Draft Minutes of the Voluntary Health Scotland (VHS) 20th Annual General Meeting
28th November 2024

In attendance:

Tayyibah	Ahmed	Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland
Billi	Allen-Mandeville	Health and Social Care Alliance (the ALLIANCE)
Lynn	Anderson	NHS Ayrshire & Arran
Salena	Begley	Family Fund
Anne	Black	The Braveheart Association
Lauren	Blair	Voluntary Health Scotland
Karen	Bradford	The Sorted Project
Amy	Campbell	Ygam
Sam	Campbell	NHS Highland
Elaine	Cannon	CVS Inverclyde
Christine	Carlin	Voluntary Health Scotland
Kathleen	Cooper	North Ayrshire Health & Social Care Partnership
Alan	Eagleson	Terrence Higgins Trust Scotland
Sarah	Edwards	The Breastfeeding Network
Jennifer	Forsyth	Obesity Action Scotland
Tomas	Gerrard	Deaf Action
Ben	Hall	Cyrenians
Gillian	Hallard	RNIB Scotland
Stephanie-Anne	Harris	Edinburgh Community Health Forum
Susan	Hunter	Befriending Networks
Roisin	Hurst	Voluntary Health Scotland
Paul	Johnston	Public Health Scotland
Laura	Jones	RNIB Scotland
Meghan	Jones	Scottish Recovery Consortium
Alison	Leitch	EVOC/Edinburgh CLW Network
Frankie	Macpherson	Health and Care News Scotland
Billy	McClean	South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership
Kelsa	McDonald	VoiceAbility
Avril	McLean	Action for ME
Hugh	McLean MBE	Lorn and Oban Healthy Options Ltd

Claire	Medland	NES
Anne	Meikle	Versus Arthritis
Colin	Melville	CTSI
Tejesh	Mistry	Voluntary Health Scotland
Paul	Mooney	Voluntary Health Scotland – Board Member
Agnieszka	Morrison	Feniks
Helen	Morrison	Shared Care Scotland
Sarah	Murray	Royal Voluntary Service
Emma	Nieminen	Voluntary Health Scotland
Paul	Okroj	Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland
Maureen	O'Neill	Faith in Older People
Wilma	Paterson	Cumbernauld Action for Care of the Elderly (CACE)
Gemma	Pritchard-Woollett	CTSI
Margaret	Reid Arbuckle	Heath and Social Care Alliance Scotland
Nancy	Riach	Arts Culture Health and Wellbeing Scotland
Bushra	Riaz	Kidney Research UK
Tilly	Robinson- Miles	The University of Edinburgh
Bethany	Sikes	Volunteer Scotland
Craig	Smith	SAMH (Scottish Action for Mental Health)
Alex	Stobart	Mydex CIC
Grant	Sugden	Waverley Care
Nicky	Thomson	Good Morning Service
Stuart	Valentine	Relationships Scotland
Linsey	Valiente	Breast Cancer Now
Sarah	Van Putten	Lifecare
Catherine	White	Alcohol Focus Scotland

Apologies:

Richard Meade, Voluntary Health Scotland Board Member

1. **Welcome to the AGM and apologies**

   Tejesh Mistry, Chief Executive VHS, welcomed everyone and briefly outlined the agenda for the morning. Christine Carlin, Chair of VHS, then welcomed members and guests to the 20th VHS AGM and noted apologies as above.

2. **Minutes of the 19th AGM held on 30th November 2023**

   Proposed by Billy McClean and seconded by Wilma Paterson. Duly accepted as a correct record of the meeting.

3. **This year's achievements and future plans**

   Christine reflected on how the sector, Scotland, the UK and the world has changed in the last year; however, it is good to pause and remind ourselves of the challenges and our achievements over the last 12 months. The Annual Report outlines the breadth of work and relationships achieved by the VHS team to support its members, to give them

both agency and a strong collective voice which is a mark of the organisation. She congratulated Tejesh on his first 9 months in the role of Chief Executive and also the rest of the VHS Team – Lauren, Roisin, Kellie and Matthew in raising the profile of the sector in early intervention and prevention work. VHS wouldn't be able to do what it does without its members; she thanked them for their expertise and passion which allows VHS and them to be a collective and effective voice, to respond to policy and to put the voluntary sector at the front of tackling health inequalities in communities.

Tejesh Mistry gave a presentation of VHS's achievements in 2023-24 as well as highlighting current work and future plans for the organisation, including its next 3-year strategy from 2025. He thanked members for their engagement throughout the year. It has been an important year for VHS, celebrating its 20th anniversary as a national charity and member organisation. Tejesh reiterated that it is still as important as ever to be able to share members' work on alleviating health inequalities.

The past year has been focused on convening power to bring people together to share and amplify voices. Tejesh focused on a few key highlights from 2023-24:

- **The VHS Annual Conference - Health Creators' Summit**, which was chaired by PHS Chair Angiolina Foster OBE and welcomed 120 delegates to hear keynote speakers including Michael Matheson MSP and Lord Nigel Crisp.
- **The Scottish Community Link Worker Network –** now has over 360 members and welcomed over 140 CLWs from across Scotland its first in-person annual conference in May 2023
- **VHS 20th Anniversary event** - featuring a keynote speech from Cath Denolm and which celebrated the work of Claire Stevens' 12 years in post as Chief Executive.
- **Policy and influencing** – Tejesh highlighted VHS's work on several member consultation events around the Human Rights Bill (in liaison with the Health and Social Care Alliance) to feed into Scottish Government developments of that piece of legislation. In November 2023, VHS also published its Essential Connections report which looked at the range and scope of CLW programmes in Scotland. This report has directly fed into the Scottish Government review of CLW programmes. He also highlighted the VHS report with Volunteer Edinburgh looking at the role of volunteering in the Royal Edinburgh Hospital and the employability benefits for volunteers.
- VHS is in its 9th year as the secretariat for **the Cross-Party Group (CPG) on Health Inequalities.** During 2023-24, VHS held 3 meetings of the CPG; the meetings focused on racialised health, the challenges of poverty in health inequalities and data.

He finished by talking about some of VHS's future plans. He highlighted that as a sector, we are in a difficult environment with fiscal challenges and broadening inequalities. He stressed the need to represent and amplify the role of the third sector and particularly the voices of VHS members. He highlighted the importance of strengthening partnerships and particularly the role that the third sector can play alongside the public sector. VHS's new strategy is being developed in the coming months and VHS will be consulting with stakeholders and members about this as well as having a conversation with the VHS Board to reflect on the past year and look forward. There were no questions on the annual review.

4. **Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2024**

   Emma Nieminen, on behalf of Richard Meade, gave a summary of the accounts for the year. The full, approved accounts had been circulated to the membership by email VHS's income for the year was £290,000. Total funds as at year-end amounted to £196,710. The company's principal funding during the year came by way of grants from the Scottish Government. Free reserves as at 31 March 2024, were £179,889. There were no questions concerning the accounts.

5. **To note and thank retiring Directors**

   Christine wanted to note that Wilma Paterson is stepping down after 4 years on the VHS Board and Maureen O'Neill, Vice Chair after 6 years. She commented that they had both brought so much experience and enthusiasm to VHS and thanked them for their support. Billy, Paul, Emma and Christine are also resigning and hope to be co-opted. The next VHS Board meeting will be on 4th December where it is hoped that the Board will keep them on.

6. **Any other competent business and close of formal AGM**

   There was no other business. The formal business of the AGM was therefore concluded, and those present were invited to stay for **'From Crisis to Control: Preventing the Ticking Time Bomb in Population Health',** featuring a presentation by Paul Johnston, Chief Executive of Public Health Scotland and then Q&A with delegates.