

Transition City Lancaster Steering Group Minutes 23rd November 2016

Present : Steve, Gail, Wendy, Victoria, Tony

1. Insurance

Gail presented the results of her Insurance review that she has been working on since the last meeting. She began by explaining how, since Zurich took over our current insurance the service had gone downhill rapidly. She is kept hanging on the phone for long periods waiting for her call to be answered and they have failed to come back with a quote to continue with our insurance. Two other firms have been approached through recommendation. Claver Hill uses Nature Save and have found them to be friendly, helpful and taking calls without problem. Nature Save are used to insuring Transition groups since they are based in Totnes and handle insurance for Transition Totnes. The Insurance Centre in China St, Lancaster have also been recommended as they are used by LESS. The main advantage of using them would be ease of access for Transition Members to pop in while they were in town in order to ask any questions.

Quotes from Nature Save are for £385 per year, which will provide, amongst other things, £5 Million Public Liability cover which is essential if we wish to make use of council space e.g. market stalls, because this is what they insist on seeing from all their traders. Nature Save could reduce this to £302 but this would only give us £2 Million Public Liability, which would be enough for Potato Day and other events at the Friends Meeting House but not for council venues.

Quotes from The Insurance Centre are from the Ansvar company, which is well known for insurance for the Non-Profit and Charity sectors. LESS also uses this company. A number of different levels of cover have been offered but the least expensive package called "Select" would be sufficient for our needs and also give £5 Million Public Liability. Cost for this package would be £535-36 including Tax and a £50 non-refundable policy charge.

Unfortunately Nature Save have not yet sent a detailed list of what would be covered for their policy so Gail was asked to go back to them before a decision is made. On the face of it, if Nature Save are offering the same cover for £150 less then this seems to be the better value and we have the assurance from Claver Hill that their service is good.

Gail wished to point out that whichever cover we take the same actions must be taken on our side to ensure we comply with the terms of our insurance. For example, for all events a risk assessment must be carried out, even if it is at the same venue we have used before. Also, only groups that can clearly show that they are affiliated with Transition i.e. a Transition Group, can be covered on TCL's insurance. This gives a strong case for projects to be carried out under the TCL banner so that cover can be provided for volunteers and event attendees. She also pointed out that at Transition Events only Transition Groups are covered for stalls e.g. Potato Day. Businesses and other organisations having stalls we will need to see that they have £2M Public Liability cover.

A grey area that was identified during the meeting is the need to have cover for selling items at events. For example, selling clothing that has been made by a member of the Transition Sewing Group, or selling cakes or food items. Would these products be covered even if someone took

them home and suffered from using them? Could they claim damages against the Transition Insurance. Gail was asked to research this with both policies before we decide which one to go with.

2. TCL AGM Planning

With only two weeks to go before we need to have our AGM meeting we discussed how could make the AGM both inspiring and enjoyable. It was decided that Cake should be provided as well as the Tea Bag – Wendy was tasked with ordering two cakes, one gluten free and vegan – the other normal. There should be enough for all attendees to have a piece.

Kathy is to be asked by Steve whether she will present an end of year financial report showing Expenditures and Revenue for both this year and last year as a comparison with Balances Outstanding clearly identified.

There then arose a long discussion about whether Steering Group members are to be re-elected or not. Victoria is keen to see Steering Group become an admin group rather than having the responsibility for keeping Network Meetings entertaining and filled with interesting information. She feels that there are core activities that need to be attended to – such as Insurance, Financial Record Keeping and Communications – but these do not need representatives from all Groups to make them happen – just specific volunteers who are willing to take on these roles and are capable of carrying them out. Groups would then organize themselves and if they wanted to – organize Network meetings to keep in touch with each other. Tony and Steve have sympathies with this concept. However, as Wendy and Gail pointed out, without SG keeping Network Meetings going the Transition Groups could simply wander off and do their own thing. One of the points of the SG is that elected members from each group meet together and report back to their groups so that everyone is working together and there is a check that everyone is following the guidelines in the constitution. It has been the experience of several Transition Initiatives that things can fall apart without a Steering Group.

No conclusion was reached and anyway, it was the concern of everyone that SG members are not the ones who should decide whether there should be an SG. It was felt that this discussion should be continued at the AGM. Steve was tasked with the job of compiling his notes from the last Network Meeting with these minutes and presenting them for further discussion at the AGM.

Tony suggested that we invite non-SG Members from each Transition Group to present a 5-10 min talk at the AGM about the projects their group have been involved with over the last 12 months and to give some visioning about what they are planning for 2017. He went on to suggest that we could also invite representatives from other community groups in Lancaster to give similar presentations. For example, Lancaster Soup and Lancaster People's Café. Everyone agreed that this would help get away from people thinking that only SG members can present stuff at AGM meetings. It also opens up Transition as being keen to include non-Transition groups into the fold.

Gail was tasked with doing a short presentation at the AGM on what advantage it gives in regard to Insurance to be doing projects as a Transition Group. Incredible Edibles, for example, could become a project that is part of the Food Group and could then save itself having to produce its own accounts and pay for its own insurance. The same goes for other projects in town that are fulfilling Transition objectives and making the town more sustainable and resilient.

Tony is to speak to Karen Spencer about a presentation for Lancaster People's Café. Steve is to talk to Pete about a presentation for the Heart of Transition group. Wendy is to speak to Sandy about a presentation for TADD. Steve is also tasked with speaking to Anna about presenting on behalf of the Food Group.

3. Wendy mentioned that she had a conversation with Yak Patel from CVS about the Mapping project. CVS have a directory of thousands of community groups in the area but are not currently doing anything particular with it as they have no funding to do so. However they would be willing to work with us on doing what they can to make this information more widely available – subject to compliance with the Data Protection Act.

No next meeting place was discussed so we need to agree something by email for December to start planning for Potato Day.