

READING PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held as hybrid on Friday 1st March 2024 at 18:45.

Present: 39 RPCSG members in person including 8 partners and 1 new member.
7 RPCSG members by Zoom including 1 partner.
1 guest member of Norfolk PCSG by Zoom.

Alex Miles hosted the meeting and welcomed all members and guests to the meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence.

Two apologies for absence had been received.

2. Approval of the Minutes of AGM of 3rd March 2023

The minutes of the AGM on 3rd March 2023 had been unanimously approved on the 31st March 2023 by those RPCSG members who attended the AGM. No comments were raised on the 2023 minutes.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes / Action Points from previous AGM.

No actions had been placed at the AGM of 3rd March 2023. No 'Matters Arising' had occurred since then and no comments were raised by the audience.

4. Treasurer's Report.

Treasurer Richard Joyes had provided the 2023 financial accounts that had been professionally examined and had been sent by email to all members before the AGM along with some explanatory notes.

Richard said that our 2023 opening balance was quite healthy but at the end of 2023 was reduced by about £960, one significant factor being a lower amount of donations being received than in 2022. We intend to pursue fund raising in 2024 and Richard asked the audience to let the committee know of any ideas on how we might seek additional donations or income.

The donations for the refreshments at the 2023 group meetings averaged £45 at each event and this helped towards the cost of the hiring of the hall. We are considering the acquisition of a card reader, prompted by the fact that fewer people now carry cash.

No queries were raised on the accounts, then Richard asked for a show of hands from those in favour of the accounts at which the great majority (possibly all) of the members approved,

Richard was thanked for his management of the treasurer role.

5. Committee's Report.

A committee's report on 2023 had previously been delivered by email to all members and hence Alex said that he did not intend to read out the report but invited comments and questions from the audience, of which there were none.

For completeness the report is reproduced below.

COMMITTEE'S REPORT FOR 2023

Covering period January 2023 to December 2023

SUMMARY

At the AGM of 2023 our Chairman Chris Addison relinquished the role after serving for seven years on the committee of which the last four years were as chairman. We are very grateful to Chris for his excellent execution of the role.

We have been unable to fill the role of chairman during the past year hence we devolved the responsibilities of the chairman to other committee members and the group has been fully functional since the last AGM. The chairman's email inbox is still active and is being monitored by members of the committee.

This Committee's report has been composed by the committee to document the activities, events and achievements of RPCSG.

As you will see below, the group has made a big increase in its spread of awareness of prostate cancer in the community, and it has been noticeable in our awareness events that an increasing number of members of the public were already aware of the disease.

GROUP MEETINGS AND MEMBERSHIP

During the past year we have held twelve group meetings, which featured seven talks with speakers exploring varied aspects of prostate cancer and its treatments. Two of the meetings were the annual social events (Summer and Christmas) and three meetings were the popular 'Open Meetings' which are a good opportunity to chat to other members about anything, whether related to prostate cancer or not. Many thanks to Beverley for arranging very interesting guest speakers at our group meetings.

During 2023 we had a total of 29 new members whereas we had 17 new members in 2022. We would like to think that the increase in new members is due in part to our increased activity of spreading awareness of the disease. During the year we redesigned the form that new members are asked to complete so that we can identify the means by which new members came to learn of the RPCSG. The results of this question will enable us to focus on the areas in which our awareness activities have the most effect. This useful information has shown that about half of new members heard of the RPCSG from the information pack given by the RBH to new members whilst the other half were by other means, some of which included the presence of our awareness

posters and leaflets. This was the first full year of using our new professionally designed leaflets, which we produced because almost no new members in previous years were noticing our old leaflet in the RBH information pack.

AWARNES AND ADVERTISING

During the past year we greatly increased the quantity and distribution of awareness information. We developed an awareness poster that is laminated for durability and have distributed many copies in public places such as libraries, doctor and dentist surgeries, information boards, local authority offices and hospital waiting rooms and departments. Particular thanks to member Richard Dawe for suggesting and coordinating the delivery of a pack containing one poster, six leaflets plus a cover letter to all the 63 GP surgeries and 6 community/private hospitals in Berkshire and South Oxfordshire area served by the Royal Berkshire Hospital van service. We are currently developing our own prostate cancer awareness trifold leaflet that can be handed out to the public during awareness sessions that explains prostate problems in plain English (i.e. no medical jargon).

On the 1st July 2023 we held a very successful awareness stand outside M&S in Broad Street in Reading. Many thanks to all the members who helped distribute RPCSG posters and leaflets and/or manned our awareness stands. Your help and support is always very much appreciated.

On the 9th September 2023 we held an awareness day at Tesco in Wokingham, with a table and documentation set up in the foyer at the store entrance. This was very successful and a great way to spread awareness of prostate cancer to the passing shoppers.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

We held our usual two social events during the past year, being the Summer Social in July 2023 and the Christmas social in December 2023. Both of these events were very enjoyable and successful, with the number of guests being 32 and 45 respectively. The socials were held in the church hall with a buffet meal provided by an external contractor. The Christmas 2022 Social was the last event at which we used the caterer Mange Bien who we have used for many years, owing to the owner closing his business for personal reasons. For the Summer Social 2023 we used a new caterer called Food for Thought and for the Christmas Social 2023 event we used another caterer called Little Platter. At the summer event the raffle raised £180 that helped towards the cost of the evening. The Christmas raffle raised £267 that again helped towards the costs of holding the event. Many thanks are due to Alex for his organisation and management of the social events.

WALKS AND COFFEE MORNINGS

During the last 12 months we held a walk in each month with the exception of December 2023, as this would have occurred very close to Christmas. Coffee mornings were arranged by invitation to non-walkers to join the walkers for lunch-time refreshments. The walks have been very enjoyable and a great opportunity to chat with members whilst taking some gentle exercise. A particular success was the walk in August 2023 when 11 members took part in the walk and a further 6 members joined the walkers for lunch-time refreshments at the Cuning Man, in perfect weather.

Many thanks to Richard Brown for a very successful programme of interesting and enjoyable walks during the year. Thanks also to Andrew for his contribution to the walks and for issuing regular 'events' emails that advertise the group meetings, walks and

information on many other external meetings, mostly by Zoom, concerning aspects of prostate cancer that we were all invited to attend.

COMMITTEE

The RPCSG committee consists of 10 people who generally meet monthly to plan and manage the RPCSG work and events. Thanks are due to all of the committee members for their dedication, enthusiasm and work done in 2023.

Unfortunately two of our committee members had to stand down during the year for personal reasons, and a further two will stand down at the AGM in March 2024. We would encourage any group member who is interested in joining the committee to let a committee member know or contact us at chairman@rpcsg.org.uk. Joining the committee does not involve carrying out any tasks and we welcome new members for their ideas for the group. If interested you are welcome to try a visit to a committee meeting with no obligation. We can only continue with all of our activities if we have enough people to help run them.

Finally, a big thank you to all our group members for their support by attendance at our meetings, which averaged 35 people per meeting including those that attended by Zoom.

Wishing you the very best and good health in 2024.

The Committee.

6. Election of Committee Members.

Alex explained that when a member is elected to the committee for the first time, he/she can serve for three years without re-election. After the third year each committee member can stand for re-election for a further 12 months.

Five members stood for election for a further 12 months, and Nigel Booth stood for election for the first time, having been a co-opted member for 11 months.

The six candidates were:

Steve Allen – Awareness Officer
Andrew Gabriel – New members Greeter
Richard Joyes – Treasurer
Alex Miles – Social Secretary and Chief Fire Officer
Steve Parkinson – Secretary and acting Editor
Nigel Booth – Co-opted

Alex asked the audience (including members on Zoom) for a show of hands in favour of these six members. The great majority of members, and possibly all members, voted in favour of the six candidates and hence are all elected.

Alex said that following the departure of two committee members the committee following this AGM will stand at eight members. We will very much appreciate any new members to the committee, and this will not incur the taking on of any tasks.

7. Any Other Business.

Peter Dawe announced an apology to members for the technical problem that we encountered at the start of the group meeting on the 5th February 2024. The problem was caused by us being unable to access the host's Zoom account, which seemed to have disappeared. Andrew created a new meeting and sent a link to all members and we apologise to any member who was inconvenienced in any way by that problem.

We will hold an awareness day on the 29th June in Broad Street, Reading outside Marks & Spencer. We will appreciate any volunteers to help at this event. There will be shifts during the day finishing by about 4 p.m. If anyone can help at this stand for just an hour or so, we will be most grateful.

Following our very successful awareness event at Tesco in Wokingham in September 2023 we intend to hold a further awareness event at Tesco. The details are being arranged.

Richard Joyes has a rota of people to help in the serving of refreshments at the group meetings. Members have volunteered up to the Summer Social on the 5th July 2024 and Richard will be pleased to have volunteers for August and on.

Alex mentioned the Summer Social that will be held on the 5th July. This will be held in the church hall as usual, and will use an external caterer for the meal.

Thanks were expressed to Alex for hosting the AGM and for other work that he has carried out for the committee.

8. Date of next AGM.

The proposed date of the next AGM is the 7th March 2025.

The meeting closed at 6:52 p.m.