

Board meeting minutes, Monday 16th January 2023

10.00am -1.00pm

Cedar Court Hotel, Harrogate

Present:

Lee Adams (LA)	Chairperson, trustee
Pat Southgate (PS)	Vice Chairperson, trustee
John Cunningham (JC)	Trustee
Judith Bromfield (JB)	Trustee
Graham Brown (GB)	Trustee
Ashley Green (AG)	CEO

Apologies:

Robert Peacock (RP)	Trustee
Linda Wolstenholme (LW)	Treasurer, trustee

Welcome & apologies

LA welcomed everyone to the meeting and said that there were apologies from Linda and Robert.

Graham Brown joined us as a new trustee and was formally proposed as a trustee by PS and seconded by JC.

Confidential matters & declaration of interest

LA said that there were no confidential matters arising.

LA made those present aware that our Network & Engagement Officer had handed in her notice, taking effect from 31st March due to personal reasons. Given the nature of the role, a number of trustees suggested the possibility that a job-share for this post could be an option, to help attract a larger pool of candidates. AG agreed to look into this.

LA & AG said that they had discussed the possibility of using the surplus funds to recruit an additional post to focus on younger people and Young Healthwatch and asked those present for their views. There was general consensus amongst all trustees for this role, subject to us being confident around our budget. AG agreed to discuss this further with LW and seek clarity on the budget, prior to any recruitment.

AG agreed to work with LW to put together a draft budget for 2023/24 and subsequent years, which would be discussed when the Board next meets on the 17th March. AG also agreed to put together a finance paper setting out options for a staff salary increase from April 2023 for approval and discussion at the April Board meeting.

LA said that RP had raised a concern around proposed transport planning which would restrict cars coming into York city centre, and particularly coming to and parking at York hospital. RP was particularly concerned as to how this would impact on people travelling from surrounding areas (Scarborough, for example) into York to attend hospital appointments. LA confirmed that she & AG would raise this with NYCC.

LA said that she had received a positive response from her MP (Andrew Jones) from the letter she sent regarding our care staff crisis report, and that RP had also received a response from his MP (Robert Goodwill), which hadn't been as positive. LA encouraged all other trustees to write to their MPs if they hadn't yet done this.

Minutes & Action log

LA and all those present, agreed with and accepted the minutes from the Board meeting in October. AG went over the action log of which the majority of actions had been completed and/or were to be discussed later in the meeting.

It was agreed that we would meet, additional to our Board meetings, in May and July to discuss our work with the ICS and younger people. AG agreed to send around 'hold' dates for these. Plus, the Board agreed to meet on Friday 17th March when AG would present the draft strategy and work plan for discussion, for final approval in April.

Trustees felt that AG shouldn't continue taking/writing up the minutes for Board meetings, and that our staff member Helen should support with this going forward.

HR matters

LA reiterated the importance of us recruiting new trustees and it was acknowledged that we should seek people from diverse backgrounds, taking into account the population of North Yorkshire, and try to recruit people from outside of the NHS, such as social care, CVSE sector etc. AG agreed to re-look at the trustee JD and share with LA, with the aim of getting recruitment adverts out in mid-February.

It was discussed that given the time to recruit new trustees we could ask JB & RP to remain as active trustees past March 2023, to ensure we had sufficient trustee numbers. JB said she would be happy to continue for longer if need be. LA agreed to talk with RP.

LA went over the trustee appraisal papers that had been circulated detailing a process to support the appraisal of trustees. All those present were happy with the proposed appraisal process. It was discussed whether we should involve NYCC in the appraisal of the Chair, of which there was a general feeling that we should explore this. AG agreed to discuss with Daniel from NYCC.

Q3 Board report (Oct - Dec 2022)

AG briefly went over the Board report and highlighted that we had produced three reports in the last quarter, as well a report on behalf of the Craven Communities Together Partnership. The reports included a summary report detailing the public engagement that we undertook in the spring/summer outdoor events and markets across the county. Secondly, our care staff crisis report which focused on the impact that the shortages in social care workforce were having on peoples care. This report had received a lot of interest and AG said that he had been interviewed for BBC Look North, which had been a real success.

Our final report was our pulse briefing which focused on the cost of living crisis, which had been shared with the two ICSs, NYCC, other partners etc. AG said that he had received a positive response from the Director of Coms/Engagement from Humber & NY ICS but acknowledged that it was difficult to demonstrate the impact of this report, and our reports in general. There was broad feeling from trustees that we should explore how we demonstrate our impact more and improve following up partners to see how they have acted on our insight and recommendations. AG said that they currently record all feedback and progress against their reports. PS asked if we should send along with our reports a type of feedback form for different stakeholders to complete demonstrating what they have or/are doing in response to our recommendations. LA suggested that we speak with HWE to see what they suggest and ask how other local Healthwatch follow up on their reports/work. AG agreed to speak with HWE.

AG said that the two new staff members who started with us in October (Craig and Helen), had already made a big impact and brought new insight and skills to the team which he was really pleased with.

AG updated the trustees on progress with the community transformation mental health work which he said was going well and reported that they had heard from around 360 adults across North Yorkshire via our survey, one to one interviews with people with a severe mental illness (undertaken by local Mind organisations), and from focus groups, run jointly with local providers. AG said that they had held a positive meeting with the NY & York mental health alliance about the work so far, and that they were very impressed with progress and keen to use the report's findings to help develop the services and support for people with a mental health problem across NY. The alliance asked if we had plans to launch the report and if we might require a budget for this. AG agreed to discuss this with the team and ICS coms lead.

Strategy 2023+

AG went over the strategy paper that had been shared which detailed the ideas/discussions that had taken place on the 15th Dec with trustees and staff. AG said that he and LA had gone over these to try to prioritise these further of which following had been identified:

- Primary care (GP website review + accessibility, and social prescribing)
- Children & young people
- Provision of domiciliary care
- Autism (focus on children)
- Veterans & service personnel

There was a discussion about focusing on dementia for our enter & view visits. JB acknowledged, that whilst this was important there were challenges in eliciting feedback from dementia patients, and suggested that we speak with Jill Quinn, from Dementia Forward for her views, of where we might best use our resource and understand some of the key issues facing dementia patients. LA said that we need to also focus on and hear more from diverse and BME communities. Additionally, LA said that they (LA, PS & AG) were meeting with the NYCC Public Health team as well as the Director of Children's services next week, which would also help to shape our future work and plans. AG said that they would also be using the learning from our continence work, rurality and mental health to shape possible new pieces of work.

There was a general consensus from all trustees that we should focus on the topic areas identified, and AG agreed to begin work on putting a workplan / strategy together, for discussion with trustees in March.

LA briefly went over her universities paper and said that she had tried to identify which universities had an interest/specialised in health and social care studies and research. JC said that he had good links with Lancaster University if we wanted to pursue this. AG and LA suggested that we focus on contacting a few universities for now, and AG said that we already had links with York St John and York University. AG said that he would also speak with Alicia to help determine next steps.

Finance

JB went over the budget monitoring report that she had produced which also predicted spend/income over the last quarter, to help with our planning for 2023+. AG said that this was really helpful, and he would review the next quarter spend with LW who had been working with Helen to begin tracking our spend.

AG said that he had met with LW and Helen to begin working on tracking expenditure and income and had discussed how best to monitor expenditure (via coding) from April 2023. Also, that LW and Helen had undertaken Quickbooks training to help them with using this system for our accounts. AG said that JB had been working with them [AG, LW & Helen] to handover the finance duties, which was going well.

As LW wasn't present at the meeting it was agreed that AG would send 2021/22 year-end accounts for LW to sign, who would then return them to JB for her to take to the accountant. After which she would upload onto the Charity Commission website.

A new bank mandate form would also need to be sent to all trustees to sign, which would have to be forwarded on to all relevant trustees. LA said that she would update LW.

Board meeting in April

Those present agreed that we would hold our next Board meeting in public and PS had already identified a location in Easingwold, that would be suitable. PS agreed to contact them. GB suggested a venue in Thirsk if Easingwold wasn't available. It was agreed that we would allocate 20 mins for public questions (pre-sent to us) at the beginning of our Board meeting, and that the public could attend (observe) our Board meeting. After which there would be refreshments available and an opportunity to meet any members of the public, and AG and LA would give a short presentation. Staff would also be invited to attend the Board meeting.

Policies update

AG discussed the mental health & well-being policy that Alicia and PS had put together. There was general approval for this policy and trustees thanked Alicia and PS for this work. LA suggested that we include the trustee and staff appraisal within this policy as well as the Whistle-blowing policy.

PS said that she was overseeing our policy review and LW had started on the financial procedures, and LA suggested that other trustees should help PS with this. All the policies were discussed with trustee names allocated to specific policies (see attached document). LA said that Peninsula would also be able to provide assistance in reviewing our policies.

LA and AG said that they had met with Peninsula who currently provide our HR advise and support as well as an employee assistance programme around support for well-being, and had discussed with Peninsula about them also providing us with health and safety advise/support, which would include on-site office assessments, written policies, online reviews and an online secure system (Brightsafe) for employees to use. LA said that she, AG and LW were keen to include this additional support to our existing package, and that they had negotiated a reduced fee. All trustees present agreed to this. AG agreed to contact Peninsula to progress this.

Close.

Next Board meeting on Monday 17th April 2023, 10am - 3pm, includes public invitation. Venue: Easingwold