

MINUTES
of a meeting of the Governance Committee
12 October 2021
(11:00-13:00)
At Queen's Court

Present:

Anne-Marie Dean, Chairman
Ian Buckmaster, Company Secretary
Carole Howard, Office Administrator

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

1 Welcome and apologies

The Chairman welcomed all members.

Apologies were received for the absence of Bev Markham.

2 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations.

3 Minutes of meeting held 14 September 2021

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

It was noted that the proposals for amending the Governance arrangements (minute 6) had been approved by the Members' Meeting (former Management Board) and were now in place.

Arising from minute 8, it was noted that, despite attempts at contact, nothing further had been heard from Havering College about possible collaboration with them.

4 Finance report

The report for September was presented.

Spending in September had totalled £9,796, which continued in line with previous months' spending. There was no issue to which attention needed to be drawn.

The Company's payroll providers, Mazars, had increased their monthly service fee by 3%. This amounted to less than £5/month and would have no effect on the financial position.

It was noted that the contract with Havering Council to provide Healthwatch services was now at the halfway point.

5 Engagement projects - updates

- (a) NEL survey on the effect of Covid on disabled people (including a report to Individuals OSC) – the next steps were now being discussed with the other Healthwatch in North East London.
- (b) LAS – Hub 1 project – it was reported that the project had now been suspended as the LAS was rethinking its ambulance station strategy. Members expressed concern and disappointment at the recent adverse publicity about the project.
- (c) Raizer Chair fund raising – a detailed response form the St John fundraising team was expected shortly, hopefully in time for the forthcoming Awayday.
- (d) Domiciliary care survey – details of the next phase had now been received from the Council and the survey would shortly begin.
- (e) ICS development – there had been a positive and helpful discussion with the Havering Compact about working in partnership with them. It was proposed that the first step would be collaboration on the forthcoming PNA (see below).
- (f) Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) – a PNA was now being conducted for Barking & Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge, and all three local Healthwatch would be supporting it. The intention was to give as many residents as possible the opportunity to share views about pharmaceutical needs, and the Compact's members organisations could be helpful in widening this approach.
- (g) BHRUT clinical strategy – BHRUT had asked all three BHR Healthwatch to support their survey on developing a clinical strategy. Members would be asked to assist with this shortly.
- (h) Blood tests (phlebotomy) – NELFT had now successfully taken over responsibility for testing in Havering.

- (i) Queen's Hospital Maternity Unit – the Chairman and Company Secretary had recently met (by video conference) the Chief Nurse of BHRUT to discuss the recent CQC report on the Maternity Unit. The conversation had been full, frank and open; it had been acknowledged that the Inadequate rating was deserved and that much needed to be done to bring the Unit back to good or better. Assurance had been given that detailed plans, including a recruitment process, were in place to address the issues raised. The unit was also admitting many more mothers-to-be with medically complex conditions than in previous years. The Chief Nurse had indicated that she would welcome a visit by Healthwatch volunteers around Easter time 2022.
- (j) Care homes – Multiple problems were emerging within the care home sector in Havering and the quality assurance agencies were beginning to become concerned. HWE was providing training on carrying out “virtual visits”, which the Community Support Officer would be attending, and a further report would follow.
- (k) Access to GPs – it was reported that new connections were being made with GPs' representatives, who had asked for comments on a draft survey they were proposing to carry out of GP practice patients.

6 Policy documents

Following the decisions by this Committee and the (former) Management Board/Members' Meeting in September to change the governance arrangements, the Board was advised that several Policies and Procedures documents required updating to reflect those changes.

A. General updates

Generally, the required changes simply substituted “Members' Meeting” for “Management Board”, and “Governance Board” for “Governance Committee” but in a few cases rather more change has been necessary.

The documents in question were:

- (a) The Governance Statement
- (b) Relevant Decision Making
- (c) Special Groups
- (d) Safeguarding: Adults and Children
- (e) Complaints policy
- (f) Engagement

In addition, in document (a) Governance Statement, it was noted that the statutory obligation for meetings to be held in public now applied to the Governance Board rather than the Members' Meeting, although no particular difficulties with that were likely to arise. Assurance was given that, when necessary, the agenda and minutes would be

adjusted to ensure that confidential business would not be conducted with the public present, nor recorded in a way that would breach confidentiality.

In document (d) Safeguarding: Adults and Children, it was noted that Guidance on the application of policies to Persons in Positions of Trust (PiPoT) was awaited from the Havering Safeguarding Adults Board and that, once that was available, the policy would be updated to take account of it.

B. Enter and View – Covid updates

The Board was advised that, as a result of the Covid pandemic, and in addition to adjustments because of the governance changes, it was necessary to include in the following documents specific provision for compliance with Covid precautions. This was partly out of prudence in general but also to comply with legal requirements that would apply to people visiting care homes from 11 November 2021, other than relatives and friends of residents. These documents were:

- (g) Enter and View visits
- (h) Enter and View visits: Information for Providers of health and social care service premises

The Board APPROVED the proposed changes set out in the documents now submitted.

7 Thanks

Ms Ladbrook asked that her thanks for the assistance given recently for a friend of hers be recorded.

8 Congratulations

The Board congratulated Mr Buckmaster on his recent appointment as a Commander of the Order of St John, and on the award to him of the Order's Service Medal in Gold, recognising 50 years' voluntary service with St John Ambulance.

9 Next meeting

The next meeting was due on Tuesday, 9 November 2021 at Queens Court.

Chairman