

## Board of Trustees Meeting

### MINUTES

21<sup>st</sup> August 2023, 6 – 7:40pm

Via zoom

#### **Present:**

Andrew Brabban (Chair) (AB)  
Helen Butters (HB)  
Nicola Daniels (ND)  
Theresa Pass (TP)  
David Parkinson (DP)  
Avarni Jagpal (AJ)  
Christina Neuman (CN)  
Barry Brennan (BB)  
Sam Ruck (SR)  
Sharon Conlon (SC)

#### **Apologies:**

Adrian Dean (AD)  
Jonathan Clay (JC)

#### **Mentioned in minutes:**

Service Effectiveness Group (SEG)  
Financial Sustainability Group (FSG)  
Internal Governance Group (IGG)

#### **1: Introductions, Apologies & Conflicts of Interest:**

AB opened the meeting and apologies were received from AD and JC.  
No conflicts raised in this meeting.

#### **2: Minutes & Action Log from previous meeting:**

Minutes 22.05.23 - The minutes of the Trustee Meeting of 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2023 were checked for accuracy. No comments or adjustments, all agreed that the minutes were accurate.

*Action: CN to send over to AB for signing off.*

#### Action log 22.05.23

Most actions on the log have been completed. Outstanding actions have been revisited and acknowledged.

#### **3: Safeguarding:**

SR reported that safeguarding is quieter at the moment due to it being the summer holidays – currently have 62 cases open but they don't need reviewing every week. This is lower than what we have normally, but we are expecting an increase come September. The new way we are recording cause for concerns is really useful and helping us to collect information. A review once it has been in place for 6 months will be a good point to see the changes and make any necessary adaptations.

#### **4. Chief Executive's Summary Report:**

TP summarised her report and highlighted the upcoming Crewe premises move. A much better venue, and a private landlord have been found – currently in discussions and hoping to move in on 9<sup>th</sup> October. ND and TP to go over on Thursday and check for updates on this. Currently we are on target with this, and everything is going smoothly.

HB asked about the strategy and offered to discuss how costs can be reduced in SEG meetings. TP agreed. HB also asked about the staff wellbeing and monitoring this, how are management doing this. TP and SR commented that staff wellbeing varies month to month and is impacted by the current climate. Having the structure of Team Leaders helps to share the monitoring and understanding of how staff are feeling.

AB commented on the risks, in regard to turnover and recruitment. Is there a consequence of that in terms of impacting our delivery or contractual funding? TP advised that SR monitors the bigger delivery contracts very closely and the impact is most likely longer term. Recruitment has been very hit and miss, some rounds have been very poor whilst others you have much more candidates – there doesn't seem to be a pattern. Having volunteers and placements back is helping to bring the cohort of staff back up.

AB noted the shortfall on income, do we know how much income we are missing due to lack of staff/capacity. ND reassured AB that we are fulfilling our statutory contract commitments, the difficulty lies with trying to source unrestricted funding. TP also highlighted that we are continually in discussion with funders to advise of any difficulties in staffing.

DP advised that there is a National Community Fund for cost of living that we may be eligible for. TP to look into this further and discuss with LDS.

*Action: TP to discuss with LDS.*

#### Finance & Business Development Report

ND summarised her report and highlighted key points. Currently in a deficit for the Quarter, a more robust fundraising plan is being developed to keep the flow going, NHS income down due to GAP and SURGE but expenses are also down from last year. We have had to make repairs to the premises. Staff absence is still quite high. Everything else is going smoothly, there has been an increase in the website hits, and more fundraising money coming through for events happening in the coming months.

Currently working on grant applications for unrestricted funding and searching for new funders to ensure the deficit does not increase.

TP and ND monitoring applications and budget very closely.

AB asked if there is a timeline for decisions – ND to monitor for the next quarter and then make a decision. No other comments from FSG members – actions are in place to address this. BB and DP have scrutinised in FSG and will review the risk register.

AB asked if we can quantify the changes we have made to our recycling/waste management and sustainability actions. TP reported that she and CN had met to start measuring our baseline but have encouraged others to form an environmental/sustainability group to move this forwards.

*Action: CN to remind trustees to send over GDPR certificates/training records.*

#### Therapeutic Services Report

SR noted the key points are the restructure we are implementing, the new cause for concern template – self harm is becoming more prevalent in young age groups and we are looking to do some work and research into this to understand why. Other point that is important is the Cheshire East recommission is out for tender and is looking different to what it currently is. We will be meeting internally to discuss our plan and discussing with ICB before resubmitting our tender – 5 year proposal.

AB encouraged a board discussion around this. SR to distribute the information and trustees to meet with SR to discuss this.

*Action: SR to distribute information and arrange time/date to meet trustees. CN to organise with trustees.*

### **5: Chair's Report**

AB reported that we are currently interviewing for a new trustee, and this will be done on 30th August. If successful, they are hoping to recommend and vote her in at the AGM.

AB mentioned the Crew move which was discussed earlier in the meeting.

AB asked for trustees to see if they can attend the next strategy day on 19<sup>th</sup> October instead of 16<sup>th</sup>. Responses needed as soon as possible.

AB asked BB to share the work he has done on the Trustee Skills Map. Other trustees are now required to fill this out so an overall picture of skills and gaps can be seen.

*Action: CN to save skills document in new folder and ask trustees to complete this in the next two weeks.*

*Action: CN to add line in Trustee Onboarding Process to capture skills at beginning.*

### **6: SEG update:**

HB went through the SEG minutes from the July meeting.

SEG have discussed the remit and purpose of the group. The main thing found to be beneficial to have as a standing item on the agenda was safeguarding. SC asked if she could now lead on this due to her expertise. SC agreed. SR thanked SC for her recent help and support with safeguarding issues.

An agreed agenda was developed to use at every meeting, so the important things are always covered, including risk.

The restructure has been a recent point of discussion, as well as the changes and use of the database.

### **7: FSG update:**

DP provided an overview. The deficit has been discussed and scrutinised, there will be some review of the risk register in relation to the finances and current challenges, the auditors have met with FSG to work on the draft accounts for 22-23 and these are to be finalised at the beginning of September. Once finalised the accounts will need to be approved by the Board – this will be done via email.

*Action: Accounts 22-23 to be approved by Board via email once finalised.*

### **8. IGG update:**

CN gave an overview. IGG have looked at the new Head of Terms document for Fellowship House – ND is still working on this and liaising with CE Council. The H&S guidance has been finalised and discussion about the new Crewe premises has been had – a look over the lease is still required. Some policies and procedures still need reviewing as a couple of meetings have been cancelled.

### **9. Management Accounts & Budgets:**

Discussed in FSG update and ND's Finance report.

### **10. Health & Safety:**

CN gave an overview. We have only had one accident; this was dealt with appropriately – member of staff was fine. Most of the annual checks have been completed, remedial works have been carried out and some asbestos removed as part of this. Some issues have been happening in Breeden House (not Visyon but other parties in the building) – advised of these

by receptionist. Team in Crewe are aware of the issues and following steps to ensure our staff, parents and clients remain safe.

#### **11. Policies & Procedures:**

##### Disclosure and Barring Service Checks Policy

SC asked about the portability section – acceptance of portable DBS in some circumstances and clarification of the meaning of ‘very recent DBS’. We don’t do this, so why is it in there? All agreed to remove this section (4.2).

##### Data Subject Access Request Policy

No comments or objections.

##### GDPR Data Protection Policy

AB asked about post Brexit GDPR updates after some recent training – BB to look further into this but feels the policy we have still stands, the only major thing relating to GDPR outside the UK is the international transferring of data – which we don’t do.

##### Privacy, Dignity and Respect Policy

No comments or objections.

##### Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Statement

No comments or objections

*Action: CN to send policies for sign off.*

#### **12. Energy Renewal**

Energy brokers are now contacting CN about renewal as the contract expires in March 24. Some exact prices have come through and are slightly higher than our current contract. Agreement to hold on for now to wait for the Price Cap in October and look into the Energy Bills Discount Scheme.

No Board approval required for signing new contract unless it is out of the budget.

*Action: Ask about the EBDS and check eligibility.*

#### **13. Strategy/Development & Objectives**

TP has written a new strategy and it requires approval.

AB noted it was well presented, built on some of the aims discussed in the development day and reflected on what has been going on within SLT and other stakeholders. AB opened this up for further comment. SC, HB, BB, AJ all happy with the document and happy to approve. DP to read document after meeting and provide comment via email. DP agreed that other trustees can approve in the meantime.

No other objections, strategy approved.

#### **14. Risk Register:**

No changes to be made at the moment. FSG to review highlighted risk re: funding (specifically about Cheshire East Re-commission) in their next meeting and once more information has been gathered, the Board to revisit this risk together.

*Action: FSG to review risk initially, then Board to meet and revisit once more information is known.*

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**Date of next meeting:** 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023

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

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Signed: 

Andrew Brabban

Position: Chair of Trustees

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024