

MINUTES
of a meeting of the Governance Committee
9 March 2021
(11:00-12:45)

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 and apologies

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 9 February 2021

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 February was presented.

The average monthly expenditure this month for the year to date had been £9,277, still below the five-yearly average. Actual spending in February was £9,235, in line with the previous monthly average expenditure. A total of £920 had been spent in the year to date in dealing with the consequences of Covid-19.

There were no other matters to which attention needed to be drawn.

5 Use of Zoom videoconferencing

When the Covid lockdowns began last March, and it had become clear that it would not be practicable to use either the office or the Town Hall for meetings in the then-foreseeable future, and that dial-in telephone conferencing would not be entirely practicable, use had begun of Zoom videoconferencing.

Since then, members had become adept at using Zoom. In addition to the weekly Keeping in Touch sessions, Zoom had been widely used both for meetings such as this Committee and with other people.

Since May, the Zoom account had operated based on a monthly payment (£14.39, including VAT).

Despite the imminent relaxation of lockdown, it was likely to be some time before the use of the office or Town Hall for regular meetings would be able to resume on the basis that had operated before the pandemic. Even when it became possible to meet in person, there would be times when individuals would be unable, or unwise, to attend meetings in person – e.g., when suffering a mild illness. Retention of the ability to use Zoom would enable people to attend a meeting virtually rather than in person when necessary and would also enable greater flexibility in communication.

The Committee was advised that, on that basis, payment for Zoom had moved from pay-monthly to an annual subscription of £143.88 (including VAT), representing a saving of around £29 per annum.

The Committee noted the proposed future use of Zoom and endorsed the move to an annual subscription.

6 Engagement projects

The Committee received the updated draft Monitoring Report for Quarter 4 of 2020/21.

Oral updates were given on the following projects:

- **NEL survey of effect of Covid on disabled people** – the survey was now underway and had been publicised locally using the Friends' Network and Twitter, and by the CCG and the Council in a briefing email. The latest analysis of responses indicated that people from Havering were responding well, with 21% of responses (second only to Tower Hamlets).
- **Safeguarding** – the Chairman presented the Project Plan for approval. Following discussion, the Plan was approved.

The draft questionnaire, which had already been agreed with the Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB), was also approved.

It was noted that the survey would be launched during the week beginning 15 March.

- **LAS: development of ambulance hub in Havering** – no further information was yet available (note: subsequently, the LAS made contact to commence discussions about Healthwatch could help them).
- **Patient participation** – it was agreed that the proposed survey should be extended to include telephone enquiry response times.
- **Blue bands scheme** – the Chairman had been contacted by Gary Etheridge at BHRUT and it appeared that consideration of the scheme was being reinstated following its suspension while the Covid-19 pandemic was dealt with.
- **Red Bag scheme** – it appeared that the Red Bag scheme was no longer being pursued.
- **Phlebotomy investigation** – the formal investigation into failures in the Phlebotomy Service was now on hold. No evidence had been found of patients being harmed as a result of the failure: both BHRUT and NELFT were confident that all of their referrals had been dealt with appropriately, and no GP had reported a problem.
- **Local Area Coordinators** – development of the LAC programme had been suspended during the pandemic, but the Council was now being urged to reinstate it.
- **Home Care Provider Forum** – details of the next meeting were awaited.
- **Health Monitoring of Care Home Residents** – new arrangements were in hand and homes were being provided with IT equipment to enable them to report residents' health monitoring data directly to linked GP practice

7 Improving the reach of Healthwatch Havering

Preparation of the new website continued.

Clarification of the way the site would work had revealed that its cost, £36/month, was additional to the cost of the system that maintained the email and other internet services. This meant that there would not be a saving but a review of services would be undertaken to ensure that only those services that were actually needed would be paid for in future.

8 Next meeting

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 9 March 2021.

Chairman