

## **Minutes of the VSSN Annual General Meeting 2017**

**23<sup>rd</sup> November 2017, Open University, Milton Keynes**

**VSSN members present:** Mike Aiken, Alison Body, Victoria Boulton, James Bowles, Helen Britton, Jean-Louis Button, Chris Cornforth, Jane Cullingworth, Chris Damm, Chris Dayson, Jon Dean, Stephanie Denning, Angela Ellis Paine, Richard Harries, Daniel Haslam, Mike Hemmings, Rebecca Ince, Carol Jacklin-Jarvis, Simone Kraemer, Mike Locke, Rob Macmillan, Lindsey Metcalf, Linda Milbourne, Ellie Munro, James Rees, Vita Terry, David Yates

**Non-members present:** Mike Calvert, Christopher Carlton, Ram Cnaan, Catharine Hurford, Epaminondas Koronis, Cristina Mititelu, Candy Perry, Siv Vangen

**In attendance:** Beth Longstaff (VSSN Executive Officer)

**Apologies:** Helen Cameron, Ann Hindley, Jane Mason, Bhanu Ramaswamy

**Minutes of the 2016 AGM:** These were accepted as a true record. There were no matters arising.

**Chairs remarks:** Rob Macmillan, Co-Chair (with Angela Ellis Paine) of VSSN, reported on the year to the end of July 2017. He reported a steady year with membership decreasing only slightly despite difficult financial conditions. Highlights of the year have included two successful day seminars in Birmingham and Glasgow and the annual conference in Nottingham, organised in partnership with NCVO and IVR. He described the ongoing development of *Voluntary Sector Review* in partnership with Policy Press, now going into its eighth year, and encouraged those present to consider submitting to the journal. He noted that the VSSN email discussion group had been less busy this year, and invited suggestions about why this might be the case – are discussions taking place in other forums?

**Trustees Annual Report and Accounts:** Rob Macmillan presented the VSSN Annual Report and Accounts for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017. He noted that Jane Cullingworth had been accidentally omitted from the list of Trustees but that this has now been corrected.

Outlining the annual accounts on behalf of and with thanks to the Treasurer, Carolyn Cordery, Rob noted that as VSSN's finances are in a healthy position and relatively stable, the Steering Group have been exploring ways of using them to further support members. There was a question from a member about how VSSN's reserves can be used to further VSSN's charitable objects. Rob mentioned the writing retreat, which would follow the seminar, and which is a new venture financially supported by VSSN.

The Annual Report and Accounts were accepted by the meeting (Proposed by Chris Dayson, Seconded by Chris Cornforth).

**Election of VSSN Steering Group:** This year there were four vacant places on the Steering Group. Five people had stood for election and the following were elected: Ali Body, Carolyn Cordery, Chris Damm and Angela Ellis Paine. Everyone who had stood for election was

thanked for their interest. Rob Macmillan, David Kane and Meta Zimmeck had all come to the end of their 6 years on the Steering Group and Angelica Finnegan has stepped down from the Steering Group due to a career change. Nick Acheson was also stepping down from his role as ex-officio VSR representative on the Steering Group. All were thanked for their extremely valuable contributions to VSSN over the years.

**Election to the VSR Editorial Management Board:** This year there were two vacancies. Daiga Kamerade was the only candidate and was appointed for a second term. Angela Benson was thanked for her contribution to the Board.

There have also been changes to the Editorial team of Voluntary Sector Review. Linda Milbourne and Mike Aiken have stepped down from their roles as Practice Editors, and were thanked for their often unsung but vital work. They have been replaced by Chris Dayson and Anna Visser.

Bernard Harris is stepping down as Editor, and Rob thanked him for the wisdom, judgement and attention to detail he has brought to the role. Carl Milofsky, from the US, has been appointed as the new Editor, reflecting a desire to increase international scope of the journal.

Rob Macmillan will take up the role of VSR representative on the VSSN Steering Group.

**Angela Ellis Paine**, Co-Chair of VSSN, continued the overview of the year, welcoming new members of the Steering Group and thanking those who had stepped down.

### **VSSN member survey**

Angela went on to outline the results of a survey of VSSN members which had been done in summer 2017. There were 46 responses, a 36% response rate. Members gave a variety of reasons for joining the network, and highlighted the following benefits of membership: the opportunity to be part of a network of like-minded peers, subscription to Voluntary Sector Review and discounted conference fees. There was not a strong call for significant changes to the way the network operates, but suggestions for how to grow the network's activities included developing special interest groups, research and policy round table events, expanding international activities. There were also useful suggestions about how to encourage and welcome new members.

Angela noted that this year the Steering Group have introduced a members newsletter and the new writing retreat, and are exploring ideas for additional events. She encouraged members to get in touch if they have an idea for an event in partnership with VSSN.

**Any other business:** Various events, conferences and publications were announced, including the next VSSN Day Seminar which will be in York in May 2018.