NORTH EDINBURGH NEWS Ltd

Annual General Meeting

18th November 2014 in Drylaw Neighbourhood Centre.

MINUTES

**Present:**

As per Attendance Sheet.

**In Attendance:**

Dave Pickering (Editor), Peter Strong (North Manager CEC).

The meeting was chaired by Martin Hinds who opened the meeting and welcomed everyone here tonight.

**Apologies:**

Councillors, Iain Whyte, Allan Jackson, Lesley Hinds, Cammy Day, Vicky Redpath, Maureen Child & Gavin Barrie.

No Response received from Councillors, Steve Cardownie & Alex Lunn

**Previous Minutes:**

Approved by Eddie Thorn & seconded by Willie Black.

**Chairperson’s Report:**

Martin explained that over the past year due to a funding shortage we had been unable to produce a printed copy of the NEN despite the hard efforts from the Board. As reported in at last year’s AGM the NEN had been selected by the CEC to be a partner in the pilot called CEC Community Engagement. We were invited to participate because of our long standing reputation and credibility of over 30 years as a local community newspaper. There are two participants within the pilot ourselves and one in Craigmillar, our role is in producing a paper, electronic media and youth engagement, Craigmillar is primarily electronic media but through no fault of the NEN but by the CEC and a rebranding to CEC Contact in the Capital we have lost about 5 month’s work.

For our part we respond back to CEC North Manager & the CITC(N) Project Group made up of local community reps, north office reps and elected Councillors from both Forth & Inverleith. £25,000 pounds was delegated to the North Office Manager who will authorise payment as and when made for services to the pilot by the NEN.

Martin went on to thank the hard work of his fellow colleagues on the NEN board.

There were some questions raised and Martin answered them satisfaction of those concerned.

**Editor’s Report:**

See Appendix 1

**Finance Report:**

Eddie Thorn Company Secretary/Treasurer produced and fully explained the Accounts for Year ending 31st March 2014 for the NEN Ltd. Report and Accounts were agreed by the Board and signed off by the Chair and Company Secretary at our last board meeting.

He explained that as previously agreed the NEN Media & Communication Trust was wound up and a closing balance of £13 was transferred in the NEN Ltd Account. He explained that the decision agreed at last year’s AGM to dissolve the NEN Ltd and reform as a Social Enterprise was deferred on his advice to the board giving the uncertain future of the paper. It is our intention that given the right circumstances in the future to still go down that road because of the benefits it will attract. All other questions on Finance, Eddie gave a full response to these questions.

**Appointment of Auditor:**

The meeting agreed to the re-appointment of Alison Glass as Auditor.

**CEC, Contact in the Capital Pilot:**

Martin as explained in his report plus in the Editor’s report this pilot was up and running and he invited any question on the pilot.

Councillor Nigel Bagshaw felt that because of certain political issues with regard to the NEN and its perceived political view he was disappointed that the NEN seemed to thank Labour Councillors for their adverts and also he would like to believe that all Editorial control was with the NEN editorial board and not become a mouthpiece for the Council. Dave explained that the thank you was for all advertisers who advertised in our autumn edition and not to Labour Councillors only, he went on to say because of tight schedules for that edition he did not personally seek out advertisers but placed an open invitation to all via the blog- it was only Labour Councillors who picked up the invitation on which they will charged the appropriate rate. Dave confirmed for the next two editions all Forth & Inverleith CEC Councillors will be afforded free advertising for the surgeries etc., he also confirmed that all editorial control remains with the NEN and this is also agreed by the project group. We will continue to run local stories as before but will allow space for both Forth & Inverleith partnership to advertise events. It should be noted that this pilot ends in March as does the NEN participation. It will then be up to the CEC Communication to decide on how the CEC council communicates in the future.

Other question’s with regard to the new web site, Facebook, twitter, training and youth engagement where answered in full by Dave.

**Nominations/Election of the Board:**

Martin Hinds proposed that because of our participation in the Contact in the Capital pilot it was in the best interest for this current board to remain in place and we would review the position in March 2015.

This was agreed by the meeting.

He added that if anyone present who felt they could add value to the Board please contact the Minute Secretary.

**AOCB:**

There was no other Business.

**Date of Next Meeting:**

In 12 months’ time in a place and time to be confirmed.

*Alex Dale, 20th November 2014.*

**Appendix 1**

**Editors Report for NEN AGM – 18 November 2014**

NEN was commissioned to deliver the Contact in the Capital (North) pilot project for the city council. The project was due to run over twelve months, but through no fault of NEN’s the project was not initiated until 1 August this year - this delay has shortened the project by one third (i.e. four months has been lost ).

The CITC (N) targets for the 12 month pilot are as follows:

Targets (to be achieved by March 2015)

1. Enhanced skills for young people and community representatives (16)
2. Community Capacity building – number of people capable of digital recording (37)
3. Increased access to information – range of channels available/satisfaction with improvement (20% increase on baseline)
4. Increased feedback opportunities – number/type of feedback available/satisfaction with feedback opportunities (20%)
5. Enhanced consultation opportunities – client/customer satisfacation (20%)
6. Number of local people/young people signed up for training as citizen journalists (12 – 14)
7. Number of local people/young people completing training (9 – 10)
8. New recruits/trainees for project governance (5)
9. Open Doors events (2)
10. Number of stories identified (3 per week)
11. Frequency of text published (1 per week)
12. Number of pictures taken & published (2 per week)
13. Number of social media transactions (tweets, followers, likes, etc) (8-9 per month)
14. Produce three newspapers (as agreed by/with CITC (N) steering group).

Examples of what has been achieved so far (i.e first three months):

**Enhanced Skills for Young People & Community Representatives**

Focus so far has been on working with young people – special thanks to Callum McLeod (CLD Broughton) and Danielle ward (North Edinburgh Young People’s Forum).

Training day held with members of North Edinburgh Young People’s Forum took place last month. Articles and short video produced.

Ongoing work with Broughton High School students.

Broughton High School students contributed a full page article in October NEN (about Septemberfest) and have made a number of posts to NEN blog.

North Edinburgh Young Peoples Forum and Broughton High School students will provide a Youth NEN section in the forthcoming NEN.

In the New Year NEN will be working on two partnership projects involving young people: Teen Scream (with North Edinburgh Arts and Muirhouse Library) and an as yet unnamed young adult literacy project with Royston Wardieburn Community Centre and Tomorrow’s People).

Another training day will be organised in the New Year and individual and small group sessions will take place with young ‘roving reporters’. (Points 1, 2, 6, 7)

**Website and Online Presence**

Work is ongoing on the NEN’s digital presence. There will be a new interactive website, the NEN blog is currently undergoing an upgrade and Facebook will also be revamped. The work is being carried out by Lennon Design, a respected organisation which has have just completed an eye-catching upgrade to Pilton Community Health Project’s website. (Points 3,4,5)

**Open Door Events**

We have not held any Open Door events as yet as we didn’t have a door to open! However last month Pilton Central Association agreed to accommodate NEN at the Ferry Road Drive community shop so events will be organised in the New Year.

*(Point 9)*

**Stories, Pictures and social media**

In terms of the targets of numbers of stories identified (three per week), frequency of text published (one per week), number of pictures taken and published (two per week) and number of social media transactions (8-9 per month) we have already exceeded all targets by some margin.

Current stats: average visits per day on the blog now tops 400 (our highest ever average) and we currently have 940 Twitter followers.

Busiest day for traffic this year was Sunday 31 August (2790 visitors) – when a ‘Neigh need for police cars’ story caught the imagination!

*(Points 10, 11, 12, 13)*

**NEN Newspaper**

As agreed with the CITC (N) steering group we produced a 16 page paper in October. We are currently working on a December edition and plan to produce another in February. (*Point 14)*

*Dave Pickering*

*18/11/2014*