

MINUTES
of a meeting of the Governance Committee
15 September 2020
(11:00-12:35)

Meeting held by video conference call

Present:

Anne-Marie Dean, Chairman
Ian Buckmaster, Company Secretary
Bev Markham, Community Support Officer
Carole Howard, Office Administrator

Jenny Gregory, Dawn Ladbrook, Di Old and Val Perry, Members

1 Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all participants to the video conference. An apology was received for the absence of Carol Dennis.

2 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations.

3 Minutes of meeting held 11 August 2020

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record and the Chairman was authorised to sign them in due course.

4 Finance report

The report for August was received.

There were no financial matters to which attention needed to be drawn. Expenditure had continued at a lower level than at any time since 2013, at a monthly average of £8,700. Following the recent return to working in the office, however, it was likely that expenditure would begin to rise to more normal levels in the next few months.

It was noted that expenditure relating specifically to the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic stood at £764 in the year to date.

5 Improving the reach of Healthwatch Havering

Following the Committee's authorisation of a review of the website and use of Twitter, the consultant engaged had now presented his report. He had been mildly critical of the website – mainly for technical issues – and had suggested that Twitter had not proved as useful as it could have been.

The Committee noted that Healthwatch England (HWE) had produced a new design of website, which would meet the consultant's criticisms. Arrangements had been made for the Executive Team to meet a representative of HWE the day following the meeting to explore whether it would be worthwhile to move over to their design.

There would be a cost to moving over – a setup fee of £90 and a monthly subscription of £36, plus the cost of migrating from the current website to the new one – although that was expected to be balanced out by lower spending on future website maintenance and monthly charges.

The consultant's fee for the work done was expected to be around £300.

A further report would follow to next month's meeting.

The Committee endorsed the decision to cease using Twitter given the problems with using the site but agreed that future use of Facebook, once the migration to the new website was completed, be explored.

6 Engagement projects

Oral updates were given on the following projects:

* Updated project plan/details submitted

- Living Streets/Streets Apart * - an HHFN email had been sent to alert subscribers to this new charity that aimed to provide walking opportunities for people living isolated in the community
- Home Care Services – users' survey *
- Patients' experiences during the pandemic
- Enter and View of LAS locations
- NEL CCG survey – update
- Blood testing – update – it was noted that the CCG were aware of the problems being experienced in obtaining blood test appointments
- Dental services for Care Homes * - it was agreed that the original project should be expanded into a survey of access to NHS dentistry in consequence of Covid-19, to be carried out by telephone survey
- Care Homes' handling of Covid-19 – it was noted that, to date, there had been 19 responses to the online survey, and two video conferences had

been held; it was agreed that a third conference be held on Tuesday 29 September at 3pm.

7 Change of office room

Following the risk assessment of the Queens Court Building and the Healthwatch office room within it, enquiry had been made as the availability of a room on the ground floor as a replacement for the current room.

It was now reported that, following discussion, a suitable room had been identified. Slightly smaller than the current room it was nevertheless suitable for Healthwatch use, with additional facilities not currently available.

The new room was in use for storage. The landlords would arrange to clear it and for the equipment in the current office to be moved. The rent would remain unchanged.

8 Board meeting, 22 September 2020 - cancelled

The Committee agreed that the Board meeting due on 22 September be cancelled as there was insufficient business to justify proceeding.

9 Christmas function

It was noted that arrangements for a Christmas function were in hand, subject to Covid-19 restrictions allowing it to go ahead.

10 2021 Diary

It was agreed that a Diary for 2021 should be produced, despite the continuing doubt about arrangements for meetings in the light of Covid-19 restrictions.

11 Resumption of Engagement Programme Panel meetings

It was noted that meetings of the Engagement Programme Panel would resume from Thursday 24 September. For the foreseeable future they would be held by video conference on Thursdays (rather than Tuesday as hitherto).

12 CQC inspections

It was noted that the CQC were resuming inspections, albeit on a more limited basis than before, and concentrating for now on services' readiness to deal with Covid-19 (with those judged insufficiently ready being adjudged as Requiring Improvement or Inadequate).

13 Next meeting

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 13 October 2020.

Chairman