



8th February 2018

Dear Members

The Future of the GDA – our partnership model proposal

On Tuesday 6th February, we presented our plans for the future of the GDA to a mix of member groups, individuals and partners who were able to attend our Members' Meeting. A copy of the slides is on our website (hard copy by request) and a summary of the key points is attached. The following proposals were approved and the GDA executive board will now put more flesh on them for consideration at a further meeting.

What key changes will take place?

Background

Our five year business plan (2014–2018) is coming to an end, as is our current funding. That model (a full-time Executive Director and three part-time staff) is not sustainable in the current financial climate. For the last two years there has been no staffing support for the Executive Director, and barring the magnificent contribution of Rob Platts, little capacity in the Board of Directors.

In the meantime, we have arrived at the point we expected to be three years ago. There is a lively commitment to progress by the States of Guernsey, and appropriate resourcing has begun. While our financial resources are shrinking drastically, our workload is increasing enormously. We are in a crucial phase of legislative development and on the verge of creating an Equal Rights Organisation (ERO). It is of paramount importance that the voice of disabled Islanders is represented now. Moreover, we have to be ready to plan a very different role after the introduction of the new law and the launch of the ERO.

While our fundamental focus remain the same, namely to promote the “equality of opportunity for disabled Islanders and carers in Guernsey”, we will be redeploying our resources to do the job more effectively.

The New Approach

In order to carry on effectively with the work we are already doing, and to prepare for the future work we will be called on to do, we are creating new roles to replace that of the current Executive Director.

Karen Blanchford will take the lead in developing our future strategies. Under the WAME brand, she will be developing our partnership with other organisations committed to equality, while developing key resources to be tendered to businesses and the larger community. Karen will also be influencing the development of the ERO, and along with Rob Platts, the new legislation.

Member Services co-ordinator: With over 40 member groups and individual disabled islanders and carers we will require part time support for member's activities and services, including communications, meetings, and workshops on topics of social policy. This role



needs to be more sustainable going forward, it will be part time but cannot start without funds. We are currently approaching supporters and members for the £15k to start this role.

Rob Harnish will take the lead in representing your voice on the Disability and Inclusion project. Ron Short have donated 1 day a week to this important project. Under the GDA brand, he will be developing a team of committed volunteers with relevant experience to represent you on various strands of the project, while representing your voice on the overarching project team.

While the current GDA Board is strong in skills and experience, it lacks sufficient volunteer time to offer practical support during this time of exciting change. We are looking to expand the Board with volunteers who can assist with marketing & PR, fundraising, and corporate secretariat duties.

What does this mean to members?

To help the GDA to continue to be as effective over the next ten years as it has been over our first ten years, we would like to see more volunteers take a more active role in all that we do. As a result, we will be creating more opportunities for you to get involved; and perhaps knocking on your door a little more often, looking for your help and support (whether, for example, finance, or expertise, or time, or testimonial).

We at the GDA are proud of our achievements over the last ten years (see [here](#)). Moreover, we are confident that, with your help, we can go from strength to strength, ensuring that Guernsey becomes a model for the elimination of the barriers to full participation for all in the rich life of our Island.

Key points made at the Members' Meeting on 6th Feb 2018:

- For the past 10 years the GDA has campaigned for the rights of Disabled Islanders and Carers. For the first 6 years that was mostly lobbying the politicians, which resulted in the unanimous passing of the States of Guernsey, Disability and Inclusion Strategy in November 2013. The strategy contains 11 work streams which have mixed responsibility of ESSC and HSC, in partnership with public and 3rd sector.
- It was noted that the GDA does not have responsibility for the Disability & Inclusion Strategy or any of the work streams but adds value through research, reports, providing the voice of disabled islanders and carers in considering policy.
- In its 10 years the GDA has not received any financial assistance from the States.
- For the past 4 years the GDA has focused on influencing the Government (politicians and civil servants) in relation to the Disability and Inclusion strategy and other related social policy and government processes that impact on disabled islanders and carers (Education, Health, transport, etc.)
- The GDA is **not** a lobby group, it provides robust research, insights, reports and the input of its membership to influence policy

The Government owns the Disability and Inclusion strategy

- The States, politicians and Employment Social Security Committee (ESSC) have ownership of the Disability & Inclusion strategy and more broadly Equality. Health & Social Care (HSC) are responsible for the implementation of many of the work streams. Recently ESSC have added resources to this project and both legislation and the ERO have been prioritised by Policy and Resources (P&R).
- For the Disability & Inclusion Strategy to be truly successful ALL politicians and committees need to take ownership and be proactive in this area.
- The GDA's role is to provide influence through research and members voices, not to own and run the strategy.
- Scrutiny committee will now undertake 6 month reviews of the progress of the strategy

Increased involvement of our members and partners

- Member groups, individuals and partners will be asked to represent disability on all other social policy forums, panels, and other representative groups. I.e.
 - Education and CYPP Youth Commission, Wigwam, Autism Guernsey / NAS
 - SLAWS Ageing Well in the Bailiwick, St John, Cheshire Home
 - Carers: Carers Guernsey, Carers coming together, member groups, carers
 - Mental Health: Guernsey MIND, L'Vair, MHSUG,
 - Employment GET, GROW, Ron Short,
 - Transport: Cheshire Home, St John, Ron Short
 - Wheelchair service review: Cheshire Home, St John, Ron Short, members
- We currently sit on more than 12 boards, committees, panels representing disabled islanders and carers. Although this results in a broad understanding of disability matters, it is *not* sustainable without an executive director
- We will be asking members for a 10th Anniversary financial contribution, where able.
 - We will be asking members to get more actively involved in fundraising, supporting and running events.

Supporters thank you's

- We wish to thank the **Guernsey Community Foundation (GCF)** for their seed funding for the past 3 years (2015-2018). It has been a challenging 3 years (with states delays to the strategy) but the most recent significant progress is testament to the continued influence, support and strong relationships of our team.
 - Thank you to **Lloyds Bank Foundation** for their support for the information and communication roles 2011-2016
 - Thank you to **Donate Local** for supporting the newsletter and meetings for 2016/2017
- We are now looking for new funders and supporters to ensure we continue our significant work of the past 10 years and to ensure our presence in this critical phase. In 2018 legislation will be drafted and hopefully the consultation take place, it is crucial we have a strong voice for this key stage. 2018 will also see the ERO business case drafted and submitted for debate, the ERO is key to educating and informing the community prior to legislation (reducing the fear from businesses)

We would welcome your support as we move to a new phase in GDA history