

Valerie Taylor Trust

Administrator: Chris Hall, 8 Sinclair Court, 138 Kingston Road, London SW19 1LY 0796 77 11 235

MINUTES OF INAUGURAL MEETING – 30th September 2007

Location: Shimla Pinks Restaurant, 65 - 69 London Road, Leicester, LE2 0PE
Trustees in attendance: Ben Clackson, Philomena Commons, Mokhtar Hussain, Catherine Clifford, David Newell, Bertie Woolnough
Apologies: Michael Woodley
Minutes taken by: Chris Hall

MEETING – START

Ben Clackson, Valerie Taylor Trust Chairman

- Welcomed meeting attendees, especially those who had travelled for Canada, The Netherlands and Northern Ireland.
- Thanked everybody for showing their support for Valerie Taylor over the years.
- Gave a brief rundown of the meeting schedule
- Gave a brief overview of the current situation at the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP), Bangladesh
- Advised the meeting attendees on the reasons for launching the 'Valerie Taylor Trust'
- Updated the meeting attendees on the Trust's application to the Charity Commission to obtain 'charitable status'
- Then handed over to Valerie Taylor, Founder of CRP

Valerie A Taylor OBE, Founder of the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed, Bangladesh

- Introduced herself and thanked everybody for their support in the past
- Advised that she felt that everybody should help disadvantaged and poor people around the world
- Thanked everybody for their efforts in attending the meeting
- Advised that there are CRP Calendars and latest Annual Reports for attendees to take away
- Gave an overview of CRP
- Update on fundraising for CRP
 - o BHPI – Training Institute of CRP - currently self funding
 - o Community Based Rehabilitation – funded by Manusher Jonno
- Thanked the hardworking staff of CRP
- Introduced Babu, Physiotherapist who was trained at CRP

Babu, Physiotherapist trained at CRP

- Introduced himself and told the audience that he had trained as physiotherapist at CRP and then worked for another organisation in Bangladesh for 3 years
- Told the audience that he was currently studying in London

Valerie A Taylor OBE, Founder of the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed, Bangladesh

- Gave a brief overview of CRP's pioneering work over the first 25 years, including:
 - o The use of Telemedicine
 - o ASCON Network
 - o ASCON Conference host twice (1st and 6th Conferences)
- Gave a brief insight into the last 2 ½ years at CRP and what happened under the latest Management structure

- For the first time in CRP's history, The Trust for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (TRP) had become fragmented
- Breaking of bonds with FCRP-UK
- Divided staff opinions on what the 'way forward' for CRP should be
- Advised that following the issuing of a letter to her by the Chairman of The Trust for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed stating that her role as co-ordinator at CRP was no longer valid, the subsequent story published in Bangladesh's leading English Newspaper 'The Daily Star' caused a media outcry around CRP that led to a number of issues being bought to a head.
- Advised that two Directors within CRP felt that they could no longer undertake their roles, the Principal of the BHPI, Dr Barkhat and Director of Medical Services, Dr Hoque handed in their resignations
- Advised that Assistant Director, Ms Mohua Paul was very unhappy and had taken 1 months leave, on her return she also handed in her resignation.
- Advised that two of the four directors are still in place but at a TRP meeting the previous week the trustees had been advised that Albert Mullah would also be resigning in Mid-November 2007-10-07
- The TRP trustees had also discussed the roles of the Directors at CRP and had declared that the grading was 'questionable'
- Advised that 3 to 4 team meetings were being undertaken each week at the present time to enable CRP to function and address numerous issues, normally only 1 or 2 team meetings would have taken per month
- Advised that she felt the FCRP-UK letters that had been sent out regarding CRP had many unsubstantiated comments enclosed
- Said that it was widely felt that over the past 2 ½ years, what had happened at CRP was an effort to convert the organisation into a private medical institution rather than to serve the poor
- Advised that since the changes took place during June 2007
 - The World Health Organisation (WHO) had reconfirmed links with CRP and where in talks about setting up satellite centres within Government Hospitals in Bangladesh
 - The 'Advisors' who currently make up the Bangladesh Government had been very active and helpful in resolving issues surrounding CRP
 - The Army Chiefs Wife had come to visit CRP and donated 50000 Bangladesh Taka and that she had started the scope for integration of Special Needs Children within military schools
 - The Australian High Commissioner had visited CRP and met the long term Australian Volunteers funded by the Australian Governments AUSAID programmes
- Advised that CRP would hit a crisis point for funding poor patients in Mid December – part of the reason for this was that FCRP-UK are currently withholding funds
- Advised what is currently being done to raise funds for CRP
 - Adrian Sym, ex-donor Liaison Officer of CRP, is running the Kathmandu Marathon
 - Bangladesh Restaurateurs have expressed that they still wish to raise funds for CRP
 - Ministries within the Bangladesh Government have offered help with funds
 - Ministry for Health has already given 20 Lakh Taka with a possible 50 Lakh Taka being given next year
 - Australian High Commission to donate between 20 – 30 Lakh Taka
 - German Embassy to donate up to 9 Lakh Taka

- Bangladesh Prime Bank to offer monies up front to patients to be able to afford treatment and then pay as loan
- Advised that current cost per patient on the inpatient wards is equivalent to 44 GB pounds – as there are 100 inpatient beds current shortfall in funding is 4400 GB pounds per month

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION - START

Question 1)

Audience Member

- Gave a thank you from the people of Leicester to Valerie for all her hard work over the years on Bangladesh and then asked what lessons had been learnt over the past 2 ½ Years as he had observed that that the reasoning behind appointing Mr Shafi Sami to CEO & Managing Trustee was incorrect

Valerie A Taylor OBE, Founder of the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed, Bangladesh

- Agreed and gave details that a legal opinion gained in November 2005 had stated that he should not be able to hold both roles

Question 2)

Audience Member

- Said that he had visited 10 years previous and thanked Valrie for her work at CRP

Valerie A Taylor OBE, Founder of the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed, Bangladesh

- Accepted his thanks

Question 3)

Audience Member

- Said that it had been 4 years since he had visited CRP and asked how the division in the trustees had happened

Valerie A Taylor OBE, Founder of the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed, Bangladesh

- Replied that it had been due to a number of reasons including
 - Lack of regular meetings
 - Incorrect number of trustees, should have been 8
 - A division 4 to 3 within the board of trustees
 - Unknown division reason – maybe due to social standing of managing trustee

Audience Member

- Maybe CRP should have a larger group of trustees due to its size

Question 4)

Audience Member

- Said that they were a member of FCRP-UK and felt very confused about what was going to happen with the current money held by them

Valerie A Taylor OBE, Founder of the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed, Bangladesh

- Replied that she had been very upset with the FCRP-UK letters and was going to meet with FCRP-UK Chairman, Tony Kendall, to discuss further. Support for the poor was her paramount concern.

Question 5)

Audience Member

- Asked how much the current shortfall of money is each month and what happened to the fundraising opportunities of CRP's Mirpur Building

Valerie A Taylor OBE, Founder of the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed, Bangladesh

- Replied that current shortfall of money is 4400 GB Pounds and that the expected fundraising project at CRP Mirpur had not gone according to plan. Good news was that 2 ½ floors of the Mirpur building were now hired out and income generating.

Question 6)

Audience Member

- Advised that he had met Valerie at CRP during the 1990's and asked if there was any kind of Video Appeal/documentary for CRP that he could show other people to try and raise more funds

Valerie A Taylor OBE, Founder of the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed, Bangladesh

- Replied that she would look into it on her return to Bangladesh

Question 7)

Audience Member

- Asked what the new management structure of CRP would be

Valerie A Taylor OBE, Founder of the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed, Bangladesh

- Replied that they had advertised for the CEO position and received over 110 applicants and that a new organogram would be drawn up to meet the needs of the organisation

Question 8)

Audience Member

- Advised that he had a great passion for CRP but was concerned that TRP appeared to be in an unconstitutional state, was interested to hear how the NGO Bureau of Affairs in Bangladesh had responded to CRP over the past months, and what were the plans to get CRP back on a stable footing, especially with regards to funding

Valerie A Taylor OBE, Founder of the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed, Bangladesh

- Valerie replied that on the contrary the TRP was beginning to function correctly again, and reiterated previous comments in regards to help from the government and its Advisers, and that the NGO Bureau of Affairs had also been very helpful. In regards to funding, this was still been reviewed as it is estimated that there may be a funding crisis in December 2007.

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION - END

Ben Clackson, Valerie Taylor Trust Chairman

- Briefly discussed the constitution under which the Valerie Taylor Trust was being set up
- Thanked a number of people for their help in arranging the inaugural meeting
- Thanked audience members for attending the meeting

MEETING - END