

## Minutes of the M10 2025 Trustees' Meeting

<b>Venue</b> Root & Branch Office and Online on MS Teams	<b>Date</b> <b>Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December</b> <b>6.30 pm</b>
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<b>Trustees Present</b> Rosie Wheeler David Atkins Emma Welch Neil Griffiths Vicki Silk Colin Bell Carolyn Place Martyn Cooper	<b>Also Present</b> Tanya Parkinson
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### Welcome

David welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Nick Daisley and Richard Taylor.

### 1. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting and trustee meeting

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting ( 14<sup>th</sup> October 2025), were agreed as accurate by trustees present. These can be published on the website as Unratified Minutes and will be ratified at the AGM in 2026.

The minutes of the Meeting M9 (October 2025), were agreed and ratified as accurate by trustees present. These can be published on the website.

**Action Emma**

#### Matters Arising (And Progress Sheet)

There were no matters arising from the M9 Minutes.

Two items remain on the Progress Sheet.

**See Appendix A**

### 2. Operational Review

#### Safeguarding

There had been two safeguarding concerns at R&B since the last meeting. Tanya reported that both incidents had been handled correctly, and correct procedure

followed. The trustees thanked her and the staff for handling the situation appropriately.

#### New Referrals

There have been new referrals which has brought us up to capacity. Five new referrals are currently being inducted and this will bring the Project up to 42 sessions per week if all are taken on. The staff will discuss this at their next team briefing.

One participant is currently on the Branching Out programme.

#### The Partnership and Audits

Tanya has recently had a meeting with Bridewell which she found very useful. This stimulated a trustee discussion about funding from the Partnership and it is considered useful to invite a meeting with the partnership, at which a trustee will be present. Tanya will aim to set this up. The trustees will explore the possibility of NHS funding from Swindon.

**Action All**

#### Fundraising

October and November had brought in some funds from grants and unrestricted funding via Just Giving. Tanya reported that Fiscal Tech have been fundraising for Root & Branch for two years via Just Giving and this has been a wonderful source of income. The Trustees would like to extend thanks to Fiscal Tech for their amazing efforts. Rosie will write to them.

**Action Rosie**

November saw the last piece of money in from the current Lottery Funding.

Karen the new fundraiser has been in post since September and has made good contacts locally, but no big grant applications are currently being made. Rachel did leave a good hand over for Karen. It is agreed that Karen will continue to look for potential funding from Grants and Foundations, she will be supported by Trustees who will aim to find another big corporate donor. Colin and Vicki offered to support with this.

**Action Colin and Vicki**

Recent fundraising at the Winter Fayre has raised £5,074. This is the most ever raised at a Winter Fayre – and is a reflection of what a wonderful and busy day it was. 177 visitors were counted on site. The event was a huge success, created a fabulous atmosphere and has been very positive for everyone involved. The trustees all thanked Tanya, staff and volunteers for all their work to make this event happen.

#### Lottery Bid

Tanya has drafted the next Bid for Lottery Funding. Our current staff are at capacity therefore the bid asks for additional hours for current staff as well as new staff for outreach work. This has been circulated to all trustees. David has written part of the bid to describe the experience of the board, and David and Carolyn will help complete the financial part of the bid. Emma and Nick have agreed to pull together all comments

into a final draft. The Bid is due in on the 15<sup>th</sup> December. Emma will write a statement for the bid regarding the National Living Wage (see notes in Governance below). Everyone will send comments to Emma and Nick by 12<sup>th</sup> December so that we meet the deadline for application

**Action All**

### 3. Financial Update

#### Finance Reporting/ Current Position.

Carolyn had run the reports from Xero – but this did not represent the end of a financial quarter. Quarterly reports will be reviewed in January.

Current reports show that the bank balance remains healthy and is comparable to this time last year.. and the budget variance report shows to be tracking nicely against the budget with a surplus.

Emma Endicote, who runs a Charity Bookkeeping service, has been recruited. She will be engaged as a consultant and will invoice us hourly each month. It is envisaged that she will be required for around 3 hours per month. She will support Sarah with the running of Xero and support the board with the generation and interpretation of the finance reports.

### 4. Governance, Policies, Strategy

#### Recruitment

Vicki has been using a local recruitment agent to try to find a suitable candidate for the Administrator Role. Two applicants have been shortlisted.

**Action Vicki/Tanya**

#### Real Living Wage/Oxford Living Wage

Emma confirmed that we have not signed up to the Real Living Wage Organisation at this time because their annual review of hourly rate does not tie into the timing of our Staff Pay Review. (RLW update in October, whilst our pay review happens in April every year.)

Therefore we will use the recommendations of both the Real Living Wage and the Oxford Living Wage (set by the Oxford City Council) to inform our annual pay review each year in April. Both rates are set higher than the National Minimum Wage.

Emma confirmed however that currently all our staff are paid more than the new Real Living Wage recommended hourly rate.

Emma will write a statement to reflect this for the Lottery Bid.

**Action Emma**

#### Companies House Personal Codes

Vicki updated the board. This is now a requirement for all Board Members to adhere to. Most of the Trustees have now been through the Identification Process to generate

their Code and Vicki is keeping a record of all Codes. The final trustees will go through this process with support from Vicki.

**Action Vicki**

#### Christmas

It was approved by the board that all staff would be given a voucher for Christmas and that all volunteers will be given a Christmas Card from the board.

**Action Rosie**

#### Interim Meeting with Tanya

It was agreed that, because the trustees now meet every other month, on months without a meeting we would schedule a one-to-one meeting for Tanya. In January this will be arranged between David and Tanya. David will get in touch to diarise.

**Action David**

#### BT

Richard had renegotiated a contract for R&B with BT. The Board approved this new contract and thanked Richard for his work on this. Emma will contact Richard and inform him that it is agreed to go ahead with this.

## 5. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2026. 6.30 pm**

#### **Items for the Agenda for Jan/Feb:**

- ID Policies that will need reviewing in 2026 (Reserves Policy Review)
- Start Staff Pay Review Process
- Create Sub Committee of help for Plant Fayre
- Publish Dates for years closures and open days (Tanya)
- Fundraising Review (Colin/Vicki)

Following this the date of the next trustee meeting will be **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April.**