**Citizens Advice Watford**

**Trustee Board Meeting**

**Tuesday 07 July 2020 6pm Google Meet**

**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  Stephen Bolton (SBolton) – WBC representative  Yomi Akisanya (YA) – Trustee  Laurence Blake (LB) – Trustee  Meera Lachani (ML) – Trustee  Gail Tendler (GT) – Trustee  Salim Bakirci (SB) – Chief Officer  Catherine Markowski (CM) – Advice Service Manager & staff representative  Mike Sellman (MS) – Volunteer representative (until 7pm)  Rosie Woodhouse (RW) – minutes  **Apologies**  Fikile Mkoyana (FM) – Trustee |  |
|  | **Conflicts of interest**  None |  |
|  | **Minutes**   1. **Board Meeting held on 28 Apr 2020**   The minutes were approved by the board and signed by the Chair.   1. **Matters Arising**   **Completed actions:**   * Business plan reviewed. * Volunteers updated with progress on remote working. * List of items for additional expenditure circulated. * Policies approved. * R&C Development Plan completed and available on the S&V homepage. * Finance policy sent to FM.   **Actions carried forward:**   * All trustees who have not yet done so to complete GDPR for local office managers e-learning and assessment, and SMCR part 2, both on Docebo. RW to re-send the link to each trustee who has not yet activated their account on Okta in order to access Docebo. * Review arrangements for remote working and GDPR.   **New actions:**  5a) Consider options for reporting of reserves and inform FS of preferred option by the end of July.  7) All trustees are invited to share ideas on returning safely to working from the office.  10) Inform SB of any relevant training undertaken.  12) All trustees to read the R&C Development Plan and consider how they might contribute | ALL  SB, CM  ALL  ALL  ALL  ALL |
|  | **Decisions by email since last meeting**   1. **Awards for All grant**   Grant awarded to deliver remote training to new and existing volunteers working remotely.   1. **Clothworkers’ Foundation**   Pending.  There was some further discussion during which it was agreed that no further funding applications will be made for IT equipment as CA is likely to offer additional funds which will be used to procure headsets and / or telephones. Future funding applications should focus on long term funding to meet the expected surge in demand for advice in the coming months. |  |
|  | **Assurance Items** | |
|  | 1. **Q1 Management Accounts**   SB presented the report to the meeting. The report shows a healthy surplus of £14,000 and unrestricted reserves of £240k, excluding the pension reserve of approximately £71k. The board discussed the merits of including the pension fund deficit in the calculation of unrestricted reserves. The accountant has advised this would be a prudent approach.  The board discussed maintaining reserves at the current level versus spending the funds appropriately. Various options were discussed including paying the pension fund deficit, using reserves to meet the expected increase in demand for advice, or identifying another option.  The board will consider two options for reporting the reserves:  **Option 1** – State that the unrestricted reserves are after setting aside an amount for the pension fund deficit; or  **Option 2** – do nothing and leave the figure at £240,000.  All members to consider these options and report their preferred option to FS by the end of July.   1. **May 2020 Financial report**   SB presented the report to the meeting. The report shows additional income and lower than average expenditure. The bureau has incurred additional expenses as a result of Covid-19 but so far these have been met out of Covid-related grants.   1. **CA’s financial dashboard Q1**   SB presented the report to the meeting.   1. **Updated budget summary**   SB presented the updated budget to the meeting. The budget will be reviewed at the end of September. The budget was approved by the board. | ALL |
|  | **CA Watford KPI’s**  SB presented the report to the meeting.   * Because of the impact of Covid-19 it was agreed to change the target agreed at the strategy day to 75%. Currently 70% of demand is being met, and a steady increase in demand is expected. * All project targets have been met. The scams awareness project was particularly successful. * AICs show that enquiries related to UC and employment have shown a significant increase. * Volunteers answered 212 calls in June. * Volunteer recruitment has slowed down but two new student volunteers started gateway training remotely in June, and interviews are due to take place for up to four potential new volunteers. |  |
|  | **Risk Assessment**  PWC presented the report to the meeting.  Three new risks were added to the risk register as a result of Covid-19: an increase in demand for advice, in particular employment and benefits advice, re-opening the premises and breaches of GDPR. There are no changes to the five existing Covid-19 risks which are being managed and monitored.  **Covid 19 – Premises Risk Assessment**  Preparations are in progress to facilitate a safe return to the office including social distancing.  **Covid 19 Recovery plan**  The board discussed the time-line for gradually resuming a service from the office. Individual risk assessments are underway for all staff and volunteers. The supervision workload will increase with some people WFH and others in the office. All trustees are invited to share their ideas for a safe return to working from the office. | ALL |
|  | **Competitor Analysis/Benchmarking**  SB presented the report to the meeting. We should continue to diversify our income streams in order to minimise risk. |  |
|  | **Policy and Decision Items** | |
|  | **Policies update**  The policies for discussion were circulated in advance of the meeting.   1. **Trustee Code of Conduct** 2. **DBS Policy** 3. **Safeguarding policies** 4. **Fair competition policy**   All policies were approved by the board. |  |
|  | **Information/Discussion Items** | |
|  | **Chief Officer’s report**  SB presented his report to the meeting.  The LSA is due in November and the auditor is due to visit to review files. Trustee training records should be up to date. Members were asked to inform SB of any relevant training undertaken. Members were also asked to complete their GDPR and SMCR part 2 e-learning and assessment. | ALL (those outstanding) |
|  | **Service Manager’s report**  CM presented her report to the meeting. This focussed on the increased demand and increasing numbers of calls answered by volunteers. |  |
|  | **Research and Campaigns update**  The R&C Development Plan has been updated and all members are asked to read the plan and contact CM to discuss how they might contribute. | ALL |
|  | **Volunteer representative’s report**  A remote social evening has been arranged for 7pm on Friday 17th July. |  |
|  | **Paid Staff Representative’s report**  All staff are working more hours than they are paid for and most have not taken annual leave. There is a concern this will lead to stress. |  |
|  | **Date of next meeting**  29th September 2020  Part 1 of the meeting ended at 7.55pm |  |
|  | **Part 2 HR reports** | Separate minutes |