

Board of Trustees Meeting

MINUTES

26th February 2024, 6 – 7:50pm

Via Teams

Present:

Andrew Brabban (Chair) (AB)
Helen Butters (HB)
Theresa Pass (TP)
David Parkinson (DP)
Avarni Jagpal (AJ)
Sam Ruck (SR)
Sharon Conlon (SC)
Lisa Cormack (LC)
Adrian Dean (AD)
Jonathan Clay (JC)
Barry Brennan (BB)
Chrisie Neuman (CN)

Apologies:

Sidra Ali (SA)

Mentioned in minutes:

Service Effectiveness Group (SEG)
Financial Sustainability Group (FSG)
Internal Governance Group (IGG)
Beverley Goodwin (BG)
Service Development Group (SDG)

1: Introductions, Apologies & Conflicts of Interest:

Apologies from SA.

No conflicts, however, LC mentioned that she is currently working with TP and Visyon on the fundraising plan and her CEO asked for a declaration of interest to be completed for disability positive.

2: Minutes & Action Log from previous meeting:

Minutes 20.11.23 - The minutes of the Trustee Meeting of 20th November 2023 were checked for accuracy. No comments or adjustments, all agreed that the minutes were accurate.

Action: Send over to AB for signing off.

Action log 20.11.23

Actions were discussed and progress updated. Actions previously allocated to ND were reassigned to TP.

3: Safeguarding:

Safeguarding report highlighted that safeguarding cases remain high but current challenges are related to scheduling meetings with relevant parties for effective communication on risk management issues. SR shared concerns about delayed or unavailable meetings with CAMHS/hub services impacting young people's experience under care. This is an issue that

Visyon and others such as JDI are raising and addressing continually. SR mentioned a meeting with commissioners is scheduled this week to raise it again.

SR, BG and SC recently conducted an audit in relation to Section 11 of the 2004 Children Act. SC commented that the audit presented a fair representation of where the organisation sits from a safeguarding perspective, and she was happy with the outcome. A couple of actions have been developed and are being worked on by SR and BG but overall, Visyon safeguarding policies and procedures are very robust.

Board agreement was requested and given, and a 12-month review cycle was established.

4. Chief Executive's Summary Report:

TP highlighted that we have been successful in the bid for Healthy Young Minds tender and that SR and TP are meeting with the commissioner to discuss the contract, timelines and payment schedules next week. An update will be provided afterwards, and further support requested from the Board if required.

AD asked if we are looking at energy efficiency/greener grants as well as closing the bases on a Friday. TP confirmed that we are actively looking into this and have identified a lot of funding for this but the current issue is that we don't have a lease for Fellowship House which is one of the criteria for being eligible. TP confirmed that we are also at early stages of discussion with CE about a new lease.

Finance & Business Development Report

TP thanked the team for pulling the report together.

BB asked about the absenteeism and how we are able to monitor trends and patterns as this isn't shown in the report. TP said absenteeism is up from before covid as people are more reluctant to come in and work with any similar symptoms to covid. SR also confirmed that our staff have reported feeling a lot more poorly with illnesses post Covid and it is difficult for them to work from home due to young people wanting face to face appointments, resulting in more time off.

Action: Amend formatting re: charts to make easier to read.

Action: Include comparison stats and trends in next report re: absenteeism.

Therapeutic Services Report

A special thanks was given to Simon our handyman volunteer for all the recent work he has done in Crewe and Congleton.

A discussion about signposting and LAC's accessing the service was held as sometimes Visyon isn't the best route due to the complexities and traumas they have. They often require longer term support that isn't offered by Visyon.

AB asked about the level of cause of concerns - they remain high, but they look like they are starting to plateau. SR commented that this could be due to the capacity we have to see only so many young people in a year. It would be interesting to see, if we increased our capacity to see more people, whether this would continue to trend upwards again.

5: Chair's Report

AB provided a verbal report and mentioned that a meeting was held with JDI in December which was beneficial and suggested more regular meetings should be held.

AB noted that some planning is to be done for the development day in May.

AB shared that ND is no longer with the organisation.

AB thanked the team that worked hard on the Cheshire East bid before Christmas.

6: SEG update:

SA and TP met with BG. It was an opportunity for SA to ask BG questions and bring her up to date with our procedures, etc. Learning on both sides was identified. A suggestion was made to merge the SDG and SEG to make them more fit for purpose. Further discussion to be held with HB and SC about this proposal.

Action: Proposal for SDG and SEG merger to be done.

7: FSG update:

The board members discussed the current deficit and expressed concerns about the organisation's financial situation. The reserves were discussed and how long these would sustain Visyon. FSG are going to be meeting more regularly to keep a close eye on the financial situation.

A budget has been drafted and options to bring more income in are being explored, including a robust fundraising plan and utilising an external bi writer for national applications for multi-year fundings.

BB conducted a financial audit in January and will be working with the Finance Officer on some actions to streamline and make the procedures more robust and efficient. TP commented that the new finance officer's approach is very different and thorough.

Support offered by Board for ongoing requests in relation to this.

Actions (ongoing): FSG to monitor the income and expenditure and formulate a plan to get the monthly shortfall back down to zero. Board to offer support when required. TP to continue to meet with FSG, LDS and SR to look at operational options for next financial year.

8. IGG update:

IGG are currently working on the insurance renewal process and will be meeting in March to look at quotes provided by the broker.

A number of policies have been updated and scrutinised. AB to sign these off once final amendments to formatting have been made.

IGG have started their actions on the risk register but these need to be completed.

9. Management Accounts & Budgets:

BB reiterated that he will be working with the finance officer on the MI Packs to streamline this information and make it more meaningful and easier to understand.

Other updates were covered in FSG update.

10. Health & Safety:

There were no major incidents reported except for one person falling off an exercise ball – no injury occurred. AD mentioned ongoing risk assessments and maintenance tasks are being conducted.

11. Policies & Procedures:

A number of policies have been updated and scrutinized by IGG. Final formatting is being done and then they will be sent thorough for AB to sign.

12. Business Continuity:

No updates to the document but TP is focused on the financial aspect of this and also the buildings. If we get the lease sorted with Cheshire East around Fellowship House and we have any substantial work done, we need to factor in how that would affect the day to day working.

13. Risk Register:

Financial section discussed and some changes FSG have made. Other sub-groups to look at their sections and review risk ratings.

Action: SEG and IGG to review risk register ratings.

Date of next meeting: 20 May 2024

All meetings 6.00pm unless otherwise stated.
Venue: via Teams

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "AJB".

Position: Chair of Trustees

Date: 29th May 2024