

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
Held online on 28 April 2025 at 1.00pm

1. Welcome and Apologies

Trustees: Paul Jebb (PJ, Chair of Trustees), Emma Brant (EB, Treasurer, Trustee), Jess Shaw (JS. Trustee), Anthony Murray (AM, Trustee)

In attendance: Yak Patel (Chief Executive)

Fifteen others attended – including staff, volunteers, representatives of member organisations, and other interested parties.

PJ welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that reports would be received on the year ending 30 June 2024. The meeting would also vote on the appointment of auditors and on the election of trustees and directors coopted since the last AGM. Voting eligibility & procedure was explained.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

PJ introduced the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting, held on 22 February 2024. He asked if anyone had questions or amendments relating to the minutes and none were indicated. Voting members in attendance were asked to approve the minutes via a show of hands. The motion was carried.

3. Chair's Report

PJ presented his report for the year to 30 June 2024, highlighting several key points including:

- The work that had been done over the year in strengthening the organisation.
- The work of LDCVS in providing advice, information and guidance around governance and leadership, and the success of 2023 FestiVOL, building on the previous year's 50th anniversary celebrations.
- The introduction of a community training programme achieved with the support of UKSPF funding and the recruitment of a Community Learning Officer.
- Granting of nearly £350,000 into community organisations through the work of the Bay Foundation.
- The success of a programme funded by the Westminster Foundation in supporting food provision to children, young people and their families.
- The continued growth of the Volunteer Centre which registered 39 new volunteer involving organisations.
- The work of the Lancaster District Youth Partnership which has now successfully registered as a CIO, and the associated delivery of a young person led granting programme, Break the Mould, plus the innovative Step into Work programme with UHMB.
- The growth of the Lancaster District Directory in its second year, now featuring over 450 services and activities delivered by more than 200 organisations, and the integration of social prescribing services with local PCNs and LSCFT.
- The delivery of respiratory focused health and wellbeing coaching in partnership with Active Lancashire.
- The continued development of the Community Action Network model on Ryelands and the opening of a shared facility in the West End where CVS partnered with Stanleys, Lancaster & Morecambe College, and Morecambe Bay Poverty Truth Commission.

PJ concluded his report by thanking the organisation's members, funders, stakeholders and staff, noting his personal thanks to several for their support in his first year as Chair of Trustees.

Questions were invited; however none were asked.

4. Annual Accounts

EB presented the annual accounts for the year ending 30 June 2024, highlighting several key points:

- Previous years' fund balances were restated. This was due to an incorrect classification of funds provided to LDCVS for making grants being classified by former accountants Waters & Atkinson as client funds and included as belonging to creditors. This was incorrect, and the balances have been restated. The effect of the above is to increase the charity's reserves on paper although at no time has there been any reduction in actual reserves.
- We also noted that previous accounts had omitted the statement of cashflows and a grant expenditure breakdown, both of which were required.
- The issues described above resulted in a lack of confidence in Waters & Atkinson and therefore the board in December 2024 determined to find a new accountancy firm to prepare the 2023/4 accounts and correct any previous errors. Accounts Matters were appointed in January 2025 after robust search.
- The accounts for 2023/4 from Accounts Matters were scrutinised, went through two rounds of amendments, and were approved by the board.
- In addition, further measures have been put into place to prevent similar errors.
- The accounts for 2023/4 show a net outflow a net outflow in restricted funds, reflecting distribution of funds received for granting in the 2022/3 year. Overall income has decreased by £151,000, reflective of reductions in both grants/contracts and trading activities which includes grant management income.
- In relation to expenditure, the charity shows an increase relating to salaries reflecting the increasing cost of living plus growth of the organisation through grant funding supporting an expansion in projects.
- The independent examination of accounts concludes that there are no matters that came to the examiners attention which gave her cause for concern.
- Trustees remain mindful of the need to build reserves and increase earned income capacity as grants to core income do not cover full core costs.

Questions were invited; however none were asked.

5. Appointment of Auditors

EB explained that at the last AGM members voted to accept the board's recommendation to appoint Waters & Atkinson as independent examiners. After discovering errors in previous accounts as reported to the membership, Accounts Matters were instead appointed by the board and are recommended for reappointment based on their experienced team and excellent service.

Voting members in attendance were asked to approve the motion via a show of hands. The motion was carried.

6. Election of Trustees/Directors

PJ explained that the LDCVS governing document requires one third of the board members (not counting any recently co-opted) to retire, based on their length of service. On this basis, PJ informed members that he must retire at the end of the AGM but had decided to offer herself for re-election.

Hazel Taylor and Jess Shaw were both co-opted as Trustees and Directors since the last AGM. Members had received a short biographies with their AGM papers and PJ invited both in turn to briefly introduce themselves.

Voting members in attendance were asked to elect PJ to his second term and HT and JS to their first full terms. The motion was carried unanimously.

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

PJ drew the meeting to a close, thanking once again the staff of LDCVS and his colleagues on the board. PJ informed members that the date and time of the next AGM, relating to the organisation's year ending 30 June 2025 will be advertised in due course.