**FACT (Families and Carers Together) Bucks**

**A Charitable Incorporated Organisation Registered in England Number 1155067**

**Registered Office PO Box 1032, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP22 9NL**

**TRUSTEES for the period 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019**

Julie COOPER

Kelli EVANS

Marylene ISIAH

Margaret NYAMBAYO

Penni THORNE

**Governance and Administration**

FACT Bucks is the Parent Carer Forum for Buckinghamshire, as required by the Children and Families Act 2014.

The objects of the Charity are to embed a local, pan disability, parent led parent/carer forum; build parent/carer participation/co-production based on good practice; and share good practice, knowledge and expertise about parent participation to ensure that it continues to grow and strengthen.

The Charity is not able to undertake campaigns, pursue individual cases nor offer support and counselling to individual parent carers.

There are now 455 families registered on our contact list. Whilst membership is open and free to all those with an interest in the needs of children and young people with SEND, there remains a reluctance to commit. Nevertheless, the Charity seeks to represent all parent carers; makes all its activities open to all parent carers; and accesses the networks of support groups throughout the county to enable greater outreach and feedback.

None of the trustees have resigned their office during the period. The Charity may have up to 12 trustees elected by the AGM. Trustees must be members of the Charity.

Under the terms of the Trust, the Trustees have delegated away the day to day administration of the Charity to the Steering Group appointed by them.

The membership of the Steering Group for the period under review has been as follows:-

Emma HOPKINS

Andrew HOWARD (Chair and Secretary)

Phil OGLEY

Ena SMALE (Admin and Membership Officer)

Penni THORNE (Treasurer)

The Steering Group meets monthly to manage the Charity; to co-ordinate parent participation; and to plan events. It also meets twice a year with a wider group of parents who represent the Charity on various bodies; twice a year with professionals to facilitate dialogue and encourage co-production; and also with representatives of Buckinghamshire County Council SEND & Commissioning teams, as well as BUCKS SENDIAS to ensure effective co-ordination of activities.

The Charity is a member of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums. We attend regular meetings for our area, discussing various topics matters with other parent carer forums. We provide financial administration for the South East Region and continue to offer support to other forums.

**Finance**

In the year ending 31st March 2019, the Charity received grants from the Department of Education (through a scheme administered by Contact) and Buckinghamshire County Council. It received a payment from the South East Region of Parent Carer Forums in respect of its provision of a finance function. It did not undertake any fundraising.

The total income for the period was £24,295.

During the year the Charity expended £25,021.

The main items of expenditure were payments to parent carers for their time and expenses in participation and/or co-production; the administration of the Charity; the update and provision of a website; training of parents to participate and the staging of certain events.

The operating deficit for the year was £726.

The Steering Group have resolved that a balance of £6,500 being the equivalent of 4 months expenditure should be held in reserve since the payment of income grants is subject to annual application processes that delay receipt of funds. The remainder of the General Reserve is available to support the work of the Charity.

The Charity has adopted Financial Control, Safeguarding and Equality & Inclusion policies in accordance with best practice guidance from Contact and the National Network of Parent Carer Forums

**Activities**

This time last year we reflected on the drawing to an end of the implementation phase of the Children and Families Act. Whilst the official phase came to an end, the reality in Bucks is that we continue in such a period of implementation. The Self Evaluation of SEND in the Bucks to which FACT have made a contribution, highlights the journey that remains if the aspirations of the Children and Families Act are to be a lived reality. Still too many SEND Children & Young People (CYP) are not at the centre of the process; there is insufficient collaboration between professionals and timescales are too long. We are active on the SEND Implementation Board which is tasked with delivering that change agenda and with this improved outcomes for SEND CYP. Fortunately, there is a genuine collective recognition that there is a long way to travel and as a result families continue to experience less than ideal processes and provisions. FACT Bucks continues to encourage all those involved to remember the impact on families and supports every effort being made to improve those lived experiences.

Unfortunately, the last year has seen a significant incident where our work on behalf of parent carers has not produced the result we had hoped to achieve despite clear evidence during the process of engagement that things would be different. The subject, of course, was Home to School Transport for Post 16 SEND CYP. As you will be aware from our consultation inputs, we had to accept that as national government makes the provision of such transport optional for local authorities, it was better to accept a limited charge with a robust exceptions process than for all transport to be withdrawn. This conclusion was supported by the survey of all parents (mainstream included) and the local authority’s own equality and impact assessment. Unfortunately, the fiscal need to save money was considered by the Cabinet as being more important and hence the introduction of scaled fees with no transition period. As the current year has shown, the combination of this change with new routes and tendering has created a perfect storm of failed provision and family inconvenience leading, we are learning, to some young people being withdrawn from school. We continue to offer our input into the outworking of this situation but it has not yet been accepted.

More positively, elsewhere we have increased our engagement on your behalf. The Parent Advisory Groups are developing good relationships in CAMHS and Integrated Therapies, with a new one for Short Breaks expected alongside the newly re-tendered service. These are practically focussed feedback groups and they are ideal starting points for parent participation. New members are always welcome. We have also established a new working partnership with Commissioning that will see parent reps involved in contract monitoring as well as general stakeholder groups for these key services. We continue to coproduce the Local Offer.

The Chair of FACT has been given a place on the Children’s Partnership Board acknowledging the importance to the improvement of the lives of young people that the views of parents brings. We continue to sit on the Integrated Services Board for SEND.

In March, we held another of our popular awareness raising events at Green Park, this time focussed on *Choosing a School*. The Head of SENDIAS and others offered practical thoughts on how to approach choosing a school and how this fits within the process of an EHCP or with SEN Support. 50 parents are now more aware of how they should approach these key decisions.

The latter stages of the implementation phase did, as noted before, focus attention on the process of transferring Statements to Plans to meet the deadline. However, whilst Plans are a vital element of the system supporting SEND CYP – they represent only a legal process and statement of intent – they do not deliver outcomes on their own and there are an equal number of SEND CYP who do not qualify for a Plan but who still have Needs that must be met. To this end, we have welcomed a renewed focus this year across the Local Area on SEN Support and upon the services that can provide this. More is expected in the year ahead including a clear statement of what parents can expect all mainstream schools to provide to be known as the Ordinarily Available Provision including equipment.

We reported previously on the SENDIAN pilot and can now report that the restructure of the SEN team to include an Area delivery model focussed on closer relationships with schools, settings and parents has been agreed that brings together SEN officers along with Specialist Teachers and Educational Psychologists in Area teams. There will also be specific officers focussed on dispute resolution and upon preparing for adulthood. Recruitment to and the embedding of these teams is still underway and issues of the adequacy of resource levels remain to be resolved but these are positive developments we have sought and we welcome them on behalf of families.

We have participated in national training events for SEND (often the only parent reps); we have attended national and regional National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) events; and we are actively supporting the development of a regional gathering of parent and professional representatives to develop local coproduction at a more strategic regional level.

The Charity has a small but very effective Steering Group but we do not have as many parents willing to engage in specific areas as we would like. This places a considerable burden on the small band of willing parents as we attempt to ensure that a parent is present at every opportunity offered to the Forum. If there is not a parent there it is much easier for others to think we just don’t care. As we move ahead, it is clear that the Act has increased awareness of parent participation (and we hope coproduction) across the Local Area but these seeds of change can only continue to embed and grow if there are Parent Carers willing to turn up. FACT Bucks offers support and training to all who volunteer and in the year ahead we will be working hard to develop a larger pool of representatives.

Looking to the future, FACT Bucks waits with others in the county for the SEND Inspection by Ofsted. Parents will have clear opportunity through an online webinar and feedback portal to input their views and as the Parent Carer forum our reps will be engaged in the detailed workstreams set up by the Inspectors. As always, we rely on the feedback we receive through local meetings, online and at other times to use these opportunities to seek improvements to the benefit of our SEND CYP. Our new website and our Facebook page are now up and running and we are providing regular updates on our work and on key developments. Please feel free to share these with other groups.

As the Parent Carer Forum for the Local Area, FACT Bucks is mandated by the Children and Families Act to give voice to the concerns of Parent Carers whilst working with professionals to coproduce effective solutions to meet the needs of SEND CYP. This is not an easy balance to achieve, especially in the context of wider funding constraints, but we believe it is important to be partners as well as critical friends in order that decisions that are made are taken with a clear understanding of the impact on the lives of SEND CYP and their families.

**Public Benefit**

We declare that we have had due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit in exercising our power and duties.

**Approved by the Trustees**

14th November 2019 Andrew Howard

Secretary

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER’S REPORT**

At the request of the Trustees, I have examined the receipts and payments account for the year ending 31st March 2019, along with the related paperwork.

In my opinion, the financial statement that follows gives a fair view of the financial activity of the Charity in the year ending 31st March 2019.

Jo-Ann Potts

14th November 2019

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**Income and Expenditure 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019 – General Fund**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  | 2019 | Note | 2019 |  | 2018 |  | 2018 |
|  |  |  | £ |  | £ |  | £ |  | £ |
| Receipts |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Grants – BCC | 5,000 |  |  |  | 5,000 |  |  |
|  | Grants – DFE | 18,995 |  |  |  | 18,500 |  |  |
|  | Regional Admin | 300 | 1 |  |  | 200 |  |  |
|  | Donations |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | 24,295 |  |  |  | 23,700 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Payments |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Promotion Costs | (982) | 2 |  |  | (110) |  |  |
|  | Special Events | 0 |  |  |  | 0 |  |  |
|  | AGM/Training Event | (1,573) |  |  |  | (1,917) |  |  |
|  | Attendance Fees | (4,509) |  |  |  | (4,793) |  |  |
|  | Travel Costs |  | (2,164) |  |  |  | (1,902) |  |  |
|  | Room Hire |  | (375) |  |  |  | (477) |  |  |
|  | Refreshments | (874) |  |  |  | (737) |  |  |
|  | Regional Participation | (802) |  |  |  | (963) |  |  |
|  | Childcare |  | (344) | 3 |  |  | (1,315) |  |  |
|  | General Admin | (7,650) |  |  |  | (7,700) |  |  |
|  | Finance Admin | (1,370) |  |  |  | (1,410) |  |  |
|  | Audit and Accountancy Fees | (100) |  |  |  | (100) |  |  |
|  | Printing |  | (226) |  |  |  | (3) |  |  |
|  | Postage and Carriage | (351) |  |  |  | (347) |  |  |
|  | Telephone |  | 0 |  |  |  | 0 |  |  |
|  | Stationery |  | (108) |  |  |  | (26) |  |  |
|  | Website Costs | (3,576) | 4 |  |  | (564) |  |  |
|  | IT Costs |  | (203) |  |  |  | 0 |  |  |
|  | Training Costs | 0 |  |  |  | 0 |  |  |
|  | Insurance |  | (184) |  |  |  | 0 |  |  |
|  | Outcomes Project | 0 |  |  |  | (934) |  |  |
|  | Miscellaneous | 0 |  |  |  | 0 |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | (25,021) |  |  |  |  | (23,300) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Surplus receipts over payments |  |  | (726) |  |  |  | 400 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reserves brought forward |  |  | 9,069 |  |  |  | 8,669 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reserves carried forward |  |  | 8,344 |  |  |  | 9,069 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Notes

1. Reflects the increased time required to complete the Regional finance function
2. A print copy insert in a family magazine for the Chilterns
3. Reduction due to lack of claims
4. Reflects decision of Steering Group to overhaul website with additional funding from DfE

**Income and Expenditure 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019 – Regional Cluster**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  | 2019 | Note | 2019 |  | 2018 |  | 2018 |
|  |  |  | £ |  | £ |  | £ |  | £ |
| Receipts |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | From Cluster | 3,800 |  |  |  | 5,400 |  |  |
|  | Grant - DfE | 2,000 |  |  |  | 2,000 |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 7,400 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Payments |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Meetings | (2,093) |  |  |  | (3,808) |  |  |
|  | Administration & Reps ExpensesFinance Services  | (7,046) | 1 |  |  | (200) |  |  |
| (300) |  |
|  | Audit | (50) |  |  |  | (50) |  |  |
|  | Bad Debt Write Off  | 0 |  |  |  | 0 |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | (9.490) |  |  |  | (4,058) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Surplus receipts over payments |  |  | (3,690) |  |  |  | 3,442 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reserves brought forward |  |  | 11,878 |  |  |  | 8,536 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reserves carried forward |  |  | 8,188 |  |  |  | 11,878 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Notes

1. Reflects the deployment of regional representatives; the employment of an administrator and the introduction of GoTo software

**Balance of Funds 31st March 2019**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | 2019 |  | 2018 |
|  |  |  |  |  | £ |  | £ |
|  | Current Assets |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Cash at bank and in hand |  | 16,232 |  | 20,647 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Net Assets** |  |  |  | **16,232** |  | **20,647** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Current Liabilities |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Monies owed to the Cluster |  | 7,888 |  | 11,578 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Reserves |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | General reserves |  | 8,344 |  | 9,069 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Net Liabilities** |  |  | **16,232** |  | **20,647** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Balance of Funds (Regional) 31st March 2019**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | 2019 |  | 2018 |
|  |  |  |  |  | £ |  | £ |
|  | Current Assets |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Cash at bank and in hand |  | 7,888 |  | 11,578 |
|  |  | Debtors |  |  | 300 |  | 300 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Net Assets** |  |  |  | **8,188** |  | **11,878** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Reserves |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | General reserves |  | 8,188 |  | 11,878 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Net Liabilities** |  |  | **8,188** |  | **11,878** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Approved by the Trustees**

14th November 2019 Andrew Howard

Secretary