society
Sota Onozuka	Elizabeth House
Nathalie Renaud	Elizabeth House
Aoife O'Sullivan	Forum Plus
Daniella Leon	Forum Plus
Jenni Chan	Friends of Paradise Park
Jeni Kent	Healthwatch Islington
Keith Pringle	Healthwatch Islington
Philippa Russell	Healthwatch Islington
Bernadette Bourgoin	Healthwatch Islington
Tracey Boothr	Help on Your Doorstep
Nicky Ludgate	Help on Your Doorstep
Ian Spencer	Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust / Elizabeth House
Alena Oncel	IMECE
Ipek Gencel Sezgin	IMECE
Perry Fung & 6 colleagues	Islington Chinese Society
Mebrahtu Russom	Islington Refugee Forum
Vivek Nanda	Islington u3a
Sandra Volcere	Light Project Pro International
Michelline Ngongo	Light Project Pro International
Michael Sugrue	Manor Gardens Welfare Trust
Jeana Kidd	Peel Institute
Savvas Panas	Pillion Trust
Amanda Welsh	Single Homeless Project
Melissa Clarke	The ARC Centre
Sophia Pettit	The ARC Centre
Damien Brown	The ARC Centre
Kate Skowronska	The ARC Centre
Lorraine Gilbert	The ARC Centre
Holly Jones	Together Productions

Nicole Brown	Visionaries Learning Centre
Nadeen Stockhouse	Women of Values

Voluntary Action Islington Partners

Attendees	Member Organisation
Joanne Scott	Candi NHS
Tina Kelley	Candi NHS
Alice Robson	Islington Council
Pam Aristokle	Islington Council
Kevin Turner	Cloudesley
Alice Robson	Islington Council
Jugjit Samra	Islington Council
Shabana Aslam	Islington Council
Elena Mitchell	Islington Council
Gary Heather	Islington Council
Cllr Bossman-Quarshie	Islington Council

1.	<p><u>Welcome from Joe Irvin (Chair, Voluntary Action Islington).</u></p> <p>Joe welcomed attendees; introduced the agenda for the evening and provided a short summary of the work of VAI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VAI is the borough-wide umbrella organisation – supporting voluntary and community sector organisations in the borough • VAI is the nationally accredited Volunteer Centre and provides brokerage services for residents that want to volunteer • VAI works with partners in particularly the local authority and health authority to try and achieve a fairer Islington <p>Members have been sent the following documents via embedded links in the agenda the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of the previous AGM (2019) AGM • Trustee Annual Reports for 2019-20 & 2020-21 • Biographical details of the trustees that we are asking to be endorsed 	
2.	<p><u>Minutes of the AGM held on December 2021 and Matters Arising</u></p> <p>Joe explained that the minutes circulated are from 2 years ago, and this is because a year ago we were right in the</p>	

	<p>midst of the Covid crisis and the board decided to skip a year and not go ahead with the AGM as it was a matter of all hands to the deck, especially with the work we were undertaking including the recruitment of volunteers for the vaccination sites. This is why members are being asked to approve 2 years of Annual Reports and Accounts.</p> <p>Navinder ran through the list of apologies sent by trustees, members, and non-members.</p> <p>The minutes of the last AGM were sent to members in advance and members were asked if they were an accurate reflection of the 2019 meeting. There were no matters arising, points of disagreements, and the minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p>	
3.	<p><u>Annual Reports – 2019-20 & 2020-21</u></p> <p>Navinder presented the Trustees Report highlighting VAI's activities during 2019-20 & 2020-21, with particular emphasis on activities during the last year.</p> <p>VAI featured in the Winter edition of Islington Life Magazine as well as The Gazette. The features were part of VAI's contribution to Let's Talk Islington, and highlighted the contribution of Islington's Voluntary, Community and Faith sector. Linked to this is VAI's membership of the Inequality Task Force, an Islington Council initiative bringing together partners from across the sectors.</p> <p>Navinder explained that she took up post at the end of November 2020 – in the middle of the first winter of the pandemic and saw how the VCFS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivered a strong co-ordinated response to the pandemic, which was due to the well-established eco-system of organisations that adapted and responded flexibly; • responded by working in close collaboration with Islington Council, including the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Public Health Islington, resulting in close collaboration and the pooling of resources • showed huge commitment – with staff and volunteers all going above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that the right response was provided to those that needed it the most <p>Navinder provided a brief overview of the work undertaken by VAI in response to the crisis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VAI refocused its capacity building offer especially around providing funding information and funding applications – information included emergency crisis funding. VAI's Development Officer revised the funding booklet, with updates throughout the year; organisations were supported to access the Open for 	

	<p>Communities Funding Database (funding toolkit) which is hosted on VAI's website and has 313 subscribers, all of whom received updates about the resources available to VCFS organisations. Our Development Officer also organised sessions with the National Lottery – with all this work supporting the VCFS to bring in extra funding resource into the borough</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated pages were set up on the website in relation to funding, volunteering and we increased the frequency of the newsletter communications – providing weekly communications from July onwards, which then moved to bi-monthly newsletters • We had an impressive number of visits to our website – with a total of 35,500 during the year • The Volunteer Centre ensured that it continued to operate as a support for volunteers. Our Volunteer Services Manager supported VCFS organisations to help adapt to the new volunteer related guidelines. We had an amazing response with 1400 new volunteers registered: 297 VCFS volunteering opportunities with the main volunteering roles relating to food banks, befriending, IT/digital support. In January 2021 we started to recruit Covid-19 Volunteer Marshals and Stewards for the mass vaccination sites. We worked more closely with Age UK, Help on Your Doorstep, and Manor Gardens Welfare Trust – and we formed an operational group to recruit, and train volunteers. Navinder expressed huge thanks to all our colleagues in the VCFS and to colleagues across the council including the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), and Public Health Islington for their partnership work with the VCFS. • Navinder thanked VAI staff members, volunteers and Board of Trustees who navigated their way through the pandemic and for getting through the challenges. Navinder also thanked all the volunteers who have helped during the pandemic including the VCFS Volunteer Managers for all their work. <p>Joe thanked Navinder and the team for doing a great job during this time. Joe went on to say that the Covid crisis has put a strain on the VCFS, but the VCFS has responded with a great deal of good-will and strength. Joe congratulated the sector for their response and what they have achieved during this time.</p> <p>Financial Report 2019-20 & 2020-21</p> <p>Joe introduced Jeremy Stone, VAI's accountant, advisor and guru!</p> <p>Jorge Ilorens, VAI's Treasurer was not able to attend this evening, so Jeremy provided the report.</p>	
--	--	--

Jeremy introduced himself and mentioned that the links to both sets of accounts have been sent with the agenda and are on our website.

Jeremy stated that he would talk through **the** 2021 accounts and if approved then it is implicit that the 2020 accounts are also approved, as they build on the 2020 accounts and include the comparisons between the years.

- The accounts have been fully audited and give a fair view of the finances and have had auditors' approval.
- We have had a challenging year in terms of room and desk rental, but despite the challenges and losses made, the auditors and board members have confidence in VAI's ability to continue trading and effectively presented a clean bill of health for now and the future period
- The statement of financial activities (p19) shows total income for 2021 = £315,500, compared with the previous year's income of £417,000, which shows a fall in income of £100k. This loss is almost entirely due to lost income from the Resource Centre rental/facility hire which is a service provided to the VCFS in Islington. There is an operating deficit of £51k. Some cuts were made to expenditure, to compensate for these, but only compensated in part.
- Fortunately, investments of the organisation increased in value and made a positive contribution and therefore giving a net deficit of £26K, so not a terrible result given all the challenges that VAI has faced financially
- Total funds of the organisation = £268K, which include restricted and designated funds. £167K of those funds are the general funds of the organisation and is a measure of the health of the organisations. Our free reserves represent 45% of annual expenditure – which means that VAI at year end had funds in excess of the minimum target required. Our free reserves are key to why auditors and trustees still considers itself as a going concern
- Trustees agreed rather than having a full audit, we will exercise the option of having an Independent Examination next year, which is allowable given the income levels, and permissible by the Charity Commission. It is a much more affordable option for us given that our income is below the £1m threshold.

There were no questions from members on Navinder's review or Jeremy's presentation of the audited accounts and the accounts were approved.

Co-opting Trustees

We have put forward for approval at this AGM four trustees and this is because of the 2-year gap. The Trustees are:

- Hussain Ahmed
- Santa Gascoigne
- Jorge Llorens (Treasurer)
- Ken Hettiarchi

	<p>A link to their biographies has been sent in advance.</p> <p>Members were asked to co-opt these trustees. There were no objections from members to these 4 trustees continuing.</p> <p>Emma Hutchins (VAI Vice Chair) seconded this motion as well as the motion on the report and accounts.</p> <p>Thanks was extended to Barbara Ludlow who has stepped down as trustee. Thanks, was also extended to Phil Kelly who stepped down as Chair after serving 6 years.</p>	
4.	<p><u>Volunteer of the Year Awards (VOYA) 2021</u></p> <p>Joe talked about the value of volunteers and stated that 34% of London residents volunteer across the capital, with the majority going unseen and unsung. This is a rare chance to celebrate volunteers and express our sincere thanks to all those who volunteered this year and all those who have volunteered in the past and those that continue to do so.</p> <p>Navinder welcomed everyone and thanked attendees for joining this part of the meeting. Navinder thanked Peadre McFadden who is representing Double Tree by Hilton who have been sponsoring the VOYA for 8 years. Huge thanks to Double Tree by Hilton for their continued support.</p> <p>Peadre thanked VAI for everything that it does and went on to say that he believed strongly in the help and care in our community, and it was an honour to sponsor the awards again and congratulated all the nominees. He went on to say that it was pleasure to be part of celebrating the admirable and hard work and all the support given to much needed causes.</p> <p><u>Guest Speaker – Jonathan O’Sullivan, Director of Public Health Islington</u></p> <p>Jonathan said it was an honour to be asked to reflect on volunteering and the huge difference it has made before and during Covid 19. There has been an exemplary response with new volunteers as well as those that already volunteer – all of which reflects the positivity of the borough.</p> <p>Jonathan reflected on the vaccination programme and the huge range of responses to emerging needs. The direct and practical ways have made a huge difference and have kept people safe and well during this difficult time in our lives.</p> <p>The huge energy around supporting the vaccination programme and reaching people especially the most vulnerable and those reluctant to be vaccinated.</p> <p>Volunteers provided support to people in relation to their mental health and wellbeing, reducing isolation, and financial hardships. We saw a huge amount of connecting</p>	

between people and decency and kindness in the community.

Activities included the delivery of essential groceries, addressing food poverty, telephone befriending, administrators, connectors, receptionists, community language translators, early years help for new parents, and buddies.

Vaccination Programme

As part of the vaccination programme – volunteering activities have included leafleting, to help allay fears and concerns; support from mental health and Covid champions; vaccinators and pop-up clinics including information relating to stroke and diabetes prevention.

It has been 1 year and 1 week since the first vaccination had been administered in the borough and since then we have given 300,000 first and second dose vaccinations and 1400 volunteers have helped with this huge endeavour.

500,000 booster vaccination in the borough – which are rapidly moving into younger age groups – NHS is putting in another call. We are now in a more challenging period, so please take care of yourselves and your neighbours and communities.

Boosters are important, as they prevent serious illness, and protects the NHS. So, do keep social distancing, and meeting outdoors. The anti-viral treatments will make a huge difference, and we will make it through this difficult time.

Our recent Public Health residents survey highlighted the difficulties our residents have been facing and the support that people have been providing by connecting with them and others in ways that has not been done before, so a BIG THANK YOU TO ALL.

Navinder thanked Jonathan for his inspiring preamble to the VOYA and handed over to Mr Mayor.

Awards

Mr Mayor echoed and amplified what Jonathan and Peadre had said previously and thanked all volunteers for being the life and soul for others.

Mr Mayor stated that he had started as a volunteer when he came to London – and volunteered for a Tenants and Residents Association. He said that he knows all the stresses, joys and frustration and the need to work with others to achieve desired goals. There is so much goodness in the borough and sense of pride.

Mr Mayor thanked VAI, and Hilton Doubletree for their collaboration and thanked all volunteers.

A short video showcasing volunteers and their work was played.

Mr Mayor presented the following awards:

Older Volunteer of the Year 60+ Award

- **Commended:** Glenda Daniels, Hanley Crouch Community Association
- **Commended:** Steve Henry, Light Project Pro International
- **Highly commended:** Geraldine Pettersson – Light Project Pro International
- **Winner:** Anita Maiagmiot, Islington Chinese Association

Volunteering Team of the Year Award

- **Commended:**
- **Commended:** Food Hub Team of Volunteers – nominated by Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust (Elizabeth House)
- **Highly Commended:** Camden and Islington Response Service nominated by Camden and Islington NHS foundation
- **Winner:** The Arc Foodbank, The Arc Centre

Damien and colleagues said the Foodbank is by far the very best thing that they have been involved in and expressed huge thanks to the volunteers

Volunteer of the Year Award – 26-60 year old

- **Commended:** Engin Kul – nominated by Age UK Islington
- **Commended:** Ipek Gencel Sezgin, nominated by Imece Women's Centre
- **Highly commended:** Keith Pringle, nominated by Healthwatch Islington
- **Highly commended:** Younas Mebrate, nominated by Together Productions
- **Winner:** Ian Spencer, nominated by Octopus Community Network

Ian could not attend the awards and Natalie from Elizabeth House, thanked VAI, and said she was so proud of Ian.

	<p>Pat Haynes Memorial Trustee of the Year Award</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly commended: Ritchie Philip, nominated by Eagle Recovery Project • Winner: Adrian Brown, nominated by The Elfrida Society <p>Adrian thanked everybody including Adrian's Manager thanked Adrian and all others who volunteer at Elfrida and are celebrating as a group.</p> <p><u>Young Volunteer of the Year Award 16-25</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly Commended: Daniella Leon, nominated by Forum+ • Highly commended: Elgi Gashi, nominated by Age UK • Winner: Aleksandra Tihomirova, nominated by SoapBox Youth Centre 	
8.	<p><u>Any other Business</u></p> <p>There was no other business</p>	