

## Minutes of the M12 2023 Trustees' Meeting

<b>Venue</b> Root and Branch, Westmill Farm & Online MS Teams	<b>Date</b> Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2024 6.30 pm
---	---

<b>Trustees Present</b> Rosie Wheeler Emma Welch Alistaire Knight Richard Taylor David Atkins Neil Griffiths	<b>Also Present</b> Tanya Parkinson
--	--

### Welcome.

Richard and David welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Colin Bell. Richard will touch base with Ian Matheson and Nick Daisley this month.

**Action Richard**

### 1. Minutes of the previous trustee meeting

The draft minutes of the Meeting M12 (December 2023) were agreed and ratified as accurate by trustees present, they can be published on the website.

**Action Emma**

#### Matters Arising

Emma confirmed that the trustee annual report and the 2022/2023 accounts had been uploaded to the Charity Commission portal and filed on their website.

Three items remain on the Progress Sheet for review next month.

**See Appendix A**

### 2. Financial Review

Sarah, the new office manager, has had a full handover from Joanna and is now able to track and record finances. Sarah now has access to the Root and Branch bank account and to online banking.

Therefore Tanya and Sarah are now able to get figures to Alistaire this month. Alistaire will be able to prepare a financial report for the trustee for February.

**Action Tanya**

Joanna has now finished working for Root & Branch but she remains in the background as a supporting Freelance Finance Officer who we can use ad hoc for occasional support.

Richard now has online banking access and will approve the next tranche of expenses.

Root and Branch remains in a healthy financial position.

Sarah has been working overtime and will claim overtime this month.

#### Fundraising Update

Tanya updated the board on recent money coming in. Two recent grants have been achieved, one from the Oxfordshire Community Foundation (for core costs) and another uplift grant from the National Lottery. Other private funding has been gifted from individuals and the trustees thanked all our donors.

The board agreed to advertise the position of fundraiser again. It is hoped that, now that Christmas as is over, we will have some new applicants for the job role in the New Year. The job will be advertised again on Facebook and the Charity Jobs website. The board will continue to explore their personal contacts and put out messages on linked in.

**Action All**

### **3. Operational Review**

#### Dates for 2024 events and closures

Tanya had met with all the staff and circulated the proposed dates for events and closures to the board. The trustees agreed the dates and the event dates will be published on the website.

#### Revised Structure, Growing Roots and Branching Out Programme.

Following the recent staff day, at which the staff team did lots of work on the daily structure at R&B, Tanya explained to the board the plans. The plans are based on the results of a participant questionnaire and on the R&B strategy and vision document.

The full results of the questionnaire will be forwarded to the board.

**Action Tanya**

The board agreed the plans, which will ensure more movement for participants between activities and involve more structured 8 week programmes which will culminate in participants receiving certificates of achievement.

The Growing Roots 8 week programme has been devised by Therapeutic Horticulturist Katie and will take participants through an 8 week course in the garden, designed to build confidence and team work.

Alongside this, an 8 Week programme will be run by Selina and will be based on our Healthy Hearts initiative and incorporate elements of physical activity and nutrition for good health.

Within the programme there will still be plenty of choice for participants and each day, for the second half of the session, the normal activities of craft, literacy skills, cooking and woodwork will also be on offer allowing them to branch out into new activities and meet different volunteers.

The new structure will enable participants to experience more whilst working on personal goals and targets. The success of the new structure will be reviewed following the first 8 week cycle, at the end of March.

#### Outcome measures

Tanya will circulate new documentation that describes three methods of measuring outcomes that are being introduced by the Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership. The staff plan to adopt and trial all three measurement tools.

The Dialogue scale (will be 12 questions) about personal satisfaction that participants score.

Goals Based Outcomes – will enable staff to work with participants on personal goals.

ReQoI – which is a scale of 10 questions, that the staff already use and find helpful.

Tanya will forward details of each measurement tool.

**Action Tanya**

#### Trustee training/update for MS Office/ Teams and SharePoint

Root and Branch Staff are now using Office 365 Teams to store and share documents and have moved away from Dropbox. The dropbox files will be kept by Emma as an archive of material for the required time. Emma will send round a doodle poll to find the best date and time for an online trustee meeting to review trustee use of, and access to, the Root&Branch MS Office 365 Teams files (On SharePoint)

**Action Emma**

## **4. Governance, Policies, Strategy**

#### Policy Review (And review of codes of conduct)

All trustees have received their Policies for review. All policies still refer to 'Service Users' and the trustees agree that we will replace this terminology in all policies to use the term 'Participants'.

**See Appendix A**

Emma will touch base with Colin to make sure the staff and volunteer handbooks both work together and align.

Work is being developed on the Code of Conduct for Volunteers and Richard suggests that all code of conducts should align. Tanya has asked participants for feedback and suggestions for their own code of conduct, so that this reflects their language. These new codes of conduct will be represented within the policies.

Once new codes of conducts are agreed and in use, Tanya will make sure these slot into the correct policies. Codes will also be displayed on the walls with-in the buildings.

Tanya, Colin and other board members have been working on a new code of conduct for volunteers that will sit within the volunteer handbook. The code is designed to set boundaries and expectations and will ultimately create a happy and safe working environment for all. Trustees will help Tanya next week while she introduces the new code.

**Action Tanya, Emma and Richard**

All trustees agreed to continue to read and review the policies and will refer to Tanya to make sure that each working document is still appropriate. The trustees agreed that we should focus on one or two policies each monthly meeting to make sure that each is reviewed thoroughly. It is agreed that the two policies to prioritise now are the Safeguarding Policy (Policy 7), and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy (Policy 15). Emma will send the Safeguarding Policy to Rosie who has agreed to review it for next month. David has already received the DEI policy.

**Action Rosie and David**

The Volunteer Handbook will be reviewed in March.

**Action Emma**

Safeguarding:

Emma and Rosie met over the December holiday. Rosie will take the lead on Safeguarding and Emma will support. (Emma will take the lead on HR with Rosie in Support).

Rosie will meet Tanya this month to review Safeguarding and Safeguarding training. Tanya reported that there are no current Safeguarding concerns for the staff team.

**Action Rosie and Tanya**

HR:

The staff handbook states that unspent holiday for staff needs to be taken during the year and cannot be rolled over. The trustees agreed that it is really important that the staff take their holiday in order that they have a break and a rest. However, this year has been exceptional because Tanya has been short staffed for much of the year and has been unable to take all her holiday. Tanya agreed that she would take more holiday before the end of March, but the trustees approved that, due to exceptional circumstances, Tanya could roll over unspent holiday to next financial year.

## 5. Date of Next Meeting

Date of next meeting will be Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at Root and Branch, at 6:30 PM.

Items from the rolling agenda will include:

- Policy Review (Policies 7 and 15)
- Start to look at staff pay review (for which a budget is required) @ **Tanya and Alistaire**
- Strategic Plan Review.

Emma will also forward (by email) the strategic Plan to all this month so that everyone can remind themselves of our current strategy. @ **Emma**