

Board meeting minutes
Tuesday 7th November 2023
10.30am – 1.15pm

Falsgrave Community Resource Centre, Seamer Road, Scarborough YO12 4DH

Present:

Pat Southgate (PS)	Vice Chairperson, Trustee
Derek Bodell (DB)	Trustee
Laura Parker (LP)	Trustee
Ashley Green (AG)	CEO
Alicia Rose (AR)	Staff
Lada Cuiu (LC)	Staff
Helen Littler (HL)	Staff
Lily Smith (LS)	Staff
Craig Derek (CD)	Staff
Members of public	7

Apologies:

Lee Adams	Trustee
Amy Barnes	Trustee
Kacie Hodgson	Trustee

Absent:

John Cunningham	Trustee
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Public meeting

Welcome & apologies.

PS welcomed everyone to the meeting including the public and gave apologies from LA, AB & KH.

AG confirmed with those present that PS & JC wished to continue as Trustees, as they had both served a three-year term, and that LA had communicated this and their desire to re-stand as trustees to all trustees by email. There had been unanimous agreement by trustees for PS and JC to be re-elected as trustees. AG asked for approvals from those trustees present. DB formally proposed PS to continue as a trustee and Vice Chair and LP seconded this. DB formally proposed JC to continue as a trustee and LP seconded this proposal.

PS confirmed that the treasurer had stepped down with immediate effect.

Confidential matters & declaration of interest

PS said that there were no confidential matters arising and no one had any declaration of interest.

Minutes & Action log – 10th July Board meeting

PS and all those present agreed with and accepted the minutes from the Board meeting in July.

PS went through the 'Action Log' and AG confirmed the majority of actions had been completed or were ongoing. The Board agreed that they would email HL any final comments on the policies by Friday 17th November 2023.

LP asked if Healthwatch policies go through our insurance company. AG commented that all policies, where relevant, are shared with and reviewed by Peninsula our external HR & health & safety legislation professionals. LP also questioned whether we use adults and children barring list? AG confirmed this all staff and trustees, and volunteers where required undertake DBS checks, and LC confirmed that volunteers DBS checks are dependent on the activities they undertake.

AG informed the Board that it has previously been agreed by members not to complete an interim budget review at this time due to the tender application, but that he had completed a summary 6-month budget review with the team to ascertain expenditure against budgets.

AG confirmed that an advert was to be circulated for a new Treasurer, as well as additional trustees via social media, VCSE sector and other media channels and that he had already had a conversation with one of our volunteers who was interested in being a trustee.

PS asked about the impact summary and AG confirmed it will be brought to the next Board meeting, and that he and AR had made progress on updating the summary and received feedback from a number of stakeholders who they were waiting to hear from. PS said it is important to give a time frame and DB mentioned the progress we achieve should be promoted on our website as we are all accountable.

It was suggested by AG that future reports with recommendations could be sent to specific organisations and individuals with a cover letter & form to feedback - to encourage them to report their progress against our recommendations, as too often we were not getting an adequate or timely response.

AG confirmed that it was not necessary or feasible to include learning disability (LD) training as part of volunteer Enter & view training. LC commented that only a small number of care homes have people with LD and the training was more appropriate for carers and not applicable for volunteers. LP commented that the NHS and LA mandatory Oliver McGowen training which covered learning disability and autism might be a good course for staff and volunteers at Healthwatch to undertake. LC confirmed the first level of this training is free for everyone. AG confirmed that he we look into this training for the team.

Q2 Board report (July - Sept 2023)

AG presented the quarterly board report, highlighting the completion and approval of the mental health report, "The public's experience of mental health services across North Yorkshire." The report was launched in July.

AG mentioned the publication of our Public Insight report which summarised public feedback (April – July), with key themes including GP services, hospital care, mental health support, and dentistry all being highlighted as areas of concern by the public. AG said that they had already received positive action taken by NHS Trusts in response to the report. AG said that a new report would be published in January, covering August to November.

AG said they had collaborated with Healthwatch York for the York & North Yorkshire acute care review, engaging with communities in Scarborough, Malton, and Selby. Findings will be released later this month. AG also mentioned that four Enter and View visits had been conducted in care homes, over the summer in Catterick, Scarborough, Skipton and Northallerton which were led by our volunteers.

A review of community postnatal care in North Yorkshire to look into what services are available and to understand women and their families' experiences, was in progress - with a focus on hearing from specific groups facing most health inequalities across North Yorkshire.

AG informed those present that in response to our Continence report, the NY ICS Place Director had confirmed that its findings would support a review of the bowel and bladder pathways, but that he hadn't received any specific actions against this and was awaiting a meeting with the ICS Director of Quality & Nursing to confirm these.

AG also highlighted the impact of the Accessible Information Standards report, with Humber Teaching Foundation Trust implementing changes, as well as York & Scarborough NHS Hospitals Trust, and the North Yorkshire Adult Safeguarding Board (NYSAB) had renewed its commitment to accessibility and inclusion. PS asked if we had received confirmation of impact AG said he would chase these.

AG mentioned that concerns about changes to the referral pathway for adult ADHD & autism assessment that he (& other organisations) had raised about the 'Do it profiler' assessment tool, had brought about an extension to the pilot and the NY Place Director has requested a paper be brought to the Place Board for discussion/up-date. Additionally, AG had been working with the NHS communications team to organise a public consultation event (x2) about autism and ADHD, which LA has been asked to chair.

Finally, AG said that the online AGM (webinar) held earlier this month had been successful and had received the highest amount of attendees (over 40) than any previous online AGM. Board members gave their feedback which was in general positive, with suggestions that for future AGMs we should consider the amount of information we cover, which we might want to reduce, allow more time in between talks for questions, use of videos for volunteers/public to share experiences?

Volunteer Review Audit.

LC presented her review of volunteers to the Board highlighting geographical areas volunteers are located in and the volunteer opportunities they are interested in.

LP asked how this information would now be used and if we would be reviewing our volunteer need/gaps in volunteers against our three-year workplan to ensure we had the volunteers to support our work. AG confirmed that this was the rationale for undertaking this work.

Marketing and Communications plan 2023/26

CD summarised the key points to his Marketing and Communications plan and said that it was very much about setting the scene to understand where we are now and where we would like to be in the future.

DB asked about what training staff had received in the media as CD had done well with his interviews on the radio and that it would be worth having some additional media training for interviews for all staff, if relevant. CD said he would look into this.

DB also mentioned that using external editors/copy writers might help to reduce time spent on producing our reports, but that there would be a cost associated to this.

Financial update (April – September 2023)

AG reported the incoming and expenditure over last 6 months against the budget. AG said HMRC employers NI allowance had reduced the staff costs, and some of the marketing budget had been spent during last quarter.

AG highlighted that the Funded projects had exceed budget, but that actually this expenditure had bene moved from staff and volunteers' expenses in order to show more clearly how our expenditure, travel etc. had been used. AG & HL agreed to re-look at this for the next budget reporting (from March 2024).

AG also mentioned that he proposed to review our reserves policy [after the tender had been completed] as we were holding a large amount of capital, which some of which could be used to support our core activity.

The board members present agreed the annual accounts for 2022 - 23.

Feedback or update from trustees on work

DB said that he had met with the NYC sexual health lead and there are increasing STIs across England, but the figure is below average for North Yorkshire. There are issues with engagement for people to do the test and sexual health economies to be brought together. DB is interested in being involved in an appropriate way.

DB also said that he had met with the NYC CQC – adults working group.

PS confirmed her involvement with Enter and View on a volunteering capacity and mentioned her meeting with the Chair of South Tees NHS Trust - Derek Bell.

PS said that no outcome had been received from her and LP chairing the ICB children and young people workshop which shew was disappointed about. AG said would follow up.

Similarly, LP said that she (or Pat) hadn't heard any further news or invitations to the ethics group that she agreed to contribute to. AG agreed to enquire about this.

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