



Minutes of The Humanitarian Centre Annual General Meeting, 2015

**March 30th, 2015
5:30pm; Hughes Hall, Cambridge**

Attendees

Humanitarian Centre Trustees

- Dominic Vergine (Chair of the Board of Trustees, The Humanitarian Centre);
- Shelley Gregory-Jones (Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees, The Humanitarian Centre);
- Steve Jones (Trustee, The Humanitarian Centre Partner, Meta-Development LLP);
- Ben Britton (Member Representative Trustee, The Humanitarian Centre Office Coordinator, Concordis International);
- Theodore Menelik-Nfuni (Member Representative Trustee, The Humanitarian Centre; CEO, Menelik Education);
- Charlotte Sankey (Trustee, The Humanitarian Centre; Director, Creative Warehouse);
- Bhaskar Vira (Trustee, The Humanitarian Centre; Director, University of Cambridge Conservation Research Institute & Reader in Political Economy of Environment and Development, Department of Geography);
- Alison Walsham (Trustee, The Humanitarian Centre).

Humanitarian Centre Staff and Volunteers

- Lara Allen (Director, The Humanitarian Centre);
- Emily Brocklebank (Events and Projects Coordinator, The Humanitarian Centre);
- Janice Pedersen (Resource Manager, The Humanitarian Centre);
- Nancy Gerein (Volunteer, The Humanitarian Centre);
- Thomas Hughes (Volunteer, The Humanitarian Centre);
- Ylenia Impala (Volunteer, The Humanitarian Centre);
- Joanna Jasiewicz (Volunteer, The Humanitarian Centre);
- Axel Minet (Volunteer and IT Support Officer, The Humanitarian Centre).

Humanitarian Centre Members and General Attendees

- Charity Payton (Administrative Officer, TRAFFIC International);
- Andrew Payton (Finance Manager, GWebb Haulage);
- Keith Ricketts (Independent training & media consultant, Keith Ricketts Education Media Training);
- Ian Sanderson (CEO and Consultant, AFRINSPIRE);
- Catherine Squire (Consultant, Framework);
- Dan Storisteanu (Research Director and Co-founder, Simprints Technology Limited);
- Julia Kraus (Chief Communications Officer, SimPrints Technology Ltd.);
- William Thorpe (Consultant, Independent);
- Ian Tod (Manager, Ian Tod Associates);
- Charlotte Tulinius (Associate Professor of Postgraduate Education, Namuncha Community Schools Project);
- Geoff Walsham (Emeritus Professor, Judge Business School, University of Cambridge);
- Rainbow Wilcox (Programme Officer, Africa's Voices);
- Lynn McGoff (Director, SOWTech CIC);
- John Mullett (Director (SOWTech);
- Kendi M'Marete (Project Lead/Deputy Manager, Papworth Trust);
- Hugh Brammer (Retired);
- Jerry Carr-Brion (Coordinator, Cambridge Oxfam Group);
- Clare Hanbury (Director, Children for Health);
- Arthur Hibble (Professor, Hughes Hall Cambridge);
- Pete Jones (Director, Partners for Change Ethiopia).

Apologies

- Nim Njuguna (Chair, NECT);
- Andrew Lamb (Trustee, The Humanitarian Centre);
- Claudia Lopes (Head of Research and Product, Africa's Voices);
- Neil McCartney (Chairman, Independent Film Trust);
- Amy Weatherup (Treasurer of the Board of Trustees, The Humanitarian Centre);
- Andrea Winkelmann-Gleed (Senior Researcher & Consultant, Saling2012 Ltd.).

1. Welcome and introduction to the meeting

Dominic Vergine, Chair of the Board of Trustees, welcomed the attendees and outlined the agenda.

2. Minutes of the Humanitarian Centre AGM held on 6 March 2014

Dominic Vergine asked if there were any comments on the minutes from 2014. There were none.

The minutes of the meeting were agreed as correct and signed. There were no matters arising.

(See Accompanying Document 1 attached.)

3. Reports and Accounts

3.1 Report on the accounts for the period August 2013 to July 2014, and the report of the independent examiners, including independent examiners' appointment for 2015 *(Presented by Alison Walsham, Trustee)*

The following overview of the year was presented:

- The 2013 – 2014 financial year was characterised by a significant amount of upheaval.
- During much of 2013 the Humanitarian Centre did not have a Director: Sonia Roschnik was appointed Director from February 2014. The Humanitarian Centre also moved office twice in this period. The Trustees thank staff members Anne Radl and Janice Pedersen for managing the Humanitarian Centre through this challenging period. As a result of their hard work, the Centre's programmes went ahead as planned.
- The Humanitarian Centre thanks its donors and supporters, particularly our major donor who has now supported the Centre for seven years through the National Philanthropic Trust.
- The largest budget items are staff and office costs. For most of the year there were two full time staff and a number of part time staff. A person was appointed part-time to update the financial management systems and enhance their effectiveness, clarity and transparency. The Humanitarian Centre is now paying full commercial rates for office rental.
- During the year the organisation changed banks, from the Co-operative Bank to CAF Bank.
- There were some changes made to spending between budget lines, but overall the organisation stayed within the projected budget for the year.

Questions were invited from the floor about the organisation's finances. There were no questions.

(See Accompanying Document 2 attached.)

3.2 Report on highlights of the past year

(Presented by Janice S. Pedersen, Resource Centre Manager and Lara Allen, Director)

Janice Pedersen provided an overview of programme highlights including the main events of the Global Food Futures themed year (August 2013-July 2014). The main points drawn attention to were as follows:

- During the year, existing partnerships and networks were strengthened, including the establishment of a reciprocal membership agreement with the Tropical Agriculture Association, and new partnerships were formed, particularly with organisations and initiatives that focus on food security. The year culminated in the publication of the 2014 Cambridge International Development Report titled, "Our common dream: a secure food future for all".
- Planning for the "Empowered Voices" 2014-2015 themed year, which focuses on human rights and poverty, took place between June and September 2014. The planning process entailed two well attended participatory workshops with members of the Humanitarian Centre's network, alongside individual consultations with experts in the field of human rights and poverty. The year was launched with an event in November 2014, and engagements around the theme are ongoing.
- A number of networking events were organised for members during the year and the first Humanitarian Centre Blue Dot Pub Quiz was held on the 31st of July.
- The Humanitarian Centre network grew during the year to 39 organisations and 46 individual members as of the end of July 2014.
- The Centre is extremely grateful to the many volunteers who have worked with us during the year, supporting membership, book-keeping, administration, communications and events. Without the support of such volunteers we would not be able to do the work we do.
- A short overview was presented of progress made towards the two key challenges for the Humanitarian Centre going forward, as identified by members during the consultation workshop after the 2014 AGM: to represent global voices in every part of our organisation and activities; to make significant inroads into measuring the impact of our work together.

Lara Allen provided an overview of the current year (August 2014 to the present). The main points highlighted were as follows:

- A new executive team took over the Humanitarian Centre from October 2014. Dominic Vergine replaced Steve Jones as Chair of the Board of Trustees, and Lara Allen replaced Sonia Roschnik as Director. Both Steve Jones and Sonia Roschnik were thanked for the significant contributions they have made to the organisation. Shelley Gregory-Jones continues as Vice-Chair and Amy Weatherup as Treasurer of the Board of Trustees.
- A group of knowledgeable and influential people have agreed to act as Ambassadors for the Humanitarian Centre.
- Research was conducted to understand the present Humanitarian Centre Network and how to enhance the network. This research primarily consisted of two surveys, one on research related to international development being undertaken at the University of Cambridge, and one on the interests and priorities of Humanitarian Centre members.

- Significant progress has been made over the past few months in enhancing Humanitarian Centre communications. The organisation now has a much more active social media profile and a regularly updated website. There has been positive feedback on the new monthly Humanitarian Centre Bulletin and weekly Events Update, which have been going out since October 2014.
- Major events of the 2014-2015 Empowered Voices themed year have included a film screening and panel discussion on how film can empower young Africans and enhance their voice, a webinar on the right to justice – how the law can empower, and a panel discussion during Science Week on Environmental Rights and Justice. In April there will be an exhibition of photographs featuring member's work in Human Rights.
- Other significant events this year have included an installation and allied campaign about light in development during Cambridge's E-Luminate Festival, and a day long workshop on affordable health technology.
- Plans for our Annual Lecture include using this occasion to launch an exciting new initiative: Humanitarian Centre Awards for International Development. We have two awards confirmed: one will be restricted to members (organisations and individuals) for positive impact on the lives of people living in poverty in the developing world; the second will probably be in the field of health.

3.3 Reflections and Projections: Where we are and where we'd like to be

(Presented by Lara Allen, Director)

The Director presented her understanding of the Humanitarian Centre at present, and outlined her vision for the future.

(See Accompanying Document 3 attached.)

4. Appointment of Trustees

4.1 Motion to modify the Humanitarian Centre Articles of Association

The Chair, Dominic Vergine, called for a vote on the proposal made during the 2014 AGM that the Humanitarian Centre Articles of Association be modified as follows:

- "Trustees may serve for up to two terms of 3 years, to a maximum of 6 years."
- "A Trustee who is serving, or has served, as Chair, Vice-Chair or Treasurer for three years may serve an extra 3 year term, to a maximum of 9 years."

The motion was passed unanimously.

4.2 Changes to the Board of Trustees

The Chair provided an overview of the current Board of Trustees and the proposed changes to the board for the 2015-16 year.

It was proposed that Amy Weatherup, who is retiring by rotation, be reappointed as she is the Treasurer. All voted in favour.

Steve Jones is retiring after many years of dedication to the Humanitarian Centre. Dominic Vergine thanked him for his exceptional contribution to the organisation, particularly as Chair of the Board of Trustees and offered a token of appreciation. Steve Jones will now take on the role of Emeritus Chair of the Humanitarian Centre.

Elsbeth Bannister was proposed as a new Trustee. All voted in favour.

(See Accompanying Document 4 attached.)

5. Proposed Resolutions

5.1 Appointment and remuneration of independent examiners

On behalf of the Board of trustees, Dominic Vergine proposed the appointment of Chater Allan as independent examiners for the 2014-15 financial year. The motion was passed.

On behalf of the Board of trustees, Dominic Vergine proposed that the board of Trustees be authorised to set the remuneration of the independent examiners. The motion was passed.

5.1 Proposal of a motion to change the name of the Humanitarian Centre

The following motion was proposed by Dominic Vergine on behalf of the Board of trustees:

“The Board of Trustees is mandated to identify a name that more exactly describes the main activities undertaken by this organisation than does the present name ‘The Humanitarian Centre’, and to amend the Memorandum and Articles of Association accordingly.”

The following questions were asked from the floor:

- Question: “Will the organisation’s aims and objectives as stated the Memorandum and Articles of Association be changed?”
- Answer from the Board: “We proposed to amend the name only. The aims and objectives will remain the same.”
- Question: “What is the focus of the Humanitarian Centre going forward - network first, innovation second, or network versus innovation?”
- Answer from the Board: “There is an argument for a focus on both the network and on innovation. To attain funding in the future we need to clarify and focus on things the Humanitarian Centre does well, such as fostering innovation, but the network is also a core strength.”

The following amended motion was proposed from the floor regarding the process of selecting a new name for the organisation:

“The Board of Trustees is mandated to identify a name that more exactly describes the main activities undertaken by this organisation than does the present name ‘The Humanitarian Centre’. The proposed new name will be circulated to members by email. If 20% or more of the members who respond within two weeks disagree with the proposed name a further meeting of the membership will be called to discuss the matter. If 80% or more of the members who respond within two weeks accept the name then the board is mandated to change the name and amend the Memorandum and Articles of Association accordingly.”

A vote was taken on this motion and it was passed unanimously.

6. Any other business.

There was no other business.

Accompanying Documents:

1. Minutes of the Humanitarian Centre Annual General Meeting of 6 March 2014.
2. The Humanitarian Centre Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 July 2014.
3. Reflections and Projections: where we are and where we'd like to be.
4. Notification of Proposals for Trustee Rotation: Appointments and Reappointments; Proposed Trustee – Elspeth (Elpie) Bannister.