

THCVS 2023 Annual General Meeting Minutes

30 April 2024, 4.00pm to 6.00pm, Bernie Cameron Community Centre

Welcome and introductions

Vicky Scott (CEO) welcomed and thanked everyone for attending.

Trustee elections

Vicky Scott invited the 2 trustees who are standing for election to say a few words:

- Jama Omar, standing for re-election
- Haydor Ali, standing for election, having been previously co-opted by trustees

There was a vote for the candidates and to approve the annual report and accounts, and the minutes of the 2022 AGM. Both candidates were elected.

THCVS achievements and accounts 2022 - 2023

Vicky Scott presented the annual report. Headlines include:

- Securing the resources to be more resilient and sustainable: 184 groups and organisations were supported; 39% of inquiries were related to funding; £203,000 secured by local organisations
- Connecting with each other and with public sector partners: We entered into partnerships such as the Health Determinants Research Collaboration and the NEL VCSE Collaborative.
- Strengthening the influence of disadvantaged communities in local decision-making and planning: the Equalities Hub supported the six equalities networks; the Cornerstone and Flourishing Communities projects both use a model of a coproduction, involving community groups and residents to work alongside statutory agencies to have a greater impact for residents

The Treasurer, Haydor Ali, provided a summary of the financial position and referred members to the annual accounts for more detail. Headlines from the 2022/23 accounts:

- Income was £681,349, up from £513,245 in 2021/22.
- Expenditure was £616,930, up from £454,78 in 2021/22
- There was a surplus of £64,420, up from £58,464 in 2020/21, of which £57,733 was in unrestricted funds.

THCVS new strategy

Vicky Scott presented THCVS's new strategy, with three strategic objectives:

Objective 1: Voluntary and community groups in Tower Hamlets will have a stronger voice

To achieve this we will:

- Support voluntary and community groups have a collective voice that influences change positively
- Help to ensure the diversity of voluntary and community groups is represented and influential in local decision making
- Act as a critical friend to statutory partners like the council and NHS, and create opportunities for dialogue

Objectives 2: Voluntary and community groups in Tower Hamlets will have access to the resources they need

To achieve this we will:

- Support access to funding through free one to one fundraising advice, training & opportunities
- Create opportunities for collaboration including grassroots groups
- Actively identify and help to secure income for local organisations

Objective 3: Voluntary and community groups in Tower Hamlets will have increased confidence, connections and skills

To achieve this we will:

- Help voluntary and community groups to connect to each other and collaborate
- Work with local voluntary and community groups to build their skills and resources
- Create meaningful opportunities to take part with statutory and other local partners.

Cross-cutting themes

- Equity. Building an anti-racist, anti-oppressive organisation which works to challenge oppressive structures
- Evidence led. Informed by evidence and being the place to go for relevant data about the VCS and its impact
- Partnership working. Prioritising partnerships within the sector and with statutory partners
- Communications. Ensuring that THCVS communicates its purpose and activities effectively
- Financial sustainability. Ensuring the survival of THCVS.

Panel discussion

Jennifer Ogunyemi (Sisters in Business) introduced the panel:

- Jennifer Ogunyemi, Sisters in Business
- Rev James Olanipekun, Christ Apostolic Church
- Safia Jama MBE, Women's Inclusive Team
- Vicky Scott, THCVS

There was a wide-ranging discussion on how THCVS's strategic objectives align with the current and emerging needs of the diverse communities in the borough, and the specific barriers that VCS groups face in securing funding, and how THCVS plans to address these challenges proactively. One of the initiatives in the coming year will be work in different areas of the borough where there are fewer VCS groups, and funding support will continue to be provided free at the point of access. We also talked about the importance (and methods) of demonstrating impact across the sector. There was a discussion about the funding situation for THCVS and its strategic objective of developing its independent voice in order to fulfil the priority of ensuring voluntary and community groups have a stronger voice in the borough. There was agreement about the need to maintain transparency and accountability in achieving these goals.

Thank yous

Vicky Scott and Jama Omar gave thanks to the three trustees are standing down, Celeste Danielle, Mike Smith and Eleanor Healy-Birt, and presented the trustees with a gift and card.