

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2007-2008 – 9th March 2008

Location: The Rise of the Raj Restaurant, 6 Evington Rd, Leicester, LE2 1HF

Trustees in attendance: Ben Clackson, Philomena Commons, Mokhtar Hussain, Catherine Clifford, Michael Woodley, Bertie Woolnough

Apologies: David Newell

Minutes taken by: Chris Hall

MEETING – START

Agenda Item 1 – Chairman’s Welcome and Report

Ben Clackson, Valerie Taylor Trust Chairman

- Welcomed everybody to the first AGM of the Valerie Taylor Trust

- Read out the Chairman’s report 2007-2008

“When we last met in Leicester on September 30th I said I hoped we would get Charity Commission Registration soon after, but in fact the Charity Commission required us to hold a Special General Meeting to change the Objects of the Charity, and we had to give a month’s notice for that meeting, so it was only in early January that we finally got our Registration.

When I talked to the person at the Charity Commission responsible for our application, it was clear that the reason she treated our application with such suspicion was that FCRP had raised serious doubts about the management of CRP. Obviously I don’t know anything more than that about the correspondence between FCRP and the Charity Commission, but I do know that since June last year there has been a negative statement about CRP on the FCRP website, and that must have contributed to the Charity Commission’s worries.

Unfortunately not much has changed in FCRP’s position in the 6 months since our Inaugural Meeting. I have maintained polite contact with Tony Kendall, the Chairman of FCRP, but not I’m afraid to much effect. On Wednesday FCRP had a Trustees meeting and Tony sent me an email yesterday saying, and I quote:

“because the TRP have not yet met the conditions we set out in November regarding the appointment of an Executive Director etc, the FCRP trustees are not yet resuming active fundraising”

So in essence the position remains much the same as in last June, when they first suspended fundraising. From our point of view it would be better if FCRP would either on the one hand resume fundraising or on the other hand shut down. This continuing uncertainty, combined as it is with negative statements in the public domain about CRP management, make our task harder.

However since registration, we have sent CRP a total of £21,600. If we all work together on this I'm sure we can send much more in future, but even £21,600 is a good start, and as you can imagine CRP has been very grateful for it. Valerie has sent us a message for this Annual General Meeting which will be read out by Philomena Commons"

Philomena Commons, Valerie Taylor Trust Trustee

- Read out Valerie's letter to the AGM

"I am writing this message on behalf of everyone here at CRP, paralysed people, staff members and students. There is one main theme that this message should convey - the most warm and grateful thanks of everyone here. Without the Trustees of the VTT forming themselves into a body to mobilise others to continue the work of fund raising and support for the CRP, our activities and determination to continue, our belief in ourselves would have been seriously hampered. It was because we knew that all of you in the UK were there to stand behind us, doing what we can on the ground that we were able to continue. For that, you shall always have our heartfelt gratitude. To give the poor, paralysed person the best chance of treatment and rehabilitation at the most subsidised rate is our goal and already the supporters of VTT have raised and transferred the money to enable us to run for one month. We continue to run from month to month but after 28-29 years of being enabled to run with God providing CRP's needs because of your generous giving, I do not believe that God's provision through our supporters around the world will end now. We have to try every door to find the support that we need, believing that it will be forthcoming. Again we thank you for being a group of people who have believed in what CRP attempts to do here on the ground and are continuing your wonderful support.

I think you will be pleased to here of an incident that happened here yesterday morning, 6th March. I was called to join the patient's regular weekly meeting held in the patient's dining room. A young wheelchair user, called Aklima, shared with our spinal injury patients how two years previously, to the day, March 6th, she had had her road accident on her way to college. Her spinal injury caused her to become a complete paraplegic. She told of her experience in the early days after her accident, of having spinal surgery in a Government hospital where she had been led to believe that she would fully recover. Then coming to CRP where she claimed she had the start of a new life which from now on she celebrates on her accident day, 6th March. Aklima has continued with her college studies and has recently joined a computer operating course at CRP. Her aim is to become a teacher. She was joined in the patient's meeting by her brother who also spoke of his gratitude for the services Aklima had received from CRP. At the end of

the meeting they passed around mistis (sweetmeats) to everyone present. Aklima's speech was very moving and would have inspired many of the patients listening to her. To hear of her change of heart was so encouraging. After the accident she had embroidered a cloth where in Bengali she had expressed that her life had been ensnared and she felt trapped with no hope for the future. Her brother gave me the cloth yesterday declaring that it was an expression of the early days but that now Aklima believed in herself and could say that she had broken out of the snare. It was so heartening knowing that our counsellor, Jabbar had obviously played an important role in Aklima's "turn around". And now our combined thanks, that of Aklima, her family and everyone at CRP goes to you, our faithful supporters, who enable these "mini miracles" to take place.

We are so heartened to hear how funds are raised for CRP, from busking on the pavement to the concert held at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama on 2nd February. This is a partnership where without your help in the UK we could not attempt anything here in Bangladesh for poor, disabled people. Thank you all so very much."

Ben Clackson, Valerie Taylor Trust Chairman

- Continued to read out the Chairman's report 2007-2008

"Hearing that letter makes me feel proud of what we have done so far, and I hope you feel the same way.

When we met in September, several of you said you really needed a leaflet in order to embark on fundraising. I'm afraid that also got held up by the Registration, because we felt we shouldn't print it until we had a Charity Commission Registration number, but here it is, and please take leaflets away at the end of the meeting to support your fundraising efforts. I think it's a good-looking, professional leaflet and although several people contributed, I'd particularly like to thank Chris Hall, our Administrator for his work on it. Chris has done a fantastic amount of work for this Trust since its inauguration, including a new Website at <http://www.valerietaylortrust.org/> . As well as some newsy items about recent fundraising events on the Home page, there is a link on the Management page to the Constitution of our Trust if you want to look at that"

- Invited Questions from the audience regarding his report

Question 1)

Audience Member

- What are the intentions of FCRP?

Ben Clackson, Valerie Taylor Trust Chairman

- Currently unknown by VTT, we need to wait and see. FCRP's board of trustees set out a number of conditions to the TRP in Bangladesh which must be met.

Audience Member

- Are FCRP not bound to exist, either yes or no?

Audience Member

- FCRP are governed by a deed to raise funds to support CRP, if they are not fulfilling the deed, they need to close down

Ben Clackson, Valerie Taylor Trust Chairman

- Ultimately it is down to the Charity Commission to intervene if they see fit, VTT has no power over FCRP.

Audience Member

- We have spent enough time thinking of the past and it is time to move forwards and continue to support Valerie's work in Bangladesh.

Question 2)

Audience Member

- What is VTT's current link with the TRP in Bangladesh?

Ben Clackson, Valerie Taylor Trust Chairman

- VTT does not currently have a direct link with the Chairman of TRP in Bangladesh. David Newell (VTT Trustee) did meet with members of the TRP whilst in Bangladesh recently, Bertie Woolnough (VTT Trustee) is visiting Bangladesh next week and will go the CRP in Savar and hopefully have further meetings with TRP members.

Agenda Item 2 – Treasurer's Report

Michael Woodley, Valerie Taylor Trust Treasurer

- Circulated a spreadsheet showing interim accounts since formation in September 2007

VTT 5th of	PAID IN					PAID OUT- COSTS				Balance		
	Loan	Donations	Stdg. Orders	Sales	Interest	Total Income	Fundraising	CRP	Admn.		Bank	Total Out
Sep-07	3225.00	1775.00				1775.00						5000.00
Oct-07		1816.00	30.00			1646.00						6646.00
Nov-07		3174.84	152.00			3326.84			305.89		305.89	9666.95
Dec-07	-3225.00	7878.00	244.00		0.63	8122.63			36.83		36.83	14527.75
Jan-08		2254.78	246.00		1.10	2501.88			29.38		29.38	17009.25
Feb-08		5044.60	246.00	72.50	0.51	5363.61		16260.00		21.00	16271.00	6092.86
Mar-08							5350.00				5350.00	742.86
Apr-08												
May-08												
Jun-08												
Jul-08												
Aug-08												
Sep-08												
TOTALS	0.00	21743.22	918.00	72.50	2.24	22735.96		21600.00	372.10		21993.10	

- Explained columns in spreadsheet
- Re-enforced the idea that regular donations meant that cash flow for CRP in Bangladesh is easier to manage if VTT can guarantee how much they can send each month.
- Invited Questions from the audience regarding his report

Question 1)

Audience Member

- Why is there a £21.00 discrepancy in the Paid out columns?

Michael Woodley, Valerie Taylor Trust Treasurer

- Discrepancy is due to sending funds during March but the Bank Charge of £21.00 not showing on the VTT statement yet.

Agenda Item 3 – Update on the present situation of Valerie’s work in Bangladesh

Catherine Clifford, Valerie Taylor Trust Secretary

- Introduced herself and thanked everybody for attending the meeting.

- Read out the update on the present situation in Bangladesh

“A recent event at CRP – this information comes from Valerie and from David Newell, a VTT trustee who visited recently.

CRP is running remarkably well and despite recent problems, treatment and rehabilitation has not been reduced in any way. All of the beds in CRP-Savar and in CRP-Mirpur are full.

CRP-Mirpur is doing very well under the management of Rana Chakraborty, who was taken on in November. Nine of the thirteen floors are being used there is a prospective tenant who is very interested in the remaining floors. The road outside the centre is being redeveloped which is likely to further increase interest in the building.

Financially, CRP is managing from month to month. Thanks to the support from the VTT fund transfer and the Bangladesh Ministry of Health instalment, two more months of running costs have been covered. They have running costs in hand to complete the month of March. For this reason patients have not been turned away.

Managerially, An Executive Director has not yet been selected particularly because of the cost of the salary. However a Senior Administrative Officer and a Human Resources Officer have both joined the staff very recently to replace two staff members who resigned and are proving to be a great help already.

Meetings of the **TRP**, resumed on 16th July 2007, since then there have been five further trustee meetings which have always had a quorum. The next meeting is planned for next week. TRP are anxious to recruit two new Trustee members but prior to this they plan to introduce some bye laws of the Trust, which include such items as the period of service for a Trustee,

The present **Management Team** is made up of the Heads of Departments. The team was created in early July, 2007. Initially they needed to have a few meetings every week as there was a great volume of work to cover. Now with staff members responsible for Finance, Admin and Human Resources working together as a smaller team and the main Management Team now meets once a month. It appears to work quite well although we know that it takes time for new staff members to adjust to working in a new organisation.

Staffing – Although clinical staff have not been retrenched, it has been necessary to combine posts for some non-clinical positions. For example, there were previously two engineers at Savar now there is one covering all the work. They are working with 8 people less than previously in the Resource Mobilisation Unit and general Admin.”

- Invited Questions from the audience regarding her update.

Question 1)

Audience Member

- Does our VTT update differ from the version of recent events received from FCRP?

Catherine Clifford, Valerie Taylor Trust Secretary

- Both versions of current events are very similar, both build on the need for a new CEO to carry CRP forward.

Question 2)

Audience Member

- I hear that the surgeon has left CRP, has this affected patient care?

Philomena Commons, Valerie Taylor Trust Trustee

- If patients need spinal surgery, the treatment is now available at other hospitals in Dhaka and the CRP patients are taken to the hospital to have the surgery and then the rehabilitation process is undertaken at CRP.

Agenda Item 4 – Election of Officers and Trustees

Ben Clackson, Valerie Taylor Trust Chairman

- The nominations are as follows:

Standing for re-election -

MR MICHAEL WOODLEY

MR DAVID NEWELL OBE

MRS CATHERINE HALL

MISS PHILOMENA COMMONS

MR MOKHTAR HUSSAIN

MR BEN CLACKSON

MR BERTIE WOOLNOUGH CBE

New nomination –
MISS FAHMIDA BEGUM

- Asked the trustees present to introduce themselves.
- As the number of nominations has not exceeded the number of vacancies, no ballot will be held at the Annual General Meeting.

The Management Committee for the year 2008-2009 will therefore be as follows:

MR BERTIE WOOLNOUGH CBE (Chairman)
MR MICHAEL WOODLEY (Treasurer)
MRS CATHERINE HALL (Secretary)
MR DAVID NEWELL OBE
MISS PHILOMENA COMMONS
MR MOKHTAR HUSSAIN
MR BEN CLACKSON
MISS FAHMIDA BEGUM

Agenda Item 5 – Membership and Fundraising

Bertie Woolnough, Valerie Taylor Trust Trustee

- Re-iterated that VTT is a very new trust and that we need to set ourselves realistic goals for the year ahead.
- Our first Campaign
 - The aim is to raise regular donations of £4500 per month.
 - Why £4500 per month?
At our inaugural meeting in September 2007, Valerie spoke of the cost per spinal injury inpatient at CRP. That cost was £44 per patient per month. As there are 100 in-patient beds, $£44 \times 100 = £4400$, rounded up to £4500 to cover associated administration costs.
 - Why this for a campaign?
In 1979, Valerie Taylor's mission was to be able to treat poor spinally injured patients, we felt our first campaign should mirror her first mission – to be able to provide guaranteed core funding to CRP to enable them to treat the spinally injured in-patients which was why CRP was created in the first place.

Audience Member

- We've heard that CRP needs £18000.00 per month in funds, why is VTT only looking to raise £4500 per month?

Bertie Woolnough, Valerie Taylor Trust Trustee

- If we raise more funds, that would be great! But we need to set a realistic target for our first full year. We have worked hard to get to where we are. The bottom line is to raise as much money for Valerie's work in Bangladesh as we can.
- Our current membership sits at around 100 people, everybody present knows ten people, we need to try and start and recruit additional members to raise awareness and to try and generate additional funds.
- Invited suggestions from the audience.

Suggestion 1)

Audience Member

- Put Membership Form and Leaflet up on the website

Suggestion 2)

Audience Member

- Use Bangla Media (Newspapers & TV) in the UK to promote the charity

Agenda Item 6 – Any other Business

Joe Burlington, Valerie Taylor Trust Member

- Copies of the film 'Radio Bhai' produced by Purple Filed Productions and CRP are available for purchase after the meeting.

Ben Clackson, Valerie Taylor Trust Chairman

- Thanked Mr Miah for the use of his Restaurant for the VTT AGM

Agenda Item 7 – Closing film (used at recent fundraising concert in Glasgow)

Dr Bryan Whitty, Valerie Taylor Trust Member

- Introduced himself and told the audience that the recent Concert held in aid of CRP in Glasgow had raised in excess of £3000.
- The film was put together to show the concert attendees what CRP is and included a message recorded from Valerie thanking the various people for the commitment to making the concert a success.

MEETING – FINISH