**Minutes of the M7 2023 Trustees’ Meeting**

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| **Venue**  Root & Branch Westmill, and online on MS Teams | **Date**  **Tuesday 4th July 2023** |

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| **Trustees Present**  Nick Daisley  David Atkins (online)  Colin Bell  Alistaire Knight (online)  Ian Matheson (online)  Richard Taylor  Rosie Wheeler (online) | **Also Present**  Tanya Parkinson  Neil Griffiths |

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# Welcome.

Nick welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Emma Welch, and Svetlina Jeanneret.

**1. Minutes of the previous trustee meeting**

Minutes from the Meeting M6 (June 2023) were agreed and ratified as accurate by trustees present, ND proposing, AK seconding. These can be moved to the ‘Approved Folder’ in Dropbox and published on the website.

**Action Emma**

Matters Arising

It was noted that it has been only three weeks since the previous Trustee Meeting, and that the Centre Manager has been absent for one of those weeks; therefore the charity has not been able to progress some of these issues fully.

*Fundraising and Budget*ND confirmed that he has corresponded with the Oxfordshire Chairs Network with respect to finding contacts, but that this has not found success so far.

AK confirmed that he and TP had had an online discussion about budgets, attended also by JS and ND, on 21st June.

*Staffing*  
The new Office Manager, Helen, started on 4th July and although immediately very busy, has taken on the role very effectively.  
  
Advertising for a new Key Worker to start in September, has been actioned, but response has been disappointing so far, and it was agreed that the advert should be more widely disseminated on social media. RW has confirmed her availability for the interview process, which is set for 20th July.

*Governance*  
DA has prepared a draft Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Policy suitable for the needs of R&B, and will shortly making it available for review. Currently DEI is reflected in all our policies and is a fundamental part of our ethos and culture – however a stand-alone policy has been requested for funding purposes.

*Trustee Recruitment*EW and RW had been able to confirm that Rosie’s co-option to the Board had been actioned, and that required paperwork had been delivered to Charities Commission, etc.

Actions have been recorded on the Progress Sheet for review next month. Seven items have remained on the Progress Sheet, with a new item (Health & Safety sub-committee) added.

**See Appendix A**

**2. Financial Update**

AK had been unable to provide a financial update pack prior to this meeting, but will make one available for circulation presently.

The year ahead must see a focus on generating core funds – project funding is good, but requires staffing in order to make the work happen.

A review of the kitchen and funding for its re-development is required to ensure it is up to standard, but certain important maintenance jobs have been lined up for the upcoming Maintenance Day (18th July) which may alleviate some of the more urgent issues.

**Action Tanya and Ian (premises review)**

Bank account: Joanna will be adding the new Office Manager to the bank account, but continues to work remotely at least during the month of July, to keep on top of accounts and conduct a handover.

**3. Operational Review**

TP having just returned from annual leave, had not provided a review for circulation prior to the meeting, but was able to go through important issues for the purpose of this meeting:

Staffing

The new Office Manager has been appointed and has started the job on 4th July. Helen will work Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays for 5 hours each day on site.

There are ongoing concerns, noted, about the health of a staff member which has meant that the charity continues to be short-staffed and it has remained difficult to prioritise important administrative tasks.

Since response to the Key Worker advert has been disappointing so far, Restore’s offer to assist in dissemination will be followed up this week.

**Action Nick**

CB made a particular point of congratulating the staff on how smoothly things were operating from the point of view of the service users, despite the staffing difficulties and changes in recent weeks.

Volunteers

A good number of volunteers have been presenting themselves, some through pre-arrangement with the absent staff member: CB and RT offered assistance in the process of on-boarding these people and making the best possible use of their time, and requested the creation of a volunteers’ checklist to ensure that the process was handled efficiently.

There could be ongoing coaching and management of volunteers on site, by those Trustees who are ‘on the ground’ in the course of a week, at least until staffing matters have been resolved.

A Volunteers’ Day is being suggested for 6th September, where volunteers for different days will be able to come together, become known to each other and compare notes. It was also agreed that proper contracts should be written up for volunteers so that expectations and responsibilities are more clearly defined.

**Action Colin/ Richard/ Tanya**

Tanya will from this point monitor each week her staffing levels and report to the board each month. Given current levels of staff absence due to holidays and ill health, priority will be given by the board to covering staff absence as required.

**Action Tanya/ Nick/ Emma**

IT  
A day has been offered to us by a local IT Support Consultancy, which is lined up for Monday 24th July. Consideration will be given to use of Dropbox, or alternative file storage platforms; also advising on updating Microsoft packages, suitability of equipment, and other IT issues. New laptops are required and Svetlina has approached a contact for help with this.

**Action Nick/ Svetlina/ Tanya**

Maintenance Day  
The maintenance day was confirmed for 18th of July, and RW and Katie will coordinate this. Nationwide Building Society have kindly offered a workforce of twenty volunteers for the day and will provide food for all workers; however tools and materials must be provided by R&B. NG offered the possibility of some paint and other materials becoming available from his other charity contacts, and will explore this matter.

**Action Richard/ Tanya**

GDPR  
EW has been reviewing personal information held on DropBox and will delete any records in accordance with the information asset register.

TP continues to review GDPR and will also update the Service User Contracts to reflect data capture and storage: where no contracts exist for service users, these will be written up for their agreement and signature.

**Action Emma/ Tanya**

Other Matters

Risk Assessments have been prepared, and will shortly need signing off by ND as Chair of Trustees.

A Health and Safety sub-committee should be established, to include staff and trustee members

There was a brief but wide-ranging discussion with NG, as a potential board member, drawing on his experience with other charity work with respect to matters of fundraising, staffing, and the care of service users and their reliance on the charity.

**4. Governance, Policies, Strategy**

Fundraising  
The matter of bringing in core running costs through the external fundraising company (FCL) continues to be a concern, though the last month has been quite successful. TP felt that the recent report from the fundraisers (forwarded to the board without other comment by ND) had misrepresented some details, and would be writing to them to request some revisions.

A total of £7179 had been received during June.  
  
The suggestion was made (CB, RT) that a volunteer could be recruited specifically to keep on top of the fundraising process and liaison with FCL, and this matter would be explored.

**Action Colin/ Nick/ Richard**

Marketing & PR - Website Development

This item from the Progress Sheet (Appendix A) was considered, and ND agreed that the sub-committee to explore web developments should be actioned now, with a view to reshaping the website this summer/ autumn.

**Action Nick**

**5. Date of Next Meeting**

Date of next meeting will be 8th August at Root & Branch Westmill. The meeting will also be streamed on MS Teams, but a strong preference was expressed for on-site meetings where possible.

**Action Emma**

**Rolling Agenda Items for the August Board meeting:**

The rolling agenda items were discussed fully during the review of June minutes, and decisions made about actions.