



Stevenage Grange Rotary Club

The Rotary Ophthalmoscope Initiative (ROI)

Progress Note (2) 4th February 2006

The purpose of this record is to ensure confirmation for those Rotarians, most closely involved in progressing the ROI (the formal Sub-committee, plus Andrew for information) have a note on progress. If colleagues have any subsequent engagement please let me know so that I can ensure this is appropriately logged for the record.

1. Links with Sightsavers International (SSI)

Further to my first note SSI have now requested 50 Optyse for field testing, not 30 as earlier advised. These will be distributed in the next 14 days. [This has subsequently been increased to 80, so that 30 units can be field-tested in Pakistan. \(see also end of note\)](#)

Good relationships have been built with Russell Richards. Russell is responsible for PR and Marketing at SSI. He is also the primary link with RIBI. Both will jointly celebrate a 30 year association (partnership) next year. Good timing for the Initiative.

Russell is very supportive.

- He has asked for permission to include the Initiative in SSI's next round of RIBI focussed literature.
- SSI will weave reference to the Rotary ophthalmoscope into their addresses to Conference, if we agree
- SSI will provide space for us to share the Conference stand, and will distribute it if we cannot attend.

2. Links with Vision 2020 UK

Contact has been made with Mike Brace the UK CEO. Mike is very excited about this. He will, in the first instance arrange for a link to our web site to be placed on theirs. [Now done](#)

3. Rotary links

These have been further developed. I previously reported to the Club that Chris Sweeney - RIBI website Editor carried the Press Release on Rotary News.

John Rowlands remains very supportive, and is a key conduit for both 1260 and RIBI Magazines. John may well lend marketing support for the next phase of the campaign.

DG Meirion is, as we all know, sees this as a highlight of his year. He is appraising fellow DG's this weekend of the initiative, and asking them to encourage their Districts and clubs to support this once the RIBI Mag is out. MM asked for and was provided with 30 copies of the Press Release, in colour to hand out. He also has copies of the draft leaflet. He wants to arrange a short slot for Club to provide an update to District Council on 22nd February. Rodney Howell (RIBI Magazine Editor) has kindly provided me with a touched up shot of the Rotary ophthalmoscope (RO), which now features on our web site, and leaflet update.

RO(I) Progress Note 2

RIBI International Chairman, Keith Paver has agreed to embrace the RO on the International Stand at the RIBI Conference. This with the slot on the SSI stand means we have prime site location (with the RIBI stand) on the main concourse. The alternative, says David Fowler, the Conference Organiser is to buy space (£150) on the 2nd floor and away from the key flow.

Keith has TV and DVD facilities and suggests that we produce a quality 'video' for continuous viewing ... particularly if we cannot attend. See Conference note, and sponsorship below.

4. Conference matters - marketing

Three conferences will happen between March 18th and April 23rd. These are:

Inner Wheel 18th/19th March – Belfast

District 1260 7th/8th April – Cardiff

RIBI 22nd/23rd April – Belfast

We need to consider:

- whether we can / should attend any / all;
- Who can, should attend, and
- funding arrangements
- What material is to be provided, and who will produce it.

Four of us are attending 1260 Cardiff, but are we prepared to 'person' the stand? [It is important to have representation at Belfast \(RIBI\). However those attending Cardiff cannot do so. Other members of the Club are to be invited to volunteer for a craicing good W/E.](#)

On material, Keith Paver has suggested/requested that we produce a quality DVD. Bryan, Ray and Ian are aware that feelers have been put out on this to see if we can get material together and recruit resources to help. The timescale is tight, but I am prepared to give it a shot, if agreeable to the Club.

Contact has also been made with Ophthalmos and Roger with regard to possible attendance, resources and funding by Ophthalmos.

5. Sponsorship

Whilst I guess technically, we could anticipate 'selling' the first 1,000 units at a premium and draw on that, it would good PR to embrace others to fund the Initiative's costs. Russell Ball has put me in touch with key contacts at both MBDA and the Hertfordshire Chamber and approaches were made last this week.

I have also provided a 'Sponsorship opportunity' link and page on the Club's web site: This invites interest, initially for the leaflet, from a range of prospects. These include those:

- associated with the optical business
- with overseas interests
- selling, or potentially selling to Rotarians
- with a personal interest

RO(I) Progress Note 2

6. Web site

A web presence is key to the marketing and sales process. Primarily it provides universal access for all, without having the costs, or hassle, associated with personal contact.

The current site is standing up well, but we may need to buy additional server space if traffic and volumes grow. Alternatively we can create (buy) a linked RO site to provide faster access, as does Shelter boxes. Something for the future, but relevant if we make the DVD available worldwide.

As mentioned above a sponsorship link and form has been added. In addition, as webmaster, I continue to amend, tidy and lighten up the material in the light of comments. A new page link - "Fact sheet on world blindness" has been added. This is culled from the draft leaflet material.

7. Marketing matters

Ian has done a great job in creating awareness of the potential of the Optyse, and its inventor. He created a link with Jenny Tolhurst at Sightsavers, promoted awareness at both National and District House of Friendship Exhibitions as well as at District Council level. Most importantly he gained it RIBI Centennial Project status, which is a key to the future marketing strategy.

We are now into the delivery phase and need to be clear about how to, and who might handle marketing matters from here.

The team will be aware that only a week before the launch we had no agreed guidance on the pricing strategy, our marketing target or a clearly understood and communicated rationale for doing this.

Very quickly it was agreed that we would price this at £25, the Club would primarily distribute the product through Sightsavers (subject to a agreement - yet to be compiled by SMS), that through email - we would target 25,000 units within 5 years, and the objectives were threefold:

- Facilitating a cost effective way for Rotarians to help eliminate unnecessary world blindness by 2020
- Promoting awareness of Rotary at all levels
- Supporting local innovations having wide-area humanitarian impact

These three key objectives have guided my work since in influencing the style and content of the Press Release, the draft leaflet, and web site style. Commercial produced copies of the first two were distributed at the launch and provided to the DG for this weekend's UK DG Meeting. An invoice for £50, which I have paid, will be presented to Ian, as Treasurer.

8. Order and distribution arrangements

As before, emerging arrangements, including the issue of delivery costs needs to be formally reviewed and agreed. [Since agreed \(6/2/06\) that we will charge extra for P&P.](#)

A revamped Order Form has been loaded onto the web site. Reference to Revenue & Customs has been deleted on Ray's suggestion. Ray has provided International bank details for electronic transfer, but asks that Ian as Treasurer confirms this.

RO(I) Progress Note 2

9. Press links

So far this has only be covered by RIBI, Stevenage Mercury and District 1200 (Somerset)

10. Formalising matters from a Club perspective

You will recall that as Secretary I have earlier advised that we should, and have subsequently made arrangements, in large measure, to formalise matters to both protect and inform the club. This has included:

- a) Proposing that an EGM be held for this purpose, and that a meeting of the Sub-Committee be convened on 6th February.
- b) Suggesting in my last note – Item 4, Issue 1, that a Board or Panel be formed to manage between Business Meetings
- c) Taking such steps as appear necessary to convert the gentlemen's agreement Ian referred to in his email in January 2006, into a formal statement(s) of arrangement, between the Club and Ophthalmos Ltd.

With regard to an EGM and date. All respondents have agreed with the need for this and a potential date of 27th March 2006 has emerged. [Since brought forward to 20/2/06](#)

With regard to item 9b, this cannot be agreed until the EGM. In the meantime, given that much needs to be done to meet conference deadlines, It is suggested that the Club be asked on 6th February to empower [confirm] that the Sub-Committee to take such action, as may be undertaken by an RO Board if approved at the EGM, be undertaken in the meantime, by the Sub-Committee, subject to it not exercising any decisions that might embarrass the Club.

With regard to creating a legal relationship with Ophthalmos Ltd, progress has been made. I sought a Letter of Intent of the Company and a drafted a legal indemnity covering public statements issued by the Club and product liability for their consideration. This has been signed by Ophthalmos Ltd., but need to be signed by the Club. I subsequently sought legal advise from Robin Cooper who is generally happy with the tone of the indemnity, but suggests this could be tightened a bit on any revision. Robin was provided with a free meal at the launch for his help.

Robin is unable to provide additional support. Following consultation with Ray, I have approached Ian Hamilton. [Ian has subsequently confirmed his willingness to act as an Advisor](#)

In the meantime, I am assuming that the Sub-Committee, approved by Council and the last Business meeting, plus Andrew for information, shall form the Panel, as outlined in 9b above. In this regard I have looked to keep colleagues abreast of developments and initiatives undertaken on its behalf by email ... save that I have not copied all into matters of detail.

This progress note (2) concludes matters to today (4 February 2006).

I shall prepare an outline agenda for our Meeting at the Corus at 7pm on Monday 6th February to embrace formal approvals required.

RO(I) Progress Note 2

11. Update on field testing etc.

As at 8th February 170 units have been allocated by Opthalmos Limited. 80 Units have been issued to Sight Savers International, as above. A further 30 have been issued to Colin Cook in South Africa, on behalf of Vision 2020. The other 60 will be issued to the International Centre for Eye Health (ICEH) for overseas students to use here in the UK and take back with them to their respective developing countries. The units are part of the first batch of 225, paid by the Club and engraved Donated by Stevenage Grange Rotary Club. The remaining 275, and others will be badged Rotary International, in accordance with the marketing material

Summary

This is the 2nd Update Note. It attempts to document decisions made and actions taken and required with regard to the ROI. An agenda will follow tomorrow to embrace formal approvals required to frank actions taken following the first meeting on 23rd January 2006.

SMS

Hon Sec. 4th February 2006

Sent to:

Bryan Cornish, President
Ray Turner, President Elect
Ian Begg, Past President
Andrew Fraser, 2nd Vice President, for information