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**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of The Autscape Organisation
Held at 11.30am on Thursday 26th July 2012 at Belsey Bridge Conference Centre,
Ditchingham, Bungay, Suffolk NR35 2DZ.**

Chaired by: Kalen (Chair of the board of directors of The Autscape Organisation)

The meeting adopted the agenda as printed.

- 1. The meeting approved the minutes of the 2011 AGM.**
(The minutes are available at <http://www.autscape.org/organisation/generalmeetings/> or, in hard copy, from the company secretary on request)
2. The Annual Report (including Accounts) as distributed to members on 27th April 2012 was presented to the meeting and the company secretary gave an oral summary to the meeting.
3. The meeting discussed an advisory motion seeking the membership's view on whether Autscape should require a majority of autistic people on the board and if so in what proportion (51% or 75%). The company secretary provided a brief outline of the board's reasoning, explaining that, in order to obtain needed skills, Autscape needs to seek trustees from beyond its beneficiary community and that this is likely to lead to the presence of more non-autistic people on the board than has been the case in the past. In response to a question the company secretary clarified that the definition of 'autistic' would be as given in the articles. In an extensive discussion, a strong majority of the meeting was in favour of the principle of Autscape remaining autistic-led. However concerns were raised about labelling individuals in order to implement a formal rule and the compatibility of this with Autscape's policies and traditions. Concerns were also expressed regarding the potential for leaving Autscape without sufficient trustees in the event that recruiting sufficient autistic people with the necessary skills proved problematic. There was also some discussion of the technicalities of implementing such a rule including the effect of various percentage figures and of the broader issue of the difficulties of recruiting trustees with needed skills. In response to a question the company secretary clarified that she could not see any means which would be compatible with equalities legislation of Autscape including neuro-diverse individuals (those who are not autistic but identify as having non-typical neurology e.g. those with ADHD) in such a rule. **The meeting voted to adopt an advisory resolution that Autscape should require a majority of 75% of autistic people on the board.**
4. The meeting discussed an advisory motion seeking the membership's views on whether Autscape should be required to maintain a majority of autistic members and if so in what proportion (51% or 75%). In response to comments, the company secretary explained that implementing such a rule would be procedurally complex but possible. She also explained that membership is not required to attend the Autscape conference and, in consequence, that the implementation of such a rule



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would have little or no financial implications. There was an extensive and finely balanced discussion and members clearly held very mixed views on the issue. The possibility of an 'associate membership' model (in which full membership would be open to autistic people and associate membership to others) was raised, but the company secretary advised that such a system is not possible within Autescape's current organisational structure. Some members stressed the importance of including people who were unsure of their autistic status, parents and family members of autistic people. Concerns were raised on principle on the grounds of human rights generally and on the grounds that Autescape is autistic run but has always welcomed all and adopting such a rule would bring about a fundamental change. Concerns were further raised about the practicality of implementing any such rule and those present might not be fully cognizant of all potential consequences of such a rule. A vote on the resolution was repeatedly tied. The chair withdrew the motion on the percentage. **The meeting decided (nem con) to consider the outcome of the vote as advisory to the board that the membership is evenly divided as to whether Autescape should be required to maintain a majority of autistic members.**

5. **Election of directors (4 vacancies).** There were no candidates. The meeting acknowledged the substantial contribution of retiring directors Peter and Kalen (and of former director Debbie). **The following individuals remain directors of The Autescape Organisation: Elaine, Martijn, Yo, Trish, and Stephen.**
[In accordance with Autescape's usual practise, directors are referred to here only by the names by which they are known to Autescape members. The full names of directors are available in the annual report.]
6. A member asked if it was possible to make the Autescape conference longer. The board explained that the possibility could be revisited but the issue had been explored on two previous occasions and rejected by the members on the grounds of cost.
7. A member asked whether Autescape could set up a forum as opposed to an email list. The member was asked to raise the issue via Autescape's info@ email address.

Meeting adjourned.