

Minutes of the M2 2023 Trustees' Meeting

Venue Online MS Teams	Date Tuesday 14 th February 2023
Trustees Present Nick Daisley Emma Welch David Atkins Alistaire Knight Richard Taylor	Also Present Karen English Colin Bell Rosie Wheeler

Welcome.

Nick welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Svetlina Jeanneret. Colin Bell sat in on the meeting for the third time following his expression of interest to become a trustee. Rosie Wheeler sat in on the meeting for the first time having expressed an interest to become a trustee.

1. Minutes of the previous trustee meeting considered for accuracy and Matters Arising.

Minutes from the Meeting M1 (January 2023) were agreed and ratified by trustees present. These can be moved to the 'Approved Folder' in Dropbox and published on the website.

Action Emma

Matters Arising

Funding for blacksmith

The trustees agreed to ask the professional blacksmith if he could return for one more course. £500 funding has been allocated. Further courses with the blacksmith will have to wait until further funding is secured. Karen will ask the blacksmith to provide shorter 'have a go' sessions so that the activity will reach more of our Service Users.

Action Karen

Seven items remain on the Progress Sheet, with actions highlighted, to be reviewed at the next meeting.

See Appendix A

2. Financial Update

Alistaire will prepare the monthly financial update and circulate via email.

Action Alistaire

3. Operational Review

Karen had circulated her Managers' Report to all the trustees ahead of the meeting. There were no issues raised for Trustee decision.

Karen gave some sad news about the passing of two long term supporters of R&B. Karen will send cards of condolence to the families.

Volunteer recruitment remains ongoing and advertisements are still placed in Faringdon News and Highworth Link.

Garden Seasonal Review:

Karen gave the trustees a presentation of garden activities Autumn/Winter 2022/2023. It was lovely to see some fabulous slides and pictures of activities ranging from nature-based art work and painting, cooking with our own-grown produce (including an excellent crop of cauliflowers) and a successful autumn plant sale, pop up plant stalls and winter fayre. It has been busy, industrious and rewarding in the garden for all staff, volunteers and service users. Karen thanked the staff and volunteer team for maintaining this success despite having no member of staff currently dedicated to these therapeutic garden activities.

A recent Service User survey has revealed some interesting results, detailing which garden-based activities are most popular. The results of this survey will be used to assist the new Therapeutic Gardener plan ahead for 2023.

4. Governance Policies and Strategy

Strategic Plan Review

David has completed the final slide of the new strategic plan (2023 – 2025) and had circulated to the board ahead of the meeting. The trustees have recommended some minor alterations. The board thanked David for the work he has put into this new document which, once complete will be published on the website. The document will provide an excellent base from which the new Centre Manager can start to plan.

The trustees requested that Karen circulate the document to all staff and volunteers

Action Karen see Appendix A

Annual Policy Review

All Policies have been reviewed. Nick had received useful advice from Restore regarding our recruitment policy so that we can be reassured that we are being consistent within the OMHP.

Trustee discussion: David recommended a change in policy regarding Service User Placement Management. And the board decided to adopt the policy that any Service User under the influence of drugs or alcohol but still determined to drive home will, as a last resort, be reported to law enforcement.

Emma and Nick will now review recommended changes and approve amendments. Policies will then be circulated to all trustees and staff and published on dropbox. Printed copies of all Policies will be kept in the office.

Action Emma and Nick

Staff Recruitment

The closing date for applications for the Centre Manager role and the Therapeutic Gardener role was 5th February. Both jobs were advertised internally and externally and posted on the website.

Nick had circulated a full report to the board. The report is stored in the trustee area of dropbox. All the applications received, and supporting documentation are also available on Dropbox. Further to the receipt of several excellent applications for both Centre Manager and Therapeutic Gardener it has been decided to interview, in the first round, 5 candidates for each role.

Emma, Karen and Nick interviewed a first round of Centre Manager candidates on the 13th February and have shortlisted three candidates to invite back for second interviews. Interviews will take place on site so that staff can meet candidates, the interview panel will be Karen, Nick and Colin.

Nick, Karen and Richard are due to interview a first round of Therapeutic Gardener applicants on site on the 15th February. It is decided that a second round of interviews will take place once the Centre Manager role has been decided.

The Recruitment Policy is being followed throughout the process.

Emma thanked everyone for their work behind the scenes to get this process organised so efficiently – a particular thank you to Nick for all his work on the job descriptions for each role.

Fundraising Update

Nick had circulated a full report to the board. Root & Branch has been assigned a new grant writer by Fundraising Consultants Ltd. Both Nick and Karen have been in regular contact with the new consultant and he has been to Westmill to visit the site and learn about the charity and its work. Karen and Nick reported some early concerns with the quality of his work, but recent communications from him indicated that he understood their concerns and would rectify things.

There is still the ongoing issue with invoicing from the Fundraising Consultants Ltd. Nick and Alistaire will establish what is happening and what we can expect going forward.

Actions: Nick will forward the contract to Colin, who has offered to look over everything for us. Alistaire will make contact with Fundraising Consultants Ltd to clarify how and when they produce invoices and what we can expect to be invoiced given the very slow start and inadequate service we have received so far.

Action Nick, Colin, Alistaire

Annual Pay Review

Alistaire reported that in the UK this year the public sector average pay rise was 4.2% and the private sector average was 6.7%. He therefore recommended that Root & Branch annual pay rise should fall somewhere in between the two.

After trustee discussion the board decided to offer staff an annual pay rise of 5.5% from the 1st April 2023.

In addition to this, following recent staff performance reviews, any staff member whose salary is behind others doing a comparable job will see an additional pay rise. It will be raised by an amount that will bring it in line with other salaries in three years time. Emma will get in touch with Andrea Case and work through the figures for this. New salary figures and costings will be circulated to the board via drop box this month with the aim to have any performance related pay rises in place by March and 5.5% annual pay rises in place by April.

Action Emma

5. Any Other Business

As a reminder to the board, it is minuted again here that Nick Daisley, whilst wishing to remain on the board, has asked that this year a replacement Chair is appointed. In the October 2022 board meeting it was minuted that a co-chair position was on offer. So far no-one has stepped into this position.

6. Date of Next Meeting

Date of next meeting will be March 14th at 6.30pm at Root & Branch Westmill.

Action Emma

Rolling Agenda Items for the March Board meeting:

- Risk Assessment Review (Action Karen)
- Health and Safety Review (Action Karen/Ian)