

Healthwatch Milton Keynes (HWMK)

Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes, Wednesday 10th February 2021

Via Zoom video conferencing facility 9.30am - 11.30am

Attendees: Mary Legge (ML) - Chair, Ama Bimpong (AB) - Deputy Chair, Alan Hancock (AH) - Deputy Chair, George Assibey (GA), Mike Newton (MN), (JW), Tracy Keech (Deputy CEO), Maxine Taffetani (CEO)

Apologies: Paul Egerton (PE)-Treasurer, Jane Whild (JW)

Agenda Item No.	Agenda Item	Action/Agreements
1	<p>Opening Remarks and apologies</p> <p>No apologies were recorded.</p>	
2	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>No declarations of interest were recorded</p>	
3	<p>Adoption of Agenda</p> <p>The Agenda was adopted without amendment</p>	
4	<p>Minutes and Actions Arising</p> <p>The Chair explained that the minutes of the previous meeting could not be approved, as a section dealing with Strategy was missing. It was agreed that the amended minutes should be re-circulated for approval, and that this should be registered at the next Board meeting.</p> <p>The action log was reviewed, and it was agreed by the Board that any outstanding items were covered by the agenda for the current Board meeting</p>	<p>CEO, ICEO and Chair</p>
5	<p>Trustee rotation and selection procedures 2021</p> <p>A paper presented to the Board, outlining the procedures proposed for Trustee rotation and the selection of new Trustees and a new Chair was discussed and approved by the Board. The Chair confirmed that she would be stepping down as Chairperson, and suggested that a skills audit of Trustees should be conducted, so as to identify where there were gaps in expertise across the Board. It was agreed that this should be done rapidly, as a self-reporting exercise, in view of time</p>	<p>CEO, ICEO and Chair</p>

	constraints. Attention was drawn to the need for expertise in equality and diversity issues and in strategy development.	
6	<p style="text-align: center;">Annual General Meeting</p> <p>Proposals put before the Board outlining arrangements for a virtual Annual General Meeting were discussed by the Board and approved. The Board did not consider it necessary to establish a Task and Finish group for the AGM, as it would follow the procedure established in 2020 and build on the experience acquired. The AGM would be held on 21st July 2021 between 2.0 - 3.0 p.m.</p>	CEO, ICEO
7	<p>Standing Items Agenda Report</p> <p>a) Business continuity The Board noted that the Business Continuity Plan was being reviewed regularly by the ICEO and Deputy Chair Alan Hancock to ensure that it remained fit for purpose.</p> <p>b) IT The Board heard a report on the opening of a company credit card and on the purchase of IT equipment, both of which have been affected by Covid-19 restrictions.</p> <p>c) Human Resources The Board heard a report on the staffing situation, staff activities and staff morale, which remained good in difficult and tiring conditions. The post description for the new Communications Officer was approved and the Board emphasised that this post should be filled as soon as possible.</p> <p>d) Information Governance The Board agreed that any Information Governance issues could be addressed by the Governance Committee, and considered that a separate IG Committee was no longer required. It should be replaced by an annual audit, to be carried out in association with the annual financial audit. Now that the DPO (Mike Newton) was stepping down as a Trustee, the Board also suggested that this role might be outsourced and the CEO and ICEO were asked to investigate cost and feasibility.</p> <p>e) Finance The Board discussed its Reserves Policy at length, taking into account both financial and political considerations and bearing mind that the figure had originally been established on the basis of three months of operating costs and the need to meet legal</p>	<p>ICEO, CEO, AH</p> <p>ICEO, CEO</p> <p>CEO, ICEO</p> <p>CEO, ICEO, Governance Committee</p> <p>Finance Committee, CEO</p>

	<p>obligations in the event of emergency closure. It decided to maintain the present level of £20,000 (or as close as possible to that figure), but to keep this under regular review.</p> <p>A Finance Policy draft has been circulated to the Finance Committee.</p> <p>f) Performance and g) Governance</p> <p>The Q3 performance report sent to the Commissioners has not as yet elicited any comments, even though it raised the issue of the Partnership Boards. The Trustees discussed the policy to be adopted on the future of HWMK's involvement with the Partnership Boards, and after reviewing several options put forward by the ICEO decided that HWMK should discontinue its involvement from June 2021, explain its decision to MKC and advise the Council that it remained open to any approach in the future to discuss a possible alternative arrangement.</p> <p>It was also decided that a new Memorandum of Understanding with the Council should be drafted, in the light of changing arrangements.</p> <p>g) Health and Safety</p> <p>No additional decisions were taken, apart from the provisions made under Covid recovery planning.</p> <p>h) Risk</p> <p>The Board approved the changes to the Risk Register proposed by the Governance Committee at its last meeting.</p>	<p>Chair, CEO</p> <p>Chair, CEO</p>
8	<p>Budget</p> <p>The Board considered proposals for lower and increased levels of activity, and agreed to plan on the basis of increased activity. The CEO and ICEO were asked to look at options to reduce the surplus and resubmit. It was also agreed that professional fees for the DPO could be increased.</p>	<p>CEO and ICEO Finance Committee</p>
9	<p>Strategy Review</p> <p>The Board held a full and wide-ranging discussion on this item. The Communications Strategy was noted and approved, but the discussion was mainly focussed on Engagement, the development of both short-term and long-term strategic plans and the relationship between them. Engagement was at the heart of HWMK's work, but it would need to be re-assessed and revitalised after the pandemic had been controlled. An immediate business recovery plan was needed, flexible and</p>	<p>CEO, Chair</p>

	<p>matched to needs and resources, but it was important to develop a longer-term strategy. This would require extended discussion by the Board, possibly with the help of an external facilitator. It was also important to develop a long-term staffing strategy, taking engagement needs and possibilities properly into account, as a basis for future recruitment.</p>	
10	<p>Business Recovery Plan</p> <p>The Board considered that this item had been covered by the discussion under Item 9</p>	
11	<p>AOB</p> <p>None raised by participants</p>	
12	<p>Dates and Times of Future Meetings</p> <p>Wednesday 12th May 2021</p> <p>Wednesday 11th August 2021</p> <p>Wednesday 10th November 2021</p>	



Signed:

Name: Mary Legge

Position: Chairperson of the Board of Trustees

Date: 27.05.2021