Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
Held on Monday 22nd January 2024 at The Garden Room, St Luke's Community Centre, 90 Central Street, London EC1V 8AJ.

Present:
Tim Hutchings: Chairman
Michael Parker: Trustee
Richard Walker: Treasurer (Via Zoom)
Jon Spencer: Trustee
Derek Jenkinson: Trustee
Angela Smith: Chief Executive
Nimita Park: Finance & Operations Manager
Natalia Tomashpolskya: Volunteer Services Manager
Sabina Uddin: Health Hub Manager
Cathryn Wynn-Jones: Communications Officer
Nathania Thrussell: Financial Administrator (Minutes)
Liam Bays: Senior Volunteer Support Officer
Robert Kwami: Volunteer Support Officer
Julia Muraszczuk: Health Hub Support Officer
Florence Bayonne: Fundraising & Business Development Manager

Apologies
Toyin Akinyemi: Trustee
Janet Dougharty: Trustee
Richard Eveleigh: Vice-Chair
Olivia Marlow: Trustee
Melanie Rochford: Trustee

Members Present
See attached

1. **Welcome**
   Tim Hutchings (TH) welcomed everyone to the AGM for 2024.

2. **AGM Minutes from January 2023**
   TH presented the minutes from 2023 which were proposed and seconded by Derek Jenkinson and Michael Parker. The minutes were then approved by all present.

3. **Presentation from Consultant Ophthalmologist Mr Alfonso Vasquez-Perez – Eye Tooth Surgery and other sight saving techniques**
   Mr Vasquez-Perez (AVP) started by thanking the Friends of Moorfields (FOM) for funding the informative, animated video on corneal transplants for patients. He said it has been so helpful for explaining the procedure to patients and answering their questions.

   He then gave a fascinating presentation on a new service offered at Moorfields called, Osteo-Odonto-Keratoprosthesis (OOKP). He explained that OOKP is a highly specialised service to restore sight in blind patients and is suitable for patients who are unable to have corneal transplants such as those with rare autoimmune diseases and thermal injuries.

The service has been commissioned by NHS England so has moved from its Brighton location to Moorfields, between City Road (for assessments and monitoring) and St Georges Hospital (for surgery). There are very few centres around the world offering this service, so it is a great opportunity for Moorfields.

AVP explained the history of corneal transplants and the progress made in treatments and the devices used. He showed the room a number of photographs to explain the procedure and the many stages of work required. It is a very complex procedure and needs a multidisciplinary team of which he is the clinical lead as the corneal surgeon. He extended thanks to the FOM volunteers for the role they play in making the OOKP patients feel comfortable when they come to the clinic.

AVP predicts that the service will grow and aims to train another OOKP corneal surgeon. As it cannot be performed if the tooth isn't suitable there is research going on at UCL in tissue engineering. Jonathan Knowles, Professor of Biomaterials Science is supportive of the OOKP work and is keen to find what other possible materials could be used.

TH thanked AVP both for his informative presentation and for the amazing work he is doing at Moorfields to restore patients' vision.

AVP invited questions from the audience:
Question 1: Is the surgery suitable for children?
Answer: At the moment it isn't as children's teeth aren't strong enough however AVP is hoping that an alternative material will be found in the future that could be used for children.
Question 2: Can the tooth used still be susceptible decay?
Answer: Yes, which is another reason why the patients are monitored every 3 months. The canine teeth last longer than other teeth. If the first tooth fails though, the surgery can be repeated using another tooth.
Question 3: Can someone else's tooth be used?
Answer: This has been tried but it doesn't last very long. It has been tried twice but failed after a year.
Question 4: How many of these surgeries does the team perform each year?
Answer: Between 5 and 10 per year
Question 5: Is there a maximum age for the surgery?
Answer: No, as long as there is a suitable tooth to use, and the patient is healthy

4. **Election of Trustees: Presented by Angela Smith (Chief Executive)**
Angela Smith explained that in accordance with Rule 13 Sections 2, 3 & 5 of the Constitution of Trustees, trustees must stand down after a 3-year period – this year Tim Hutchings, Melanie Rochford, Derek Jenkins and Richard Walker will come to the end of their term.

Tim Hutchings, Melanie Rochford, and Richard Walker put themselves forward for re-election, this was proposed, seconded, and passed by the members. Derek Jenkins has served 3 terms as trustee and is therefore standing down from the Board of Trustees.

5. **Presentation of Long Service Awards**
Natalia Tomashpolskya (NT) announced the presentation of special awards to recognise the service given to FOM by our volunteers over the years.

Vivian Gaimster was given an award by TH for her 5 years of service. Also recognised for their 5 years but unable to attend were: Julie Hawkins, Kamal Nandha, Michael Oywaj, Linda Scott, Gaynor Sessions, Colin Spence and Yash Vaghela.

Paul Chennel was presented with an award to recognise his 10 years of volunteering. Unfortunately, Ciro de Lima was unable to attend the AGM but was recognised for his 15 years of service.

TH presented gifts to show our appreciation to Ann Tourle for volunteering for over 30 years and to Basil Bramble for his 25 years. NT thanked them both for their exceptional work.

To mark his 11 years of service as a Trustee Derek Jenkinson was presented with a gift by TH and AS who thanked him for all his hard work and support, and the ongoing support he will be giving going forward.

6. **Update on Moorfields: Martin Kuper (Chief Executive Moorfields) and Laura Wade-Gery (Chair of Moorfields)**

Martin Kuper (MK) gave an update on the Moorfields Strategy where the motivation is 'People's Sight Matters' and the purpose is 'Working together to discover, develop and deliver excellent eye care sustainably and at scale.' MK said that FOM really helps the trust with its core values of excellence, equity and kindness. MH said the FOM Volunteer to Career scheme was a fantastic initiative and is now rolling out globally.

He talked about the role of AI, and how the Octane algorithm can help opticians to read OCT scan results more effectively leading to correct referrals. AI research is getting closer to being able to detect a person's risk of Parkinsons, Alzheimers, diabetes, etc. by looking at the back of their eye.

He also discussed trying to deliver a Scalable Digital Network by working in partnership with the local hospitals to organise referrals and use capacity most effectively to reduce waiting times. In addition, the use of diagnostic monitoring hubs when patients are stable and don't need to see a doctor in person, frees up space for those who do need a face-to-face appointment.

MH concluded by saying that FOM has a massive role in trying to make the transition from City Road to the new Oriel site as painless as possible for the patients, many of whom will find it difficult. Also as we move towards a digital network FOM will be able to help patients with computers and technology.

Laura Wade-Gery (LW-G) started by talking about her background and her personal draw in getting involved with Moorfields. She said as a patient of eye care services she knows how frightening it can be, how you need confidence in the care being given, and the importance of being treated with kindness and empathy. With a previous career in online retail, she said she is really interested in how we can use technology to make things easier and more accessible for people.

LW-G then talked about the work of the board, and its 3 key roles, to help formulate strategy, to ensure accountability, and to shape the culture. She said the board members are drawn to the fascinating mix of values of combing excellence, equity and kindness. She said that over the life of the NHS life-expectancy has risen by approx. 15 years however the quality of life shows that we are not an equal society. She said we need to think about how we reach out to communities where the access is not as good as in other areas. LW-G said that FOM plays an amazing role in making the patient experience as good as it is but the trust can definitely improve on this part of the service further.

MK invited questions from the audience:

Question 1: Why were patients sent to the Hoxton Hub after years of being at City Road without an explanation or warning?

Answer: MK said that this issue had been a struggle. Jon Spencer explained that clinical care moved quicker than admin care and therefore the communication had been lacking. This year there will be a lot of work on patient communication and how we can improve this.

Question 2: Why don't GPs get enough training about the eye and therefore react quicker when there is a problem?

Answer: MK explained that now opticians can refer directly to the hospital rather than having to go via the GPs which makes the system quicker and more effective. They are currently looking at how best to work with opticians and optometrists as they are best placed to make referrals. The GPs are busy with coordinating care and not necessarily needed to offer specific eye care advice.

Question 3: Is the use of OCT scans by high street opticians helpful?
Answer: LW-G explained that the increase in availability of OCT scans has caused an increase in referrals, opticians are often over referring as they don't fully understand how to interpret the results from the scan. Part of the role of AI will be to act as a gatekeeper for NHS resources to prevent over referrals.

7. **Project Oriel: Jon Spencer (Chief Operating Officer)**

Jon Spencer (JP) gave a detailed update on the progress of Oriel. He talked about being part of an integrated site in the Knowledge Quarter of London and how they are hoping for some retail space to be included which will be beneficial to our patients.

JS told members that in July 2023 they broke ground and there is a link on the Oriel website to a video of the latest status of works. He explained that following the discovery of a 19th century workhouse on the site, the team have been working with the Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA). MOLA have been turning the discovery into learning and are holding a public talk on Tuesday 30th January online 1-2pm about what was found.

JS said that having a stand at the FOM 60th Anniversary Conference was helpful as it provided an opportunity to get feedback and questions from existing patients. There have been a number of events with the Oriel advisory groups to help with the look and feel of the building, and find out what matters to patients as they navigate the hospital. Feedback relating to lighting, toilets, use of braille, etc have been vital to the planning of the project.

JS invited everyone to attend the Oriel showcase being held 5-7 March 2024 at the Moorfields Education Hub, 1st Floor, 15 Ebeneezer Street N1 7HP.

JS invited questions from the audience:
Question 1:Which elements of the project worry you?
Answer: We just want it to be right for this patient group so this final stage of planning to ensure that all the patient requirements are met is crucial.
Question 2: What is happening to the City Road site?
Answer: The site was bought by a developer ahead of Moorfields being able to buy the Oriel site. The current plans are for a mix of residential and commercial use; however these are not finalised and are currently out for consultation. Although the council are sad to see us go, they are also excited to have a multifunctional space to develop.
Question 3: City Road feels like home for many of us, will the hospital lose its individuality when it moves?
Answer: Oriel has been built and developed alongside clinicians and patients with the idea of improving on what we already have so hopefully it will retain that positive feeling. Also, FOM will have its space at the very front for a friendly welcome!

JS directed everyone to the Oriel stand at the back of the room if they would like any further information on the project.

8. **The Chairman's Report: Tim Hutchings**

TH started his report by saying that 2023 was a very special year for The Friends with the 60th Anniversary celebrations. At these events he spoke with volunteers both past and present who showed not only their dedication for doing so much for other people but also how much they got back themselves. TH said a big thank you to a wonderful group of people providing a special service. He said that the handholding service is remarkable and it's the trust built up between the hospital and FOM over the past 60 years that has enabled this to happen. TH told the members how fantastic the Volunteer to Career scheme has been, benefitting the volunteers, FOM, the trust and the NHS.

TH talked about the challenges of the transition to Oriel and how the volunteers will be helping with this. The travel between the stations and the Oriel site will be harder than between Old Street station and City Road therefore the FOM support will be vital. TH said that the level of detail looked at during the design process of Oriel has been amazing.

TH finished by saying thank you to the volunteers, FOM members and the staff for all their support and work.

9. **The Trustees Report and Annual Accounts: Richard Walker (online)**
Richard Walker (RW) summarised the accounts saying it was a satisfactory year where the income held up well, and the Friends of Moorfields Eye Hospital finished in a healthy financial position with plenty of cash in the bank.

TH proposed these accounts, this was seconded by Derek Jenkinson and approved by the members.

10. **Friends' Strategy Update: Angela Smith**
AS began her update by sharing a photograph of the volunteers showing what a diverse group of people they are and saying how proud she is of this thriving team. She reminded the members of our mission that FOM supports Moorfields' values and motivation, and we want to help the trust to deliver excellence, equity and kindness at the heart of eyecare to ensure patients have the best experience possible.

AS reminded everyone of the 4 strategic objectives of FOM for 2022-2027:
1. To provide an effective, efficient and diverse volunteer service
2. To support MEH in the delivery of patient information, engagement and education
3. To support staff and volunteer wellbeing (MEH and Friends)
4. To remain a sustainable and respected organisation

AS then described how we are delivering on each of these objectives.

To provide an effective, efficient and diverse volunteer service
AS explained that the majority of our resources go into the volunteer service and that seeing the change in young people as a result of volunteering is very rewarding. Currently our team of volunteers provide the equivalent of 20 full-time staff posts and if paid the minimum salary, would cost the trust £879,640 per annum. She outlined the different roles that volunteers undertake and said that the trolley is service is finally back in action following Covid. AS displayed charts showing the difference that handholding has had on the patients' experience, and said that the feedback from Moorfields doctors and consultants has been very positive.

With regards to the Volunteer to Career scheme, AS stated how successful it has been in upskilling volunteers, allowing them to gain experience and has provided a real stepping stone to their future careers. She said that the hospital staff have been very supportive of the individuals. Whilst the scheme itself has ended, FOM will continue to offer this to every volunteer if they would like to pursue it.

To support MEH in the delivery of patient information, engagement and education
In 2023 FOM have continued to deliver on this strategy, in agreement with the Trustees, The Future of Eyecare Conference was held in November at the Kings Fund with excellent speakers covering a range of eye care topics. In addition, the Health Hub run by Sabina Uddin who is a registered nurse as well an eye clinic liaison officer (ECLO) and Julia Muraszczuk who is an optometrist and also an ECLO, supported by a team of volunteers deals with over 4,000 enquiries every year. .

To support staff and volunteer wellbeing (MEH and Friends)
FOM want to make it a nice environment for staff and volunteers to be in so we continue to pay for the fish tank and for the flower beds to be improved, and The Friends shop provides a space away from the clinical environment. Our 60th anniversary party included nearly as many hospital staff as volunteers.

We are funding a staff training project using virtual reality to allow hospital staff to be in the shoes of patients, this empowers staff to better support patients.

To remain a sustainable and respected organisation
We ran a campaign, £60 for 60 years and people did various things to raise funds for us or gave a direct donation. Michael Parker did a 60-mile cycling challenge raising over £3,000. We restarted our station collections which have raised over £5,000. Mr Banerjee who was the Moorfields principal pharmacist donated £60,000 and Ting Kit Leung who was a patient donated £100,000 to be used for equipment within the Medical Retina department. AS extended thanks to Moorfields Eye Charity for supporting us financially with a grant and with their overall support of the Friends.

AS outlined what is next for the Friends which includes expanding what we already do even further, expanding the volunteer to career pathway, expanding volunteering in the network sites, improving the look of the Health Hub, and helping with digital inclusion. Our communications have improved hugely since Cathryn's arrival but we are still looking to develop our communication strategy further. AS will be exploring funding opportunities and possible partnerships to ensure we can continue to deliver the work we do. We will also be behind the Trust and the Oriel team to help and support with the transition.

AS concluded by thanking the staff, Tim, and the board of trustees.

11. Any Other Business
Basil Bramble said how much he has enjoyed being a volunteer and hopes to do another 25 years! Ann Tourle said it has been a privilege to volunteer for FOM and extended a special thanks to Angela and Natalia for their support.

12. Meeting Closes
TH thanked all present and closed the 2024 AGM.

PRESENT

Alex Rebou
Andrew Milliken
Andrew Whittington
Ann Tourle
Ashwin Chandrani
Barbara Harrison
Basil Bramble
Brenda Faulkner
Caterina Carrozza
David Bright
Eve McClean
Ian Wainer
Jim McClean
Joan Feakes
Judith Cockman
Laura Wade-Gery
Marjan Ahmadi
Martin Kuper
Neil Ashcroft
Paul Chennell
Pauline Clark
Suresh Dave
Tanya Spensley
Venice Shallow
Vivian Gaimster
Waseem Kazmi
William Davis