

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

21st February | 5.30pm - 7.30pm
Cambridge House | Room 4.4

Minutes 21/2/19	
Author: PR 21/2/19	
For information and agreement	
Summary of Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PR to review policies relating to Risk Assessment and Equality/Diversity • PR to send Southwark Council's safeguarding policy document to Karin • KW to email everyone a doodle poll link to establish a date for a Board social event • Each board member to approach 1 person to be a potential new member • PR to check Memorandum of Articles to establish how many new members are needed • KW and CN to discuss options to boost the research capability of the Healthwatch team • PR to share draft 2019/20 budget; all to review by email – to reach an agreement in principle prior to April 1st. Final sign-off at the next board meeting. • NH and PR to meet to review the budget prior to the above • PR to schedule Board meetings for the next 12 months, also Strategy & Policy committee, Resource committee and next AGM • PR to meet with the Board members individually in the next month to 6 weeks to get to know everyone • PR to clarify which contracts we are operating in relation to Lambeth, what they are for and how long • PR to discuss future funding of SRCF with KW • JBW to send PR further useful contacts in the borough • Walworth developments – see under AOB – JBW & PR to raise this at the VCS meeting. PR to offer Community Southwark's involvement

Attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jacky Bourke-White (JBW) - chair • Nicola Howard (NH) • Karin Woodley (KW) • Maisie Anderson (MA)
Staff in attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul Rymer (PR), Catherine Negus (CN)
Apologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ruth Driscoll (RD)

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome & Conflicts of Interest

JBW welcomed the trustees to the meeting and asked whether there were any conflicts of interest. KW reported usual Cambridge House (tenant/landlord) conflict and that one of the candidates for the CEO post is also a Locality Trustee.

Agenda Item 2 – Minutes

The minutes were reviewed and then approved.

Agenda Item 3 – Healthwatch Southwark

Catherine Negus (CN) described the work that HWS has undertaken since the last board meeting. **Highlights:**

- **Mental health crisis project:** Held an event in November to find out the views of a broader range of people. Good attendance and feedback. Working on a public report.
- **Tower Bridge nursing home project:** Carried out Enter and View visits in late November. Wrote up our findings and provided them to the CQC within 5 days. Working on a public report.
- **Carers project:** Around 40 survey responses so far. Rosa and Bron preparing for focus groups.
- **LGBT+ survey:** Nathan just beginning to clean and analyse data with guidance.
- **Faith and Health:** Agreement with the Council to run final 'legacy' event.
- **Social prescribing:** Rosa will be working on joint project with other CS staff to establish a baseline on social prescribing locally.

Challenges:

- **Report writing** has been slow and quite difficult given that we no longer have a Research & Intelligence Officer – Catherine has had to be heavily involved. Catherine will lead a team workshop to discuss step-by-step report process/lessons learnt, and have closer involvement in the early stages of future writing projects. We are investigating training options. [Action point noted: Catherine to meet with Karin to discuss potential free research support options.]
- Rosa's work with **Lambeth and Southwark Strategic Partnership (LSSP)** continues to be a challenge; LSSP isn't really an accountable body but a guidance coalition. The LSSP have been discussing their future but will continue for now. Rosa is supporting engagement where she can, has drafted a report, and is focusing on a big event in March.
The event will look at the LSSP's programmes in light of the Ten Year Plan, aligning us with the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) and the priorities of the Guy's and St Thomas' Charity (GSTC). Some NHS commissioning will be moving back up to STP level.

- Rosa will be leaving us in early May to have a baby. We will need to consider how to fulfil our contract with the LSSP for the five remaining months in a way that keeps open potential for funding for strategic work.

New priorities:

1. **Referral to Treatment Times:** This is a topic of high-level concern, especially regarding King's. Also raised on our signposting line. We would look at whether waiting for treatment for a condition can lead to deterioration/other conditions (in line with GSTC interests), and what information/support is provided while waiting. Likely to involve an Enter and View programme at acute hospitals.
2. **Talking Therapies:** Came up heavily in our mental health crisis project, reflecting longstanding concerns.
3. **Issues With Resolving Issues (beginning with social care).** Might be mainly about talking to professionals. It would cover topics like complaints processes, PALS response, safeguarding procedures, and advocacy services.
4. **'Seldom Heard'/protected characteristics workstream.** We're considering whether this should be integrated across the other priorities, or form a separate project. We are considering looking at perinatal families, and/or children and young people.

Agenda Item 4 – CEO report

Community Waltham Forest

Waltham Forest Council informed Gordon that they would like to take the VCS service in-house before the end of 2018/19 and therefore terminate the contract early. During the handover period terms were agreed and staff informed.

Waltham Forest staff will TUPE over to Waltham Forest Council on 4th March. All have had one to one meetings with WF HR and plan to move over. Sangita left the organisation for another job; we took the decision not to recruit. Arrangements are in place for the closure of the WF office at The Mill, and to say goodbye to the staff.

Community Southwark - Southwark Contract

Contract negotiations are going well; the requested service specification has very minor changes (mostly due to current language). Awaiting clarification on some points related to arrangements at the end of the new contract should it not be renewed. The financial costings have all been accepted by SC and so once clarifications of the contract are agreed everything should be in place.

Method Statements – these have been rewritten to take into account changes to the organisation since they were first written – but are not different in terms of actual activity.

Recruitment: currently recruiting for 3 vacant roles; also preparing for the recruitment of a new role SESS Officer, to join the Engagement Team from April and deal with the administration of SESS and to support related social action work. This role is budgeted at £24K as it is anticipated that the level of work will be at 3 days a week.

Lambeth VCS bid – we did submit a bit but with significant caveats in relation to the KPIs. The contract is worth £90K a year but the KPIs were in my opinion unrealistic. We submitted a bid with our understanding of what was achievable, based on our considerable experience of the

sector. We were the only organisation to submit queries through the bidding portal. Update expected by the end of February.

Other fundraising activity – see table below. Additional information that we were unsuccessful in relation to the Lambeth bid. This was because we did not sign the tender documents – with good reason – the KPIs were unachievable. We stated that we would want to see revised KPIs that, based on our experience, would be realistic given the resource available under the terms of the contract.

Strategy planning – I am kicking this off with a staff away day on March 5th. It is also intended as a team building / morale building exercise as I feel that due to so much change there is some work to be done to improve team spirit. Trustees are welcome to attend this all-day event, however the Board will be fully involved and informed throughout the process, so attendance is not required. There will be a discussion at the next Board meeting focusing on strategy, which will bring in any material / ideas captured on March 5th.

Please note – as agreed in the Board meeting, PR would now prefer that staff only attend on 5/3; so the invitation above to attend is withdrawn.

Staff morale – I am working hard to improve staff morale. Initially I am working with the team on improvements to the office space, starting with a de-clutter and deep clean (agreed with Cambridge House). We are exploring how to ensure that all of the basics are improved – environment, heat, lighting, desk arrangement and IT. As much as possible is being done by the team but Cambridge House have been consulted as appropriate. Jan has agreed for us to redecorate and have some art displayed in 4.4, to make our main meeting / training space better.

Staff sickness – There has been a round of coughs and colds in the office which has led to some absences. I am encouraging staff to work from home if they are well enough to work at all, in an effort to minimise the risk of passing on bugs. We will have 4 additional laptops once Waltham Forest closes which will facilitate this. I do also feel that stress levels are higher in some teams so I have asked other colleagues to provide support wherever possible. When the team has finished recruitment this should be improved.

AOB

Future of funding for Southwark Refugees Community Forum

SRCF have submitted a work plan for a potential 12 month contract which would cost just under £20K. The board discussed the outcomes delivered previously, and whether the work plan is achievable. PR outlined his team's input – they suggested payment quarterly on results.

- Action: PR to discuss future funding of SRCF with KW, potential other partner organisations we could work with as an alternative

Walworth Community Development Trust

KW raised this topic and outlined the situation to date. Simply, CS have not been involved to date to support this important consultation and should have been. KW has told relevant stakeholders that CS should be involved. The board agreed that CS could offer to coordinate a

meeting of impacted organisations/stakeholders in order to better facilitate genuine community involvement in the consultation.

Actions:

- JBW & PR to raise this at the VCS meeting
- PR to offer Community Southwark's involvement

