

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER 07185372

**VISIONARY - LINKING LOCAL SIGHT LOSS
CHARITIES
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31 MARCH 2017**

Charity Number 1135360

[include SCO number]

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISORS

President: The Lord Low of Dalston, CBE

Visionary Trustee Board

Philip Longworth (Chair to x December 2016)
Francesca Hibbert (Resigned x October 2016)
James Moran
Miriam Wright
Martin Sandeman
Keith Mastin
Graham Findlay (Chair from x December 2016, Vice-Chair to x
December 2016)
Michael Conroy
Neville Broadbent
Stuart Clayton (Appointed x October 2016)
Madeleine (Appointed x October 2016)
Arwyn Jones (Appointed x October 2016)
Owen Williams (Appointed x October 2016)

Development and Innovation Committee

Keith Mastin
Michael Conroy
Neville Broadbent
Senior Management Team

Finance Committee

Graham Findlay
Philip Longworth
Alison Oliver

Company Secretary

Martin Sandeman

Senior Management Team

Chief executive (CEO)	Alison Oliver
Head of Member Services	Matthew Carr
Head of Income Development	Andrew Haynes

Bankers

National Westminster
Cathedral Square
Peterborough
PE1 1XH

Accountants

Carston
Tudor House
16 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9LJ

Registered office

[Yew Tree Lane]

Registered charity no.

1135360

SCO

Company registration no.

07185372

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The trustee board presents its annual report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2017.

The legal and administrative information set out on pages [2 and 3] forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

Visionary - linking local sight loss charities (Visionary) is a charitable company limited by guarantee. It was formed from the National Association of Local Societies for Visually Impaired people (NALSVI) when the membership voted, in December 2009, to change the name to Visionary and for this new entity to become incorporated. Visionary was formally registered as a charity on 10 March 2010.

Full membership of Visionary is open to voluntary organisations that operate at a local level and comply with the criteria of membership. In addition there are associate and national categories of membership for other related organisations that form part of the network. Visionary's trustee board (the board) is responsible for managing the business of Visionary as outlined in the articles of association.

Visionary trustees are recruited from Visionary members and external sources where a distinct skill benefit will be gained by directorship. Elections are held annually with full members voting in person at the AGM or by proxy. The board deals with trustee recruitment and interviews for new board members in between AGMs. In this case, trustees must stand down at the next AGM and submit themselves for election by members. Trustees are appointed for periods of three years

Report of the trustee board For the year ended 31 March 2017

and rotated in accordance with the terms of the memorandum and articles of association. After a three-year period trustees may stand for a further term. The Chair and Vice-Chair are elected each year by the board.

Visionary is managed by not less than three trustees who form the board and who are directors of the company; they meet no less than quarterly. As at 31 March 2017, there were 12 trustees, four of whom bring their personal experience of sight loss to the board, in addition to their other skills. Business planning and risk management processes are undertaken at board level.

The following committees report to the board:

- Development and Innovation Committee – to review and recommend allocation of resources in response to application to the Development and Innovation Fund. The Development and Innovation Committee is made up of no less than three trustees plus the members of the Senior Management Team.
- Finance Committee – to provide independent advice and assurance on risk, control and finance matters. The Finance Committee is made up of no less than two trustees (including the Chair) and the CEO.

Trustees undergo full induction regarding the Visionary objectives and local charity environment. They are encouraged to take an interest in a particular aspect of the work of the charity. Trustees give of their time freely and do not receive any remuneration in relation to their roles (other than reimbursement of their expenses).

The strategic alliance with Thomas Pocklington Trust (Pocklington) has continued to operate effectively through the year with a commitment from Pocklington to fund the expanded Visionary team through the

Report of the trustee board For the year ended 31 March 2017

secondment of 10 staff members, including the CEO, to Visionary to lead on and deliver its activities. The CEO is responsible for Visionary's day to day operations and the leadership of the organisation and is supported by the other members of the Senior Management Team: the Head of Income Development and the Head of Member Services. The rest of the team is organised across three departments: Income Development; Development and Innovation; and Member Engagement. The CEO is further supported by a team of volunteers, themselves Chief Officers of local sight loss charities, known as the 'Member Advisory Group' (MAG). Regional Representatives from local sight loss charities also report back to the CEO and management team, informing them of the needs, aspirations and views of members in their regions.

The trustees have established systems of internal controls with the CEO which are designed to provide reasonable, but not absolute, assurance against material misstatement or loss. They include:

- A strategic plan and an annual budget set by the Trustees;
- Regular consideration by the Finance Committee and Trustees of financial results, variances from budgets, cashflow forecasts and non-financial performance indicators;
- Delegation of authority and segregation of duties; and
- Identification and management of risks.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The charity's objects are “to promote the relief of persons who are blind or partially sighted”. The trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit. The trustees are confident that Visionary’s aims and activities are in accordance with the regulations on public benefit.

Our Vision is for a world in which people living with sight loss can access the services they need at a local level where and when they need them.

Our Mission is to develop a strong national network of good quality local sight loss charities covering all parts of the UK to achieve this.

Our business plan is based on our three strategic priorities:

- to identify the unmet needs of blind and partially sighted people;
- to support the development of the roles of local sight loss charities in meeting this needs; and
- to develop a strong national network, working with partners to support the effective delivery of consistently high quality services for and with blind and partially sighted people.

It describes the values that govern our work together: **quality; collaboration; inclusivity; and trust.**

The plan includes the need to respond to the changes in our society, the current and future backdrop of the requirement for more integrated health and social care delivery, and the greater financial pressures we all face. It also reflects the need for Visionary to provide flexible support to a range of organisations with different delivery models and, in

Report of the trustee board For the year ended 31 March 2017

particular, to represent the voice of our smaller organisations alongside that of our other members.

Visionary achieves its objectives by supporting its members, local sight loss charities that deliver direct support to people with sight loss, enabling those charities to deliver their services more effectively. This support is primarily provided through providing information, training and networking opportunities for the members as well as liaising with other relevant charities and bodies at a national level. It is the local sight loss charities who are the full members of Visionary and whose nominated representatives attend Annual General Meetings. Visionary also works closely with its associate members and national members as part of its role in the wider sight loss sector.

Part of the commitment to being the voice of a national movement of local charities is to play a lead role in national networks such as VISION 2020 UK (including the UK Charities Forum Steering Group), the UK Vision Strategy Leadership Group and the England Vision Strategy Executive Group. Visionary's prominence in these forums, representing local organisations, has increased significantly over the last year and the charity is now seen as a key influencer in achieving the shared sector objectives of raising awareness, improving performance through the development and promotion of consistent sector quality guidelines, and working with partners to deliver more cohesive services for and with blind and partially sighted people across the country.

We believe that “together we are stronger”.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The financial year to 31 March 2017 continued to focus on creating a sustainable platform in the membership, developing the larger staff team and enhancing relationships with partners to extend the reach and impact of the charity's work. The Visionary network is unique in connecting local sight loss charities and is built on our values of quality, collaboration, inclusivity and trust. The effects of the loss of significant statutory funding mean our mission has never been more critical and the need for Visionary is stronger than ever before. This is the second year of our new business plan. The following sections summarise some of our key achievements during 2016/17 against each of Visionary's three strategic priorities within the plan.

1. To identify the unmet needs of blind and partially sighted people

An initial view of local charity coverage across the UK was completed at the end of August 2016. Further work has been ongoing since then, utilising our new CRM system, to develop this into a more detailed picture of provision by service type. This will be informed by further data collection about specific service provision through the membership renewal process. Broader sector information is also being included through a joint project with national service providers. This will result in a heat map showing overall provision by local authority area and more detailed information regarding areas of service provision by local authority area. This work will continue in the 2017/18 financial year when it is envisaged further output will be ready for validation by regional groups.

2. To support the development of the roles of local sight loss charities in meeting these needs

We have been actively working with many of our members over the last year: supporting them directly with specific issues or queries in areas such as governance, finance, fundraising and service provision; providing financial and resource support through Development & Innovation Fund projects; and developing resources and quality guidelines for the wider network through the working groups that we have established. During the year we established working groups with members and relevant partners in the areas of: Rehabilitation; Technology; Volunteering; Eye Clinic Services; and Employment. All of this interaction has enabled us to keep developing our offering and revisit priorities to best meet the needs of members and the people they serve. A great example of this was when we received consistent feedback from members wanting more support on contracts and commissioning as well as broader income development. We were able to respond to this with creation of a new post for someone with commissioning experience to lead our Income Development team. This team has worked with members on opportunity identification, bid support and capacity reviews as well as developing the Outcome and Impact measurement workstream and providing direct support to trustees, especially at smaller member organisations. In doing this the team has also started working with commissioners and funders to promote the work of local sight loss charities and influence commissioners in the design and procurement of services.

In the latter part of the year we developed an early draft of a quality framework focusing on Organisational Infrastructure and Service Delivery guidelines. The team is working to populate this, with members, on a phased basis over the course of the next financial year. The established workstreams and related working groups with members continue to progress in supporting this.

10

Report of the trustee board For the year ended 31 March 2017

In response to requests for more engagement with the trustee boards of our members, we issued a trustee survey in January 2017. As a result of this, we started a number of initiatives to provide more direct support to trustees, including a regular trustee briefing which was launched in the new financial year.

During the year we secured £15,000 of funding, in the form of consultancy work over two years, from the Inspiring Impact programme. The project aims to use Seeing It My Way outcomes to develop a shared outcomes framework for the sight loss sector along with the necessary monitoring tools and will involve working with a number of members on a pilot basis to develop this.

The Development & Innovation Fund was re-launched over two rounds during the year. Ten applications were successful and the work relating to the 4 projects approved as part of round one was well progressed by year end with the further 6 projects approved as part of round two either under way at year end or scheduled to start early in the new financial year. **These project cover areas including: design and delivery of a new cookery course for young people; recruitment of a development officer to bring organisations closer together in their work in East Lancashire;**

3. To develop a strong national network, working with partners to support the effective delivery of consistently high quality services for blind and partially sighted people

Membership numbers continued to grow over the course of the year with over 135 full and associate members as at 31 March 2017 compared to just under 100 at the end of the last financial year vs the baseline of 48 before the new business plan was implemented. In addition to our full and associate members we continue to work closely with our 6 national members to maximise the reach and strength of our network.

Report of the trustee board For the year ended 31 March 2017

The year saw the Visionary team out and about around the country. The team visited 79 full members on site, attended 22 regional and country meetings and events, and represented members on various national committees and forums. This included attending and participating in the regional England Vision Strategy events that have been held across England. The team has also been working with SCOVl (Scottish Council on Visual Impairment) and WCB (Wales Council of the Blind) to determine how Visionary can further improve our engagement with members in Scotland and Wales. The CEO sat on both the UK Vision Strategy Leadership Group and the England Vision Strategy Executive Group where Visionary is now seen as an even stronger contributor than before. As part of this, we actively participated in the UK Vision Strategy Evaluation, sitting on the steering group and contributing to the assessment of the results.

We have worked on a number of other national initiatives on behalf of members: in particular, Visionary continued its key role in the work of the UK Charities Forum, leading on the Coverage and Quality work and contributing to the Employment work. We also worked as part of a cross-sector group with blind and partially sighted people to co-produce a new CVI booklet: Sight Loss – What We Needed to Know. The booklet aims to provide support and guidance to those who are newly diagnosed and was successfully piloted across a number of eye clinics across the country. The group has applied to the Department of Health for matched funding to roll this out more widely.

The Visionary Annual Conference was held in a new venue in Birmingham in October 2016 and was attended by over 170 delegates (110 prior year) from 50 different organisations. The feedback for the event was extremely positive with [insert rating and include one or two quotes re information sharing]. The Visionary one day Leadership Conferences (previously the CEO conferences) were extended from two locations to three and then four this year (as the events were held in

12

Visionary – Linking Local Sight Loss Charities



Report of the trustee board For the year ended 31 March 2017

April 2016 and March 2017 thus both falling in this financial year). The events were held in London, Newcastle and Bristol in April 2016 and in London, Manchester, Bristol and York in March 2017. [include average scores and a couple of quotes]

It is recognised by members that none of this could be achieved without an infrastructure organisation like Visionary. It is also recognised by the central Visionary team that none of this could be achieved without the involvement, knowledge and experience of its members who we thank for their time and contributions.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Overall the Charity generated a deficit of £xx in the financial year ended 31 March 2017 with income of £xx and expenditure of £xx. This included £xx of donated services funded by Thomas Pocklington Trust. Visionary's purpose, as agreed with its members, is to support them in their development and service delivery, connect them with each other and with national partners, and promote a strong collective influence on their behalf. Visionary has benefitted local organisations during the year by applying charitable funds to the following activities:

1. Provision of an information and support service for the membership. Sharing information, policy updates and good practice through regular bulletins and the regional forums;
2. Organising an annual conference and two rounds of leadership conferences;
3. Delivering training and establishing and facilitating working groups;
4. Making small grants and providing staff/project support to members to develop services for people with sight loss; and
5. Liaising with relevant charities and other bodies at a national level on behalf of the membership.

The charitable company's assets are held for the sole purpose of carrying out the objectives and policies of the charitable company.

Grant Making and Funding Policy

Funding or provision of support to our members is provided on a case by case basis based on an assessment of need, in line with the Development and Innovation Fund policy and the applying organisation's current position and strategy. During the period there were two application rounds which were overseen by the Development and Innovation Committee.

Reserves Policy

Our reserves are maintained to provide funds to offset any unexpected events which may arise and to provide for major planned events. The policy takes account of the support provided by Thomas Pocklington Trust under the Memorandum of Understanding which, through donated services, reduces the level of overheads required to run the organisation. The policy is to maintain a general reserve equivalent to six months of expenditure which is not covered by contractual income. The current level of unrestricted reserves is £xx, which is sufficient to meet this policy.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE AND ACHIEVING OUR PRIORITIES

The work to create and establish a single unified eye health and sight loss sector body, Vision UK, bringing together VISION 2020 UK and the UK Vision Strategy, continues at a national level. Visionary is represented on the steering group for this initiative and local delivery and support will be a key consideration in its future plans. This is particularly important at a time when we are seeing an increasing number of member organisations facing uncertain futures and when we need to work together with members and national partners to see if we can develop new models for ways of working. In particular, we are looking at how we can support members more on their business development plans and, now that RNIB have publically started to communicate their restructuring plans, we are reinvigorating the work we had started to develop with them and other stakeholders, including Vision UK, on national vs local support and delivery models, with a particular focus on regional support and plans.

The board has reviewed and approved an addendum to the business plan which revisits the three strategic priorities and highlights key focus areas for the next few years.

1. To identify the unmet needs of blind and partially sighted people

Focus on highest priority needs identification

- Continue the work to help identify service provision duplication and gaps geographically and determine to what extent Visionary can play a role in working with others to develop solutions to deliver services more efficiently and effectively based on what blind and partially sighted people want. This will be both in terms of where service coverage is duplicated or limited and also where it is most at risk and, if possible, identifying where people are not accessing services at all.

2. To support the development of the roles of local sight loss charities in meeting these needs

Service development and knowledge sharing

- Develop the operational plan for Visionary including clarity regarding what the role of local organisations is (or should be) and to what standard it should be performed. This will include further work on the quality framework and guidelines and contributing to the new work under the Vision UK initiative to develop future national/local delivery models.
- Further identify member support needs and provide clarity on how we support member organisations of differing sizes and types through our conferences, events, other communication forums and training programmes. This will include development of the Visionary Knowledge Hub as part of the new website launch.

Infrastructure support

- Support skills building and facilitate access to more professional support within the membership through training and identification of trusted suppliers.
- Investigate possibility of common CRM to improve consistent data collection and build strong evidence base for services/funding, leveraging the work we have already done on implementing our own CRM.

3. To develop a strong national network, working with partners to support the effective delivery of consistently high quality services for blind and partially sighted people

Local/regional collaboration, service coverage and restructuring

- Act as a broker to facilitate more collaboration and active partnerships, especially at a local and regional level, looking at new models of organisation and service delivery and developing a clear position for Visionary's role in supporting and leading this change with our partners. This will include identifying how members can/should work with other organisations e.g. hearing loss organisations and age related service providers and looking at ways or providing more regional support to members.

Sector change and national influencing

- Progress Visionary's role in re-positioning sight loss in the context of the broader health and social care agenda. Continue to develop our influence at national level and work with others to hold statutory service commissioners and providers to account, working with members to develop new models for commissioned services, developing frameworks for outcome and impact measurement and building shared evidence bases to support this.
- Review financial resilience of members and the sector and develop plans for sustainability in relation to creating alternative and/or joint income streams as a platform to meet future demand.

We will continue to develop the strategy in consultation with our members and other stakeholders and will continue to communicate the progress on this through our briefings to members.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees (who are also directors of Visionary - linking local sight loss charities for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

Report of the trustee board For the year ended 31 March 2017

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

**Report of the trustee board
For the year ended 31 March 2017**

SMALL COMPANY PROVISIONS

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

Registered office:
CBI House
St Vincent's School
Yew Tree Lane
Liverpool
L12 9HN

Signed by order of the trustees

Mr MJ Sandeman
Company Secretary

Date