**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) OF Friends of the Drop In for asylum seekers and refugees (FODI) held at 2.15 pm Wednesday 18/10/23 at St Mary’s Parish Hall**

**Present-**

Committee members - Jane Nikolarakis, Steve Newman, Zara Juma, Brenda Reardon

FODI members and partners- Talha Mahmood, Mahnour Roushan, Lamine Diaby,Halima Jallow John, Bashir Abdalrahim, Tracey West, Mark Barfoot, Arianwen Lawrence West, Melika Azhandeh, Jennifer Laws, Tom Keyworth- Munns, Aminullah Maysoudi, Luna Sobbi, George Said, Mohammed Youssef, Sebastian Osorio, Zahra Alenzi, Ali Alenzi, Tatiana Andreasjan, Liudmila Krasilnokova, Liudmila Karpov,

Madiha Siddiqui, Emma Ratcliffe, Mohaamed Nassier, Ayaan Choksy

Sandra Watt FODI – Manager

Fanni Ng’ambi – Operations Assistant

**ITEM 1- Welcome**

Steve thanked everyone for attending and welcomed them and new members to the 2023 AGM. The trustees introduced themselves before proceeding.

**ITEM 2- Minutes of 2022 AGM and matters arising**

The minutes were agreed to be a true record and were signed off by Steve and Jane.

**ITEM 3 – Apologies for absence** were received from:

Trustees Pauline Shannon, Sally Vivyan and Aby Eiluorior, members and/or donors Felicity Livesy, Billy Broad, Marie Donnelly, Sylvia Taylor, Kathleen Hines, Maria Papanikandrou, Pam Wortley, Action Language.

**ITEM 4 – Management Committee Report**

Steve gave a brief summary of the Committee's Report, the full version of which was circulated before the AGM and will be uploaded to the FODI website. Thanks were given to Sandra and great admiration and regard expressed for all her dedicated work, especially as this year has been an extremely difficult time for Sandra. Congratulations were given to Fanni, who will become the new manager. Fanni has been well trained by Sandra and we are confident that Fanni will be a great manager going forward. Congratulations were also given to Farkhunda who will be the new operations assistant and will be starting the job soon.

Steve also thanked all the volunteers and partners for their hard work and commitment to FODI, enabling us to run projects, outings, drop ins etc.

Steve briefly outlined the main challenges faced by FODI as follows:

* Meeting the needs of all our clients during a continuing cost of living crisis.
* Responding to increased demand generated by a significant increase in the number of asylum seekers in Sunderland.
* Continuing to implement the strategic plan to ensure the development of FODI.
* Responding to changing circumstances for clients eg people being placed further from the city centre
* Lack of immigration solicitors in Sunderland
* Those presented by government legislation
* Homelessness caused by move on after receipt of 8 day NTQ letters
* The need for a treasurer

**ITEM 5 - Treasurer’s Report**

The Treasurer’s Report compiled by Sally was circulated in advance of the meeting covering the period April 2022 until October 2023.

Sandra went through it briefly, explaining that FODI has multiyear funding from 3 main sources, the National Lottery, Lloyds Bank Foundation and the Tudor Trust. Lloyds funding is due to finish in December, so we have the challenge of sourcing another multiyear funder. The report lists all our funders. The ICB, formerly CCG funding pays for activities, trips out, gym and swim vouchers etc and the extra £10,000 from them pays for bus fares for the drop ins, projects etc

**ITEM 6 - Looking Ahead**

Steve said FODI has several projects/events planned for the future, including the football tournament with YAV, the Festival of Light, the Xmas party at the Minster in December with Sandra Claus. Fanni updated people with information about the young people’s programme ‘I Will’ which ran a pilot and will be starting soon at Sunderland Museum delivered by Celebrate Different Collective, looking at what affects young people and the Sunshine Corner family project combining drumming, dance and food, in conjunction with Sunshine Coop, taking place at Sunderland Winter Gardens. There will be a volunteer coffee morning at our office on November 2nd. Sandra added the information about Black History Month from partners SBMEN with their event being run at The City Hall next weekend. There will also be 2 sessions with Sangini and the women’s group based on sharing food and more projects planned in the year ahead. She said it will be necessary to do funding bids for FODI. Steve mentioned the FODI ESOL project, run with funding from KYN lottery fund and set up to provide English classes, due to reduced provision in Sunderland.

**ITEM 7- FODI Volunteers**

Sandra explained that FODI is dependent on volunteers, who give their time for free. She thanked all FODI volunteers and trustees for their excellent commitment and contribution. Certificates were given to client volunteers, who may find them useful to go with their CVs and to show how much they are appreciated.

**ITEM 8- ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Talha raised the issue of asylum seekers and refugees having problems accessing NHS dentists. Jane said this was not just a problem for AS/R. Zara, who works in dentistry said that a lot of dentists, especially in the city centre were being privatised, with Sandra saying she had had to refer people to the dental hospital in Newcastle when they had serious problems. Sandra also said that this is a problem to be minuted by the AGM and raised with the NHS.

**ITEM 9 – ELECTION OF COMMITTEE**

Steve said that after 3 years being trustees, those who wanted to continue needed to stand for re-election. Steve, Jane and Zara were all up for re-election. They were all proposed and seconded. Steve said that volunteer Pauline had previously been proposed and seconded and co-opted to the committee. She had expressed an interest in doing the role of FODI secretary. We had 3 new trustee candidates, Talha Mahmood , Melika Azhandeh and Hannah Morgan.

Talha and Melika had already been proposed and seconded and were welcomed to the board of trustees. Hannah, a volunteer and Durham University student doing a PHD on digital access for asylum seekers, is on a temporary placement and when she returns will be asked to confirm her interest and co-opted later

Sandra said that anyone who was not a FODI member could complete a membership form.

**ITEM 10- BRIEF MEETING OF NEWLY ELECTED COMMITTEE**

The new committee had a brief meeting and the Chair was elected as follows:

Chair- Steve Newman

Secretary- Pauline Shannon

Trustees – Brenda Reardon, Jane Nikolarakis, Zara Juma , Talha Mahmood, Melika Azhandeh, Aby Eiluorior

DONM: 6.30 pm, Monday 6th November, via Zoom