

LONDON AMBULANCE SERVICE BENEVOLENT FUND

Extra ordinary meeting of the **BENEVOLENT FUND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

As published on our web site and reported on the Annual General Meeting notice for the period 1st January 2005 to 31st December 2005, the above meeting took place on Friday 29th September 2006.

This meeting took place in substitution for the normal AGM which was cancelled due to delays in our annual financial report and reasons beyond our control.

Date: 29 September 2006

Time: 0900/30

Venue: Marriot Hotel Bexley Heath

In Attendance:	A. Garrett	-	Chairman
	M. Avis	-	Vice Chairman
	T. Vince	-	Staff Support Officer
	K. Finch	-	Treasurer
	J. Stubbs	-	Secretary
	J. Selby	-	Chairman Designate
	L. Long	-	Executive Committee

Apologies:	A. Storrar	-	Executive Committee
------------	------------	---	---------------------

MINUTES

The Chairman opened the meeting at 0930 and welcomed all of the executive committee members in attendance. The committee was reminded that although no other meetings had taken place during 2006, it had been necessary to call an extra ordinary meeting to substitute and supplement the AGM which should have taken place in the first quarter of this year.

1. The Benevolent Funds income and expenditure account for the year ended 31 December 2005, as published on our web site was distributed to all in attendance and comments from the treasurer were invited. Our treasurer stated that in general during 2005 there had been an improvement of our financial management and therefore the situation remained financially stable. It was pointed out however that during this financial year 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2006 there had been additional expenditure due to the allocation of funds to enhance the celebration of our **40th Anniversary**. This had been in the form of additional prize draws during June this year and the upgrading of our convalescent facility.

2. The chairman invited the LAS Staff Support Advisor and Almoner to the Fund to comment on the past year and current situation and in particular how the additional draws 40 x £250.00 had been received. Our Almoner reported that the draw had taken place as planned and the all prizes had been paid to the winners. The list of winners had been published in the LAS RIB and on the Ben Fund site as is normal for the monthly draws. Of concern is the ability to address new staff on the benefits of joining the fund as the induction courses are lengthy and a large amount of information has to be absorbed and dealt with, which in terms of priority, places the membership of the fund at the lower end of the scale. General discussion took place and it was suggested and agreed that a poster campaign on station notice boards be initiated commending the benefits of joining the Benevolent Fund. Further concern was expressed regarding the amount of administration in the notification of new member's acceptance to the fund and their membership number. It was agreed that as all staff are now allocated an email address, this can be the method of informing new members of their personal Benevolent Fund details. The small booklet of membership is to be discontinued as any person wishing to check on the constitution or bye laws of the fund can find the relevant details on our web site and if necessary can print out a copy.

3. The annual Chairman's Report was distributed and relevant parts of the contents explained and talked through with all in attendance. In general the chairman had reported that all projects embarked upon during this period had been achieved in a very efficient and satisfactory manner. This was particularly so with the convalescent and recovery facility which had recorded 26 visits for members in need after a period of debilitating illness or problems relating to their families of dependents. Without exception each member that had been recommended to visit had reported their surprise and satisfaction of the quality of the accommodation, the site and the chosen area. The Chairman thanked the committee for their valuable support and input to the fund, but added that we do need more members to come forward for the management committee.

4. A general discussion was invited on the current and forthcoming vacancies within both the executive and management council. The Chairman pointed out the assistance and support that our Almoner and Treasurer had received from Jackie Phipps of HQ administration at times of pressure and his own experience when having to cover for Tina Vince in her absence. Jackie had expressed an interest in taking part in the fund and therefore it was proposed by the chairman that Jackie be elected to the executive committee. This was seconded by Tina Vince and Jackie Phipps was duly elected to the executive committee with immediate effect.

5. Discussion and comments were invited regarding the current level of Subscription, and Benefits. In general there was an overall acceptance that the current Membership Subscription should remain at its current level with a review in the first quarter of 2007. It was felt that the Benefits currently enjoyed are sufficient. However it was agreed that the Benefits need to be regularly monitored to ensure that they reflect the expenditure involved where beneficiaries are involved.

6. The London Ambulance Service Benevolent Fund's web site has been very successful and has improved our communication, regarding annual reports, newsletters, minutes of meetings and various other information medians. During this year as part of our 40th Anniversary celebrations, the web site has been highlighted with a flash animated introduction page. At the end of this year 2006, this will cease and it has been suggested that we consider installing a video with voice over giving a full explanation of our Fund and how information can be accessed for the benefit of our members. The committee wished to view a demonstration of any such video and satisfy themselves that this will be useful in enhancing the site for all concerned. A demonstration is to be arranged within the coming months.

7, The Chairman related the work that had been carried out at our convalescent and respite facility during the last year and invited discussion for future developments and improved facilities for the visits of members in need. It was agreed that the chairman will visit and the installation of some new equipment would be arranged. This may include TV, Cooker and Fridge.

A.O.B.

There was concern expressed regarding the Funds Data-base, which has been in existence for a number of years. It was pointed out that there is always the possibility of PC failure resulting in the loss of the relevant data and therefore we must consider the installation of an independent back up system.

The Benevolent Fund computer is a stand alone PC based at HQ with our almoner Tina Vince and is not in anyway connected to the LAS network system. This is a computer purchased by the Fund to deal with Benevolent Fund business only. We also have the problem of the increasing size of the information stored and therefore it was agreed that the Fund will purchase and install a back up system to cover this problem. AG to liaise with the LAS IT dept and discuss a viable solution that will be acceptable to both parties.

There being no other business the chairman thanked everyone for their valuable time and input and closed the meeting at 1630 Hrs.