

Minutes of the 50th Annual General Meeting of the Riding for the Disabled Association held on Friday 29th November 2019 at Saddlers' Hall Gutter Lane London

Present (Top Table) HRH The Princess Royal (President and Chairing this meeting) Mrs S Heynen (Chairman) Mr E Bracher (Chief Executive) Mr N Goldie Scot (Honorary Treasurer) + Other Board members + Representatives of all Regions acting as proxy voters for Groups from that Region + Representatives from various Member Groups In Attendance Amanda Perkins

The AGM opened at 10:40am. The President welcomed everyone to Saddlers' Hall for the 50th Annual General Meeting and thanked them for attending.

**A** Apologies were received from: A list of all apologies is held at RDA National Office. There were no other apologies.

**B** Minutes of the 49th Annual General Meeting held at The Trades Hall of Glasgow on 14th November 2018 The minutes had been circulated and agreed to be a true record of the meeting and signed by the President on a proposal from Mrs Gay Redman and seconded by Frances Lochrane.

**C** Matters Arising There were no matters arising.

**D** Chairman's Report The Chairman delivered her report for the last year as follows:-

In today's Chair's Report, there are 5 areas of note that I'd like to highlight:

### **1. RDA's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

I'd like to acknowledge the wide range of celebrations that have taken place across the UK, both at a National, Regional and Local level. Over half our Groups have been involved in an anniversary celebration of some kind and many more involved in other events... a wonderful reminder of the many lives we touch in a positive way.

### **2. Communications**

This year, our priority has been to boost the profile of RDA and drive awareness of the impact we have. Linked to our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, our 50 Faces campaign has been successful in showcasing the diversity of those involved in RDA and the incredible stories within the community. Some of our 50 Faces are here today and I'd like to thank them for their support.

We have had a tremendous year in getting our RDA story into the mainstream. Countryfile was a definite highlight but we have also had over 60 appearances on TV/Radio, plus extensive Social Media activity, reaching a combined audience of approximately 10 million people (excl Countryfile), not to mention all the coverage in Print media.

Well done and thank you to everyone involved.

### **3. National Training Centre**

We are thrilled, and relieved, that this opened in June and is now fully operational. We are very grateful to Her Royal Highness for making the time to visit and officially open the Centre.

I am pleased to report that numbers of riders are increasing and the Centre is now operating profitably. It is hosting a number of training sessions and meetings and is open to all, so if you would like to come and see round, please do feel free to drop by.

### **4. Service to Groups**

As well as the scale one-off events I've mentioned, we continue to deliver a great service to Volunteers, Participants and Groups, specifically:

Groups remain our highest level of expenditure and we are providing greater support for our Groups and their Volunteers than in previous years.

£130,000 was awarded in Grants which is an important part of our commitment to helping Groups develop.

Almost 2,000 Volunteers attended workshops or completed an e-learning course, a reflection of our continued commitment to training.

Education continues to be popular with over 3,700 Endeavour Awards achieved and over 21,000 educational activities taking place.

Our July Championships were our biggest ever, with over 500 riders attending and Groups in every Region involved. Importantly, over 50% of Groups took part in our Qualifiers.

And onto my final point:

### **5. Strategy:**

RDA has done a wonderful job, inspiring and developing Participants and Volunteers for the past 50 years. It's critical that we give ourselves the best possible chance of continuing to do this for the next 50.

We currently support approximately 25,000 Participants which is wonderful. But we also know that there is significant unmet demand for our Services. We thrive on the fact that we have been putting a smile on the faces of Riders, Drivers and Vaulters for many years. Going forwards, our collective challenge is to put a smile on the faces of many many more. The Board and I are working on a Strategy and Plan to understand how we best meet both the current and future increase in demand

and how we deliver the funding that will be required to make our Ambition a reality. More of this to come in the coming months.

In the meantime, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved with RDA for their continued teamwork, support and fantastic fundraising efforts, not forgetting of course our wonderful ponies and horses, all of whom make RDA such an exciting organisation to be part of.

Well done and thank you all.

E To note the Trustees' Report and Accounts for the Year ended 31st March 2019, and to receive the commentary from the Honorary Treasurer The Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts to 31st March 2019 had been approved and signed on behalf of RDA by the Board of Trustees on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019 and the RDA Auditors had issued an unqualified audit report confirming that the accounts provided a true record of the finances of RDA and a copy is filed with the Charities Commission. A copy of the summarized accounts is in the Annual Review and a copy of the full audited accounts is on the web-site.

The Honorary Treasurer reported the following: - The RDA achieved net income for the year to 31 March 2019 of £232,000 including realised and unrealised investment gains of £123,000. This compared with a surplus of £576,000 in the prior year.

Income totalled nearly £2.3 million a reduction of some £330,000 on the prior year. Total income included £475,000 that was restricted for the National Training Centre. The principal reasons for the reduction in income were a decline in legacies received last year and a reduction in fundraising for the National Training Centre. Legacy income is, by its nature, variable and difficult to predict but legacies still comprise a major source of income and the generosity of those who choose to remember the RDA in their wills remains of long term importance to the charity.

Fund-raising for the National Training Centre was front-loaded in 2018. We are extremely grateful for all the support we have received in successfully concluding the fund-raising for this important project.

Looking forward, we are investing in our fundraising capacity and are putting a new fundraising strategy in place to increase and diversify our income. Like all investment, the upfront cost precedes the return and this will be reflected in the current financial year.

Expenditure totalled £2.2 million, an increase of nearly £190,000. Importantly over 80% of expenditure was again spent on our charitable activities, supporting RDA groups, volunteers and participants. Expenditure on fundraising now stands at 26.4% of funds raised.

The value of RDA's net assets amounted to nearly £6.7million at the year end. The book value of tangible fixed assets increased by nearly £1.7million to £3.9 million reflecting the development of the National Training Centre and the sale of our existing office at Norfolk House.

RDA's responsibility is to provide long term support to nearly 500 groups, 18,000 volunteers and 25,000 participants. The Trustees aim to ensure that the charity holds sufficient reserves to provide a high degree of financial resilience and consider that a general reserve of between 6 and 12 months of total expenditure would be appropriate. As at the year end RDA's unrestricted General Funds amounted to nearly £1.4 million. This represents approximately 7.5 months of expenditure.

We are extremely grateful for all the financial support we receive without which we would not be able to undertake our charitable activities.

There were no questions for the Honorary Treasurer.

F Resolutions ORDINARY RESOLUTIONS

1. To re-appoint Sayer Vincent as Auditors of the Association in respect of the accounts for the year commencing 1 April 2019 Carried

2. To confirm the re-appointment of Neil Goldie-Scot as Honorary Treasurer of the Association Carried

3. To confirm the re-appointment of Emma Wells as a Trustee of the Association, with specific responsibility for participants

4. To confirm the re-appointment of Julianne Jessup as a Trustee of the Association, with specific responsibility for communication

5. To confirm the re-appointment of Jess Cook as a Trustee of the Association, with specific responsibility for disability issues

G Any Other Urgent Matters. No items were raised.

The meeting closed at 11:00am