**Citizens Advice Watford**

**Trustee Board Meeting**

**Tuesday 24 April 2018**

**6pm Watford Advice Centre – MINUTES PART 1**

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|  | Minutes Part 1 |  |
|  | **Standard Items** | **Action** |
|  | **Present**  Stephen Herman (SH) Chair  Roland Bedford (RB) Company Secretary  Pui Wah Carter (PWC) Treasurer  James Tyerman (JT) Trustee  George Derbyshire (GD) Trustee (WBC representative)  Farrukh Siddiqi (FS) Trustee  Salim Bakirci (SB) Chief Officer  Rosie Woodhouse (minutes) |  |
|  | **Apologies / Introductions**  Cllr Stephen Cavinder (SC) Trustee (WBC representative)  Gail Tendler (GT) Trustee  Fikile Mkoyana (FM) Trustee  Farrukh was welcomed to the meeting and formally appointed as a Trustee with immediate effect until the 2018 AGM. |  |
|  | **Conflicts of interest**  None |  |
|  | **Minutes**   1. **Board Meeting held on 23rd January 18**   The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd January 2018 were approved as correct and signed by the Chair.   1. **Matters Arising**  * SB told the meeting that the transfer from CAF Bank to the new United Bank account is completed. * The Centre Point Community Centre has been offered by WBC as alternative premises in the event that we are unable to use the Advice Centre. WBC will send a memorandum of understanding to that effect. It was noted that the facilities, in particular interview rooms, are limited. * A fire evacuation exercise has not yet been carried out but the fire alarm went off on Friday. The fire service were called but declined to attend. A faulty sensor in the loft was identified as the cause and is to be replaced on Monday. A fire drill is due to take place. * Changes to the contribution rates of staff pensions were applied from April. Staff make a 3% contribution and the bureau contributes the maximum of 6%. It was noted that we can promote the scheme but we can’t provide financial advice. It was suggested that staff could attend Pensionwise appointments but this was not considered necessary. * SH attended the March workers meeting as agreed. Some suggestions were made with regard to additional expenditure but there were no big ideas. Small capital items were suggested including new photocopiers / scanners. SB will monitor the need for this but it is not evident at present. * No report is available for the Rough Sleeping Prevention project because no meeting has taken place at New Hope. The Housing Adviser advises on benefits and debt as well as housing, and is encouraged to explore other enquiry areas. | SB |
|  | **Decisions by email since last meeting (inc Policy reviews)**   1. **Business Plan 2018-21**   SB has circulated the new business plan with smart objectives from the strategy day and additional targets suggested by Cit A following the outcome of the LSA. The plan is now closely related to the strategy, as required by CitA. Peer assessment of the plan was suggested by CitA, this was considered to be a good idea but is time intensive. There was a discussion about the figures – these fluctuate and are not updated in the plan but the plan will be updated annually.   1. **Awards for All Grant 2018**   SB circulated a document showing that the targets set are higher than in the funding application. There is 10 hours a week additional capacity for volunteer recruitment for one year. This was identified as a priority at the strategy day. We could apply for another grant next year. There was a question about retaining volunteers. It was felt that retention follows from recruiting the right people. |  |
|  | **Assurance Items** |  |
|  | 1. **Q4 Management Accounts**   PWC circulated accounts for the period up to the end of March. The surplus showing at the end of February will be reduced by payments in March but it is expected that the service will finish with a surplus of 20k. This is within the reserves policy so we start the new financial year in a good position. Unrestricted reserves are 179k. The closure of the EBDEx account is awaited as some payments are outstanding. . The question of whether any investment opportunities had been overlooked was raised, and it was agreed that the paid gateway assessor role is an investment in client outcomes.   1. **Budget 18/19 overview**   SB circulated two options for the draft budget. Option 1 shows the staff pay rises and a 37k deficit, although this might increase as some end of year expenditure is not accounted for yet. The net impact is 22k on the unrestricted reserves. The paid gateway assessor role will eat into these next year, but 150 calls per month answered by volunteers could allow for the loss of the paid gateway assessor role.  Option 2 shows the budget without the staff pay rises. |  |
|  | **Balanced Scorecard**   * This shows a very successful year. The total number of clients helped increased by 500 (fluctuations are due to holidays during some periods). Watford is the most successful service in Hertfordshire in terms of calls answered with 3084 calls answered this year. Over 50% of calls were answered (with a Cit A contribution of 7%). The number of full advice appointments went down and this was due to a number of advisers taking time off. More advisers are being trained but this takes a long time. One adviser is needed for every five gateway assessors. * There was a discussion around the outcome of the client satisfaction survey. CitA carries this out by sending clients a text a month after their appointment. We conduct the survey in reception immediately afterwards. Different ways of measuring give different results, and clients report higher levels of satisfaction when asked in reception. The sample size is too small to be meaningful. Resources also affect satisfaction – in Watford people have to wait but in Three Rivers they are seen immediately. The number of clients reporting their experience as ‘very negative’ is a cause for concern, but the figures don’t appear to be reliable. SB will follow up with CitA to find out how the survey will work in future. Customer care training is to be delivered to receptionists. | SB |
|  | **Risk Assessment**  The top two risks remain the same, these are volunteer recruitment and funding. The volunteer recruitment risk is lower now that the Awards for All funding in in place. The premises risk is closed as a risk now that the issue of the lease is resolved. |  |
|  | **Advice Needs Analysis 2017/18**  There are some changes. The ethnic diversity of clients is down, but otherwise this is much the same. |  |
|  | **Policy and Decision Items** |  |
|  | **Policies update**   1. **Policies Process**   The Board considered a new process for considering and reviewing policies which proposed a list of key policies to be reported to the Board after review by management, and a designated lead trustee for each key policy. At the suggestion of GD the Disciplinary Policy was added to the proposed list. Some key policies had been reported to this meeting following review.  A The Board agreed the following process:  1. All new policies to be reported to the Board for approval and consideration whether to designate as key policies.  2. Existing key policies as listed in appendix 1 to these minutes to be reserved for Board approval following review by management and lead trustee.  3. The CO and Chair be authorised to agree changes to non key policies after review, subject to email notification to all Trustees allowing at least 14 days for trustees to comment or request Board consideration.  4. The process be reviewed after 6 months.    B The following key policies were approved:  Information Risk; Grievance; Safeguarding policies; Whistleblowing (pending further review); Health and Safety; Equality and Diversity.  C The non key policies reported to this meeting be reviewed by CO and CE in accordance with the new process.   1. **Remuneration Committee Terms of Reference**   Corrected terms of reference were circulated and approved. | SH  SB |
|  | **Information/Discussion Items** |  |
|  | **Chief Officer’s report**  This was circulated at the meeting.   * The EBDEx project is now closed. The targets were achieved following additional days worked by the adviser. * The Disability Benefits Form Filling project targets were achieved ahead of time. The adviser is training and supervising volunteers. * HWAS targets were achieved but outcome recording is unsatisfactory. Funding for this project will include some additional money to deliver UC support to clients. * There is currently no funding to deliver Financial Skills for Life training. The adviser has left but is willing to deliver more sessions if we can identify funding. SB could approach HCF but is considering other options. | SB |
|  | **Service Manager’s report**  Not available. |  |
|  | **Volunteer representative’s report**  Not available |  |
|  | **Paid Staff Representative’s report**  Not available |  |
|  | **Date of next meetings:**  19th June  4th September  **Proposed date for AGM:**  15th November  Part 1 of the meeting closed at 7.45pm. |  |
|  | **Part 2 HR reports** |  |