**Minutes Clinks’ AGM held on 21st November 2019**

**Priory Street Centre, 15 Priory Street, York, YO1 6ET**

**4.30pm**

**Members present:**Barnardo's, Changing Lives, Circles UK, Derventio Housing Trust, Finchale Training College, Hestia Housing & Support, Himmat Limited, Lloyds Bank Foundation, Margaret Carey Foundation, On The Out CiC, POPS (Partners Of Prisoners and Family Support Group), Prison Advice and Care Trust (Pact), Restorative Justice Council, Run For Your Life CIC, Spark Inside, Sussex Pathways, The Footprints Project, The Prince's Trust, Veterans Change Partnership.

**Clinks Trustees present**: Roma Hooper OBE (Chair), Jessica Southgate, Helen Attewell, Liz Calderbank, Dr Alison Frater, Rachael Byrne, Simon Alsopp.

**Apologies:** Raheel Mohammed

1. **Welcome and Chair’s address**
	1. Roma Hooper OBE, Chair of Clinks welcomed members and guests to the AGM. She commented on the success of the State of the Sector and introduced herself, as well as her background. Roma commented on the other events in the sector potentially affecting attendance, but also that we had a very good turnout for the AGM.
	2. Roma highlighted this is the last event in Clink’s 20th year the new strategy, which is being delivered from 2019-22, and the launch of our impact assessment findings.
	3. We will follow this year’s AGM with a panel discussion on the Monument Fellowship question, “What should happen to people who commit criminal offences?”, which includes some key speakers and contributors to the book collated this year by Clinks and the national Criminal Justice Arts Alliance.
	4. Roma also offered the book to those in attendance as well as the podcast which has been released.
	5. This is a celebration and reflection to build on and deliver the strategy effectively.
	6. On behalf of the trustees, Roma also thanked the staff of Clinks and noted that their expertise was valued greatly by members.
2. **Apologies from Members**

2.1.Education & Training Foundation, The Anne Frank Trust, Urban Outreach, Green Pastures, The Corbett Foundation, Conviction, The Zahid Mubarek Trust, Mary Magdalene CiC.

1. **Approval of the minutes of the 20th AGM held on 7th November 2018**

**Ordinary Resolution 1:**

That the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 7th November 2018 be adopted as a true record of the meeting. Minutes of the 19th AGM held on 7th November 2018**.**

* 1. The previous minutes were accepted as a true record. Proposed by Helen Attewell (NEPACS), seconded by Tammy Banks (Re:Shape). Passed with 11 votes.
1. **Presentation of the Annual Report and plans for the future: Anne Fox, Chief Executive Officer**

*4.*1 Anne presented on the Annual report, highlighting key aspects of the full report:

*“Thank you Chair and good afternoon everybody. My first job today is to talk you through our annual report for the year ended 31 March 2019 including discussing our future plans.*

*You all have a copy of this and as ever my thanks to the team especially Ben, Isobel and Vic for the work which has gone into its production.*

*It’s a big report and I can’t cover it all now so I’m literally pulling out some headlines and highlights.*

*The biggest news of the year was that we undertook the development process of our strategy which we launched at our last AGM and started to implement in April 2019.*

*Our year in numbers shown here indicates some of our achievements and especially our growing reach. This was in part enabled by our new website which we launched at our last AGM, developed with you in mind, visits to which increased by 19%.*

*In our work to promote the sector included our “Insider’s view of prisons and probation today” event held in partnership with the now Lord Mayor of the City of London. The event showcased the work of the sector to charitable funders who do not already invest in this area of work. The response to the event was very positive.*

*Our support work with the sector included 43 events and the vast programme of work of our thematic networks, not least of which the National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance which became an Arts Council England Sector Support Organisation as part of its national portfolio. We’ve also continued to provide dedicated support to family support organisation as well as investing reserves to develop a women’s specific organisations network to take forward our plans on merging Women’s Breakout into Clinks in 2017.*

*Our final trackTR report which highlighted how under represented, under pressure and under resourced the sector’s work was with the probation system directly influenced future plans for the probation system which Government began consultation on in July 2018. Our policy work has also continued to focus where needed on racial disproportionality in the justice system as well as on the specific needs of women.*

*We worked with Unlock to ensure that charities were informed about restrictions on staff and trustees with convictions and supported members pursing applications for waivers from the Charity Commission, committed to ensuring that convictions will not be a bar to charities having access to the talent they need and that people with convictions can access the full range of opportunities into the future despite actions in their past.*

*Internally we invested in our financial, governance and HR capability so that we can work as effectively and efficiently as we can to deliver our future strategy and give you what you need.*

*Looking to the 2019/20 year the focus is to start to roll out the new strategy.*

*We will have real focus this year on making sure we use every opportunity we can to talk about your value and role and how that’s best enabled, to funder, policymakers and commissioners.*

*We will continue to focus support where we are funded in specific areas across England and for the sector working in wales. Our training and events programme will respond to need and changes in the future external landscape.*

*Our policy work will continue to work across the UK and Welsh Governments and their agencies to have the right relationships on your behalf to affect the changes we need to see. We will continue a focus on the future of probation as well as the implementation of the Female offender strategy, Lammy and Farmer Review recommendations.*

*The National Criminal Justice Alliance’s landmark inspiring Futures programme will start -advancing knowledge into why arts interventions impact on lives of people in the CJS and how to optimise the effect. We will also review the work of our women’s network working with members understand their priorities and needs and making changes to what we do if needed. And we’ll write and publish a collection of essays and creative responses to the question “what should happen to people who commit criminal offences” on behalf of the Monument Fellowship – more on this later!*

*In this year we will focus internally on understanding how best to manage our finances to use our resources to best effect. We will produce an impact assessment – again, coming up this afternoon and our new Chair will lead a focus on ensuring we are governed in the best way and working most effectively as a wider team of staff and trustees to reach our goals.*

*And speaking of the board I now have the pleasure of handing over to our Treasurer Simon Alsop who will talk you through Clinks in pounds and pence in 2018/19*

*Thank you”*

1. **Presentation of the Annual Accounts**
	1. Simon Alsop (Treasurer) presented an overview of the Clinks’ Annual Accounts.

*“Good evening everyone, I don’t intend to go into a lot of detail, nor will I repeat much of what is already set out in our annual report, rather I will try to give a little more colour to one or two areas that I think are worthy of special mention. I am of course happy to answer any questions now or at a later stage.*

*I am pleased to report that Clinks has put in a solid performance for the year, with income slightly ahead of 2018.*

*The costs are also higher – in particular in salaries and recruitment fees (although we have seen an offsetting reduction in freelance expenses) and they are also higher in website development but that is more of a one off expense.*

*Overall this means that there was a deficit for the year, and reserves have been reduced by £44,000*

*Some of this was planned - the website costs were budgeted for and we brought forward designated reserves to cover them*

*The staff expenses reflect the fact that 2018/19 has been a period of transition for Clinks, with a number of staff having left and been replaced.*

*Overall this is healthy for the organisation but in the very short term it has impacted the cost structure and is to Anne and everyone’s credit at Clinks that it has not been more disruptive.*

*We have also invested in staff to be more effective across the organisation – finance is one of those areas and I’d like to give a mention here to Victoria Sadler, who joined during the year as Corporate Services Manager. I think I speak for all trustees when I say that she has taken ownership and gained our confidence very quickly, and has very much made sure that everything is completely under control.*

*In doing this she has been assisted in a very major way by my predecessor as interim treasurer, Liz Calderbank. I am very grateful to Liz for the legacy she leaves behind.*

*This is a slightly roundabout way of letting you know that the post audit report from Sayer Vincent – our auditors - found that, as has always been the case, Clinks is soundly run from the perspective of financial management and there were no weaknesses in the finance procedures and controls.*

*Another area I wanted to mention – and we have given this some prominence on page 22 of the annual report – is the in-depth work we have done in respect of our reserves policy and the overall level of reserves. That work suggested that we should hold free, undesignated reserves of £486k.*

*A certain amount of the trustees’ wariness around reserves is due to our reliance on the MoJ grant for such a significant portion of our income. We have always enjoyed terrific support from our funders, and continue to do so, and for that we are hugely grateful - but we cannot take that funding, or the MoJ grant as a given.*

*We are currently midway through a three-year term with the MoJ, and we are able to demonstrate very effective use of the funds. We have continued to work hard to maintain good relationships with an ever-changing cast of ministers and senior civil servants in key government departments, to ensure they understand the important role of the sector, and that the results of our 17 policy consultations have influence. Nevertheless in a time such as this where there is a great deal of turnover in government, and in government departments, the future can never be certain.*

*Added to this, we have to take into account the fact that we do not aim to make a surplus – every pound that we receive is spent supporting our objectives and rightly so – which means that our ability to build, or to rebuild reserves to the required level is limited. That said, we have agreed to hold slightly below the level suggested by our analysis and our unrestricted, undesignated reserves stand at £465k.*

*Finally, to point out that we have again designated reserves this year for future projects: £100,000 has been designated to cover the Women’s Breakout work over the next two years, and £20,000 each has been designated for a policy impact assessment and IT consultancy for our website..”*

* 1. A formal resolution to accept the accounts was proposed by Trevor Philpott (Veterans Change Partnership) and seconded by Josie Brooks (Spark Inside). The resolution was passed by 11 votes.
1. **Resignation, re-election and election of Trustees**

**Ordinary Resolution 3:**6.1 The following trustees were re-elected as trustees of Clinks, in accordance with Article 37 of the Articles of Association:

* Helen Attewell
* Liz Calderbank
* Dr Alison Frater
* Rachael Byrne

Proposed by Diane Curry (POPs), seconded by Trevor Philpott (Veterans Change Partnership). Resolution passed with 12 votes.

**Ordinary Resolution 4:**6.2 The following individuals were elected as trustees of Clinks:

* Raheel Mohammed
* Chris Stacey
* Simon Alsop

Proposed by Sam Brown (Clean Sheet), seconded by Lesley Ward (PACT). Resolution passed with 14 votes.

6.3 Roma announced that two co-oped members are being added to the board, Richard Booty and Patrick Williams.

1. **Impact Assessment 2019 findings**
	1. Anne then presented on the findings of the Clinks’ 2019 impact Assessment:

*“I’m delighted to present our independent impact assessment and also talk you through how we’re responding to its findings.*

*Again you have copies, it’s another lovely publication not least because it’s also full of images of you all and the work you do – you really do make us look good!*

*We will be learning from this work and implementing our response to the recommendations throughout this strategic period so do talk to us at any stage about what you think it might mean for you and what you need from Clinks but for now I’ll go through the main findings and touch also on what we’re responding with.*

*The impact assessment was independently conducted- this is essential to us because we’re committed to holding ourselves up to objective scrutiny. Ideas to Impact, namely Becky Nixon undertook the work and this publication is her report with a section at the end written by Clinks in response.*

*Thank you if you took part in the review work Becky and colleagues conducted. – They heard from over 120 people - providing really powerful learning for us.*

*The assessment set out to understand 3 things:*

*1. Whether Clinks is providing the range of services and activities that stakeholders want and need*

*2. What difference Clinks is making to its members and the wider voluntary sector in criminal justice and ultimately to the sector’s service users*

*3. Whether Clinks’ work is of good quality.*

*Respondents value the work we do promoting and raising the profile of the sector and individual organisations. We could improve opportunities for self-promotion by organisations at events and making sure our events are geographically spread.*

*Our information provision is our most popular type of support and this includes through policy briefings, networks and forums. Organisations say our targeted information saves them time and being able to contribute to for example light lunch was welcomed and organisations say they receive responses. Staff are deemed approachable and you welcome having named contacts in thematic networks and our Area Development Team. You would like us to deliver our information in a range of formats and continue to look at how we prioritise and filter information. You’d like more interactive events with bigger audiences and more chance to network across a wider cross-section of people.*

*You welcome our involvement of people with lived experience in our events – it inspires you and gives you practical ideas. Our service user involvement network and resources were also deemed helpful. You suggested we update these resources in line with good practice and consider the needs of people with lived experience who wish to set up their own organisations.*

*The work we do providing commissioners and decision makers with a route into the sector and vice versa is valued. It gives officials diversity of voices and improves policy maker confidence while the sector feels the opportunities we provide could help hold officials to account.*

*The complexity of our relationship and advocacy work is recognised and the feedback is we manage to strike the necessary balances well.*

*Areas for improvement include publicising what impact our policy work has and better strategic alignment of our forums and networks so members and attendees can feed into policy development.*

*In relation to our work to tackle discrimination and inequality the response was that representation of small and specialist organisations is evident. Interviewees were optimistic about Clinks’ merger with Women’s Breakout and how the women’s sector influenced the Female Offenders’ Strategy.*

*You want us to be more representative of BAME people and questioned the progress in changing practice as a result of reviews we’ve led and supported.*

*Organisations value the networks Clinks helps them build – through access to our publicity channels, introductions to partners and commissioners and access to funding. However you also want more ways to meet other organisations to explore collaboration- including regionally and sub regionally. You want us to focus more on procurement practices and provide more practical support to small and specialist organisations to access opportunities.*

*Our evidence is valuable to officials – especially trackTR and state of the sector and voluntary organisations valued the range of opportunities to feed in. Response rates could be improved though as well as the accessibility of our requests for information for small and specialist organisations.*

*There is a positive view that the sector is round the table through Clinks from both the sector and officials though most organisations still want more collaboration at national and local levels and more of a partnership approach.*

*So, in response on pages 58 and 59 we set out what we’ll do. The real cause for comfort for us is that in reflecting on the finding and recommendations we found that our future plans in terms of our 2019-22 strategy Creating Change Together addressed or went some way towards addressing most of them. We can build from there.*

*Briefly, conscious of time, we will:*

*• Have a focus on understanding the difference we make – starting with the tricky areas of policy impact and share that learning across the charity*

*• Our forthcoming communications strategy will ensure timely, accessible information with more focus on the user and utility*

*• We will improve how we communicate what we’re doing in relation to policy development and what difference we are making*

*• We will work to encourage a more strategic approach to the sector in HMPPS*

*• We will consider how to make our networks and forums more interactive and make best use of the time you give to them*

*• We will continue to grow our Area Development Team where funding allows. We will build our presence in Wales and in 2020 we will have a focussed work stream in our State of the Sector work looking at organisations in Wales in more depth*

*• We will continue to push for implementation of the Female Offender and Lammy Reviews as well as both of Lord Farmer’s reviews working with specialist organisations and we will explore the need with BAME specialist organisations for a BAME specialist support network*

*• We remain committed to challenging and supporting increased lived experience involvement, coproduction and co-creation in the sector.*

*• We will review our membership, training and events offers and coproduce programmes of support with the sector and connect you to available evidence and good practice.*

*In all of this we’ll keep a focus on ourselves – always asking ourselves how we could work better so that we are always able to give you our best so you can be at your best for those who need you.”*

7.2 Anne passed back to Roma, who reflected on the hard work of the team at Clinks, especially in a difficult and challenging climate. Our members were thanked and recognised as being a key part of Clinks and the work which is done.

7.3 Roma commented on the importance of governance and the activity of the board, as well as the appointment of Simon as Treasurer and Victoria Sadler to support his role. The Finance and HR committee was highlighted as a strength of the board and leadership.

7.4 Roma added that the board wishes to visit more members and this will be arranged by Helen Carter, Membership manager. She also personally thanked Clinks’ staff for their hard work and determination, as well as Anne’s work and dedication to the organisation.

1. **The AGM was closed.**

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Delegates then engaged in a panel discussion. The topic for discussion was the Monument Fellowship 3rd question *“what should happen to people who commit criminal offences?”* and was chaired by Dr. Alison Frater, Clinks trustee and chair of the National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance steering group.

The panel members were: **Sofia Buncy,** Muslim women in prisons project, Khidmat Centres, Bradford; **Ben Crewe,** Professor of Penology and Criminal Justice and Deputy Director of the Prisons Research Centre at the Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge; **Tammy Banks,** CEO of re:shape, a sexual harm awareness, prevention and education charity.

The discussion will be used as part of the ongoing work of the Monument Fellowship, contributing to the legacy work of the Trust. Delegates then joined Clinks’ staff and trustees in drinks and networking.