**Citizens Advice Watford - Trustee Board Meeting**

**Tuesday 26 January 2021, 6pm on Zoom**

**Minutes Part 1**

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|  | Minutes Part 1 | |
|  | **Standard Items** | |
|  | **Apologies / Introductions**  **Present (meeting held by video conference due to Covid-19):**  Farrukh Siddiqi (FS) – Chair  Leena Nagrecha (LN) – Company Secretary  Pui Wah Carter (PWC) – Treasurer  George Derbyshire (GD) – WBC representative  Laurence Blake (LB) – Trustee  Salim Bakirci (SB) – Chief Officer  Catherine Markowski (CM) – Advice Service Manager & staff representative  Rosie Woodhouse (RW) – minutes  **Apologies**  Meera Lachani (ML) – Trustee  Mike Sellman (MS) – Volunteer representative |  |
|  | **Conflict of interests**  None |  |
|  | **Minutes**   1. Board Meeting held on 29 September 2020   The minutes were approved by the Board. The Chair will print, sign and post the minutes for all meetings together at the end of the year.   1. Matters Arising   **Completed actions:**   * Read R&C plan – closed * Reserves policy – closed * Annual accounts – closed * CO report – it was suggested a summary statement is included at the start of the report. * Advise CM of any contacts at HCC – contact now established.   **Actions carried forward:**   * GDPR – RW to follow up * Mental health training – RW to follow up   **New actions:**   * CM to discuss improving client access with Dacorum CEO and set up internal client feedback. * SB to delegate policy updating to volunteers. * Advise volunteers of change in expenses policy for home working. * Policy template * Review LSA documents * Read R&C report * Attend workers’ meeting on 2nd March at 9.30am * Advice CM of social media contacts for R&C purposes * Appoint interim volunteer representative | RW  RW  CM  SB  SB  SB / FS  ALL  ALL  ALL  ALL  CM |
|  | **Decisions by email since last meeting**  **Funding streams**   1. *Community Justice Foundation - £5,200*   Received.   1. *Citizens Advice - Softphones transition - £1,300*   Received and system successfully implemented.   1. *Citizens Advice - Help to Claim - Additional £500*   Received.   1. *Citizens Advice - Energy Advice - Additional £2,640*   Received and targets increased.   1. *Hertfordshire Community Foundation - £2,000*   Received.   1. *Hertfordshire County Council - c£9K to distribute £10K of energy grants*   *Hertfordshire County Council- Extension of Crisis Intervention*  Additional resources have been requested to assist with distributing the grants to clients centrally, and for each LCA to deliver advice.  **Rough Sleeping Intervention Service** – A new report suggests fewer people are sleeping rough in Watford. Funding was increased by 9 months to the end of the calendar year, but after 31st March it is unlikely the project will continue in its current form. |  |
|  | **Reserves Policy**  Expenditure has increased in proportion to income. A corresponding increase in reserves equivalent to 6 months’ operational expenditure was recommended.  The change was approved by the Board. |  |
|  | **Assurance Items** | |
|  | 1. **Q3 Management Accounts**   Income has increased but changes are expected because much of the funding is short-term.   1. **December 20 Financial report**   SB presented the report, which shows surplus income. Some of this will be carried forward to continue with some temporary paid roles. Unrestricted reserves are expected to increase to £40,000.   1. **Q3 PQF report**   Discussed in item 7 CA Watford’s KPIs |  |
|  | **CA Watford KPI’s**   * New volunteers have been recruited and a further group will start in the summer which will fill gaps when temporary staff roles come to an end. * Overall volunteer numbers show a slight decrease. * The PQF results were discussed by the Board. We will continue to monitor these and discuss what actions to take to improve. CM will discuss with Dacorum ASM how they have improved access and set up internal client feedback. * Number of clients helped has increased and demand for email advice is increasing. * Most projects are either on course to achieve targets or have already achieved or exceeded targets. The Disability Benefits project has been extended. | CM |
|  | **Risk Assessment**  Two new risks were added:   * Re-opening the office safely * CAF bank account limit. |  |
|  | **Policy and Decision Items** |  |
|  | **Policies update**   1. *Volunteer expenses policy* 2. *Client Confidentiality Policy* 3. *Privacy Policy* 4. *GDPR data protection policy* 5. *Dignity at work* 6. *Supporting vulnerable clients* 7. *Finance Procedures* 8. *Data Retention Policy* 9. *Acceptable Use of ICT Facilities*  * CA has changed the way they manage the updating of policies, which are now updated without notification. SB will go through all policies and delegate responsibility for updating to volunteers. * The volunteer expenses policy is withdrawn for the approval list following new advice from HMRC on expenses for working from home. SB will advise volunteers that a utility bill is required as evidence in support of a claim. * A template should be used for all policies with header and footer displaying the implementation date and last BMIS update. SB will design this with assistance from FS having recently overseen this process at CA Bucks.   All policies were approved by the Board. | SB  SB  SB / FS |
|  | **Strategy Day and Strategy Day Agenda**  The strategy day will be held on Thursday 28th January at 2pm on Zoom. The agenda has been circulated and all trustees are asked to read it in advance of the meeting to maximise opportunities for an interactive meeting with meaningful discussion. | ALL |
|  | **Chief Officer’s report**   * An executive summary and EDI update have been added to the report. * All trustees are asked to review the LSA documents in preparation for this year. | ALL |
|  | **Service Manager’s report**   * The Adviceline single queue system if implemented would require a change to our advice model as calls would be answered by advisers rather than assessors. CM will produce a document on the implications of the single queue for discussion at the Strategy Day. * The number of calls answered and clients helped is increasing. * A trainee ASS has been recruited. | CM |
|  | **Research and Campaigns update**   * Two volunteers R&C co-ordinators have been recruited. The MP has been invited to attend the workers’ meeting on 2nd March and a meeting with him will take place in February to discuss the impact of the UC uplift. All Trustees are invited to read the new R&C report and attend the workers’ meeting. * The R&C volunteers will also be promoting our presence on social media. Any Trustee with useful contacts please advise CM. | ALL  ALL |
|  | **Volunteer Staff representative’s report**  No staff feedback was received. |  |
|  | **Paid Staff Representative’s report**  The volunteer representative is currently unavailable. CM will consider appointing an interim volunteer representative. | CM |
|  | **Date of next meeting**  Tuesday 27 April 2021 6pm |  |
|  | **Part 2 HR reports** |  |