



**TALK SURREY CIO**  
SUPPORTING APHASIA RECOVERERS AFTER STROKE  
Registered Charity No. 1176014



## **Minutes of the Twenty Third Annual General Meeting** **Thursday 30 September 2021 at 12.30pm** **The Lightbox, Chobham Road, Woking, GU21 4AA**

**Present:** Carol Sacchett (Chair), Alison Wainwright, Charles Stokes (volunteer), Clive Moon, Elaine Gill (Mayor of Runnymede), Evelyne Collins, Frank Cuddy (volunteer), Gill Simmons, Gudrun Evans, Jannette Turner (volunteer), Jo Matthews, Pam Harris (volunteer), Philippa Mitchell, Saj Hussain (Deputy Mayor of Woking), Sharon Spurdle & Tony Popham (Mayor of Elmbridge).

### **1. Welcome and apologies for absence – Carol Sacchett (CS)**

CS welcomed everyone to the first AGM since 2019 and the COVID pandemic. She confirmed that we did not hold one in 2020 following agreement with the Charity Commission that small charities could be exempt due to COVID. She also explained that we had decided to hold one this year to celebrate the imminent reopening of our groups.

CS specifically welcomed Elaine Gill, Saj Hussain and Tony Popham.

Apologies had been received from the following: David Gunn (treasurer), Ellen Bowles (Knaphill volunteer), Ian & Marian Alden (members), Jo Wright (Mayoress of Elmbridge), John Robini (Mayor of Waverley) & Pallu Modi (trustee).

### **2. Minutes of the twenty-second AGM of TALK held on 19 June 2019**

These were agreed.

### **3. Chair's report – Carol Sacchett (CS)**

CS explained that we have been wholly reliant on volunteers and our three great staff members. We have continued to provide support to people despite COVID, just in a different way. We have received positive feedback about the support that we have offered from local NHS speech & language therapists, members and volunteers. CS praised the staff: Sharon Spurdle has kept in touch with recoverers, volunteers and local speech and language therapy services, working with Alison Wainwright and Gill Simmons to prepare for the reopening of groups week commencing 04 October. Alison has sent out weekly activity packs to our recoverers during the last 18 months, which has helped them to feel part of the organisation, enabled them to do activities with family and friends and has also helped to maintain the sense of connection even though we were not meeting in person. Alison has also kept in touch with the more vulnerable recoverers and with UCL students. Jo Matthews has been busy securing funding from different sources, which has kept us in a strong financial position to be able to reopen. CS thanked all volunteers and the group leaders: Caroline Parkes (Guildford AM), Marianne Herne (Ashford), Evelyne Collins (Knaphill), Jenny Wilson (Walton) and Rosemarie Juliano (Guildford PM). (Alison Wainwright is currently interim Group Leader of Walton and Guildford PM.)

CS also asked that a huge vote of thanks to Hazel Steel be noted, without whom there would be no TALK. Hazel was a co-founder of TALK and dedicated many years to it as a key member of the Board of Trustees.



**TALK SURREY CIO**  
**SUPPORTING APHASIA RECOVERERS AFTER STROKE**  
Registered Charity No. 1176014



CS bid farewell to two trustees, Charles Stokes and Alan Price, thanking them for their hard work. She also introduced the new trustees, who all started in March 2020: Clive Moon (Publicity & Raising Awareness), Philippa Mitchell (Equality, Diversity & Inclusion); Pallu Modi (Publicity); and Gudrun Evans (Secretary).

Valerie Blake also joined in March 2020 and provided a lot of Human Resources support, but has moved to Devon and has recently announced that she will be stepping down as a trustee.

Today is the first time that we have met in person since the new trustees joined but we have all met regularly during the last 18 months via Zoom, using the time to review and update policies, invest in training and set out some strategic aims and plans for the next few years.

CS also explained that we have invested a lot of time on updating our website. She thanked Martyn Batten for his involvement and support with this, stating that it is still work in progress and that when we are ready, we shall ask for feedback on the website.

CS finished her summary by confirming that despite all the challenges we have faced, TALK is in a good position. We started 2021 on a good footing having previously secured £100,000 from The National Lottery Community Fund (to be phased over five years). Local authorities continue to support us and we receive strong support from Ashford & St Peter's NHS Hospital's Foundation Trust in addition to many others. CS stated that we are very grateful to all our external funders.

#### **4. Election of new Trustees – Carol Sacchett**

CS proposed that the four new trustees be formally appointed. Charles Stokes seconded the proposal and all hands were raised in support.

#### **5. Treasurer's Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 – Carol Sacchett**

CS confirmed that we use Lawson Ward as our auditor and that we had only received the Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements the previous day. She read out both the Treasurer's and the Independent Examiner's summaries and finished by thanking David Gunn and Lawson Ward.

#### **6. Operations Manager's Report – Sharon Spurdle (SS)**

SS reiterated that we had continued with our work and that we had asked questions of people to ensure that what was being provided was appropriate and that people received something during the pandemic. Feedback from people is that the activities have given them something to do each week.

SS confirmed that we are re-opening venues w/c 04 October and that it has been hard work to get to this point, including many planning meetings with volunteers. She said that TALK would not run without our volunteers and that they have come up with ideas of how to keep in contact, making regular phone calls, checking in on people etc. SS finished by saying that a lot of positive things have come from the last 18 months.



**TALK SURREY CIO**  
**SUPPORTING APHASIA RECOVERERS AFTER STROKE**  
Registered Charity No. 1176014



Charles Stokes requested that all new management team members get out to the groups. They are all different and he thinks it would be good for us to experience. Everybody agreed with this.

Frank Cuddy asked how much advertising for new volunteers is to be done. SS confirmed that we have 17 people on the waitlist to be placed into groups and that we are advertising on social media for more volunteers.

## **7. Fundraising and Public Awareness Report – Jo Matthews (JM)**

JM explained that the focus for year was to focus on core grants. She highlighted how fortunate we were in securing support from The National Lottery, but that we cannot access it without matched funding. She thanked Ashford & St Peter's for its continued support and confirmed that she has been able to access some of the COVID-focused grants. We have had to make up for the lack of community fund-raising, which normally yields £16-20k and SS stated that we are hoping to do some more sponsored activity in the coming months. We are also planning to get back onto other schemes, e.g. supermarket tokens.

SS finished by saying that she was pleased we had got through the last 18 months and can start to look forwards. It is still quite an uncertain time, so we will not be resting on our laurels.

Saj Hussain asked if we had any youth recoverers because there is a High Sheriff Youth Award available if we did. Jo confirmed that we do not and asked everyone to let us know if they were to come across any grant or sponsorship opportunities. CS confirmed that the normal support for aphasia in the community was virtually nothing, so the work of TALK is vital.

## **8. Any other business**

Tony Popham highlighted that volunteers are very important and that recruitment of them will be a challenge, as it is across Surrey. CS agreed.

Frank Cuddy asked whether hospitals know about us. SS confirmed that they do and that she has been to them, visited stroke wards, left information and they are aware of our services. We have close relationships with the local hospitals.

Frank asked if we have problems with non-English-speaking people. CS confirmed that this is one of the reasons we have appointed Philippa to the EDI. We want to make sure that TALK is accessible to a wider range of people.

Frank also asked about training for volunteers, saying that he felt the need for some more training. SS confirmed that we are working with iHasco to provide induction and other training for volunteers and that we will be focusing on this once the groups have re-opened. CS added that SS had worked with Kirsty Catling to develop a training programme for volunteers and then COVID struck. We shall be picking back up with Kirsty. Evelyne Collins confirmed that we run appraisals by speech and language therapists too which will restart.

Clive Moon reminded everyone that although we have three members of staff, they are not full-time. They are very hard-working part-time members of staff.



**TALK SURREY CIO**  
**SUPPORTING APHASIA RECOVERERS AFTER STROKE**  
Registered Charity No. 1176014



## **9. Date, time and place of next AGM**

Provisionally agreed on 29 Sep 2022. This will be put in as a placeholder and will be reviewed and confirmed nearer the time.