

MINUTES
of a meeting of the Governance Board
15 March 2022
(11:00-13:40)
At Queen's Court

Present:

Ian Buckmaster, Company Secretary
Ron Wright, Non-Executive Director
Bev Markham, Community Support Officer

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

In the absence of Anne-Marie Dean, Chairman, the Chair was taken by Ian Buckmaster

1 Welcome and apologies

All members were welcomed to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Anne-Marie Dean, Carol Dennis, Carole Howard and Paul Rose

2 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations.

3 Minutes of meeting held 15 February 2022

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

4 Finance report

The report for February was presented.

Spending in the month totalled £10,260, which is comparable to recent months, and includes the cost of the Awayday in January.

It was likely that the year-end shortfall would be around £250-£300. There were sufficient reserves available to cover the deficit.

There was no other issue to which attention needed to be drawn.

5 Accountancy arrangements

Although the Company was exempt from company audit requirements, an annual Corporation Tax return was required and details had to be submitted to Companies House as part of the national reporting requirements, and it was useful for an external agency to cast an eye over the accounts for assurance and quality purposes.

Since 2014, this work had been completed by an accountancy firm, but following a review of the arrangements, it has been agreed that a new accountancy firm, The Accountancy Partnership (TAP), should be appointed.

TAP operated online. Their fees, payable monthly, would amount to about £1,000 per annum, which was about 70% of the fee paid previously, for which they a range of additional accountancy services would be available (should it be necessary to take advantage of them).

It would be necessary for a Members' Meeting formally to endorse the recommendation that TAP be appointed at a forthcoming meeting.

That the Board AGREED to RECOMMEND to Members that The Accountancy Partnership be appointed to prepare the accounts of the Company in succession to Sharman Fielding for the financial year 2021/22 onwards.

6 Engagement projects

The Board considered plans for forthcoming projects as follows:

(a) Project Plan drafts

No plans were submitted on this occasion

(b) Possible projects

It was reported that recent discussions with the CCG/OCS indicated that they would be seeking Healthwatch assistance with revitalising PPGs at GP practices and improving GP reception services and telephone systems.

7 Enter & View – policy documents – revisions for approval

Following the decision to resume Enter & View visits, three policy documents had been reviewed to reflect the new approach to arranging visits.

The intention was that, once a facility had been identified for a visit, the following stages would be followed:

- About 6 weeks before the date of the intended visit, the office would write to the Manager to give notice of it, outlining the process and intention, and asking for a short questionnaire to be completed and for service users, their relatives and/or friends and staff to be told of the visit and asked whether they are willing to participate in a video conference to talk about their experiences
- Four weeks before the visit, a video conference would be held with the manager to go over the response to the questionnaire and to give them an opportunity to talk about the facility generally and to identify issues that the visiting team might want to explore during the visit
- Three weeks before the visit, one or more video conference(s) would be held with service users, relatives, friends and staff to discuss any issues they might wish to raise

The video conferences would be attended by the team that would be carrying out the visit, two other members and a member of the staff. The information obtained through the video conferences and the actual visit will all form part of the eventual report of the visit.

The Board APPROVED the three draft policy documents.

8 CCG/ICS Engagement arrangements

It was noted that the CCG/ICS was seeking to improve its arrangements for engaging with patients and the public and was proposing to arrange a workshop involving a range of people from services, Healthwatch and individuals. Ms Gregory, Ms Old and Mr Wright agreed to be nominated to participate in the workshop.

9 Next meeting

The next meeting was due on Tuesday, 12 April 2022 at Queens Court.

_____ Chairman