



AGM minutes 2019

Date of meeting:- 25 May 2019

Chair's Report (Beth Bartlett)

Beth began by welcoming all who had attended, then gave an overview of the work of the rescue over the past 12 months. It has been a hectic year with many changes. Sue Birch stepped down as a Trustee and Leah Godsell-Fletcher stepped away after having her gorgeous daughter Ava and has recently stepped down as a trustee as well. We were lucky enough to get Moira Moseley and Caroline Bonner on board to help with rehoming – and they have been a fantastic help. We still have the same volunteers to help with transport, fundraising, follow-up home checks and moderating our various Facebook pages & groups, with two new volunteers joining us.

Our Instagram account is updated regularly now but we still are in dire need of a new website or a complete overhaul of the existing one. This was in the pipeline last year but unfortunately didn't materialise so has to be one of our top priorities this year.

We've had a lot of dogs with expensive veterinary bills in the last year, with an annual total of around £32k. Add to this transport costs and other expenses and it's clear we need to carry on with and expand our fundraising activities.

We currently have a volunteer who is looking into merchandise for us and who is willing to deal with it once we have products in stock.

Unfortunately, we've had a couple of incidents this year where fosterers have been bitten quite badly by our dogs. Incident reports and evidence have been obtained and I had a meeting with a representative of our Insurance company

who was impressed with our documentation and risk assessment procedures. Always good to know we're getting it right!

Going forward our plans will include sorting out the website, organising our application forms so they can be completed on phones and tablets, more fundraising and advertising for more dog-free foster homes.

Rehoming report (Sandi Brewer, Rehoming and Foster Co-ordinator)

Last year was a busy one, with 73 dogs being rehomed by us – 66 of which were Bostons (the remainder were 2 Frenchies, 3 Pugs and a Peke). Out of these 2 went into rehab, 3 into long term foster and 15 were foster-to-adopt. We took in and rehomed 4 x pairs of dogs.

There was an even mix of dogs, with 35 being male and 38 females. The average age was 4, the oldest being 12 years old and the youngest 10 weeks.

Reasons for surrender varied, with the most common being dog aggression (12), closely followed by human aggression (10). Other reasons were marriage/relationship breakdown (9), lack of time (7), ill-health of owner (7), ill health of dog (6), work commitments (5), death of owner (5), new baby (4), behavioural issues (1) and stray (1). A total of 6 dogs were brought in from abroad.

The average time a dog spent in foster was 68 days. We currently have 62 fosterers of which only 7 are dog-free and 13 are respite/emergency only. We signed up 36 new fosterers during the last year, with another 9 waiting to be homechecked now.

Currently there are 133 applicants on our waiting list, and on average we get 5-6 new applications each week.

We have 80 homecheckers, 44 of which are new this last year.

We now ask on every application form if applicants would be interested in helping out in other areas (fostering/homechecking/transport) so have gained new volunteers this way.

Financial / Treasurer's Report (Simon O'Rourke)

Copies of the accounts for 2017/18 were distributed to those in attendance and Simon confirmed that the CC16 (the Charities Commission form confirming our accounts for the previous financial year) was validated free of charge by his colleague. He has kindly agreed to do the same for this year's accounts. Funds remain relatively healthy. Total income for the financial year was £49,817. Expenditure totalled £44,739, leaving a total net income of £5,078. The balance of our accounts (HSBC Bank account and PayPal totals £30,215.

We have had to pay £226 in PayPal charges when people don't use the 'Friends & Family' option when donating/paying for something. Lara will investigate registering the rescue as a charity with PayPal.

We have also, for the first time, incurred legal expenses in trying to recover a dog from a resistant fosterer.

'Wonderful', the organisation we use for donations/fundraisers, has also been added to our adoption contracts so that adoption donations can be paid via Wonderful, which automatically collects GiftAid for us where eligible however, Wonderful have written to us to advise that adoption donations cannot be made if they mention the word 'payment'. Simon is seeking advice to ensure we meet HMRC regulations with regards to this.

We are not far off the threshold for > £50k total turnover, which would place us in the next financial bracket for the purposes of the CC, which would mean the need for even more detailed accounts.

Election Of Trustees

Beth Bartlett, Sandi Brewer and Simon O'Rourke were re-elected uncontested. Leah Godsell-Fletcher has stepped down. Unanimous approval of Moira Mosley as the 4th Trustee. These appointments will continue until the next AGM.

AOB

Lara O'Rourke suggested all members/supporters set a Facebook fundraiser for their birthday. Even if no one donates, Facebook donate £5.

It was suggested that the rescue should apply for lottery funding however, Simon's experience of this when involved in a previous charity, is that they favour 'human' good causes and applicants need to be able to demonstrate how any grant applied for would benefit the local community.