

The West of England Friends Housing Society
Minutes of the Board Meeting held at Avenue House on Tuesday 3rd March 2020 at 6:45pm

Present: *Board Members:* Tim Wye (Chairperson)
Christopher Denman, Jo Gray, Janet Lynch, Melanie Mackintosh, GERALYN MEEHAN, Jerry Oliver, Chris Szpojnarowicz, Michael Tuckwell
Avenue House: Caroline Cooper, Karen Parkin (minutes)
Graham Rivers Architects: Graham Rivers
Bishop Fleming: Claire Argrave, Caitlin Murphy

1. Moment of Silence

In accordance with our Quaker values, a moment of silence was taken prior to the start of the meeting.

2. Apologies and welcome

Neil Allan sent his apologies.

3. Agreement of minutes of the meeting held on 19th November 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th November 2019 were agreed as being a true account of the meeting, and were signed off by the Chair.

4. Building Plans update

- Estimate costings of £250k +VAT have been provided for the planned Avenue House front extension. This includes a contingency allowance of 5%.
- Pre-planning permission has been applied for at a cost of £228, which should take up to 40 working days to be decided. If granted, this doesn't guarantee that full planning permission would be given, but it does give a good indication and highlight any potential problems with the plans.
- Graham Rivers thinks chances of permission are very high.
- It was agreed that we continue with our plans and officially appoint Graham Rivers as architect to see them through.

5. Board Membership (member terms ending)

- Melanie Mackintosh reached the end of her 2nd 3 year term last year, and agreed to extend. She is happy to extend further if required
- Neil Allan is coming to the end of his 2nd 3 year term and is also willing to extend if required
- Janet Lynch has come to the end of her 1st 3 year term and has taken the decision to step down at the upcoming AGM. Thanks were expressed to Janet for all of her time and efforts dedicated to the Board.
- Final decisions about whether to extend Neil and Melanie's terms in office will be taken at the upcoming AGM.

Action: Tim to write to residents re: resident representative vacancy on the Board

6. Financial Report by Bishop Fleming

- The 2019 year end draft accounts have been sent to the Chair and Manager, along with the auditors Haines Watts who have been into Avenue House this week carrying out audit work.
- The draft accounts indicate a year end surplus of £30k
- The management accounts for January 2020 were discussed:
 - There is a surplus of £12.5k against a budget of £2,800 – this can be mainly attributed to the building upkeep budget not yet being spent.
- There was a discussion around moving and locking away some of the Society's reserves, as the interest rates on our bank accounts are very small. As the FCA protect up to £85k per institution, this would mean using a significant number of banks.

Action: Chris Szpojnarowicz to pick up and present back to the Board

- A question around how the budget for audit/accounts/Bishop Fleming fees is split amongst the 3 houses was raised, as the accounts show a budget for Kirwin and Lansdowne which seems very high. It was clarified that as the accounting covers the whole Society (we do not have a separate set of year end accounts for each house), the budget for this is split per room/flat.
- Claire Argrave from Bishop Fleming will be going on Adoption Leave at the end of this week. Caitlin Murphy will be taking over – she has been working with Claire and the Avenue House office staff for some time now.

7. Auditor quotes

- Quotes have been received from Haines Watts and Godfrey Wilson. Bourton Sweet declined to quote.
- Melanie Mackintosh declared that her daughter works for Godfrey Wilson.
- Both companies have provides similar quotes.
- After some discussion, the general feeling was that as we have used Haines Watts for many years now, it would be good practice to change auditors. This bears no reflection on the job that Haines Watts have done for us – it was agreed that they have done a fantastic job.
- The final decision about appointing auditors for this financial year will be made at the upcoming AGM.

7. Verbal update from Manager

- Avenue House had an audit from the pharmacy on 13th February – they concluded that standards are very good and safe. Blister packs are no longer provided, but this has worked out really well.
- Bristol City Council inspected us on 24th January. It was a very positive report.
- We have recruited 3 new carers – 2 have now started and 1 is due to start next week. This has boosted staff morale after a very difficult few months.
- Melanie Mackintosh suggested in future advertising amongst post-graduate students.

- Since December 2019 we have had 6 new residents at Avenue House. We currently have 3 vacancies, one of which will be filled at the end of March. It was declared that this will be the mother-in-law of our Chair.
- No CQC visit as of yet.
- There is one staff member left to sort out her leave to remain status as a result of Brexit.

Action: Administrator to check with staff member that this gets done

9. Update on Business Plan

No change.

10. Staff Benefits

Following Daksha Patel's (of Janjer Ltd) consultation with staff at Avenue House, the suggestions raised around staff benefits were discussed:

- Rewarding good staff attendance record
This would need to be robustly managed, and after discussion it was decided to put this on the back burner for now.
Geraldyn advised that it would be a good idea to remind staff once a year about how absence is managed (Bradford Factor) and that when using this tool, short term and frequent sickness scores higher than long term sickness.
- Staff Member of the Month/Quarter/Year
This has been done in the past and caused some animosity. It was suggested that we could have a box for nominations, and have a panel to decide who the award goes to. The winner of the previous month could then be on the panel to decide the next month's winner. To explore further.
- Discount Card
There are various options for this:
 - NHS discounts – this is free and anyone in the care industry can sign up to it
 - Pure Card (amongst others) – the organisation would buy this
 - It was agreed that we try the NHS discount card first, to see if people make use of it. **Action: Administrator to promote**
- Access to dental and eye screening
Action: Geraldyn Meehan to cost up
- Access to Ballantyne Gym and Spa Facilities
This was put on the back burner – it could potentially be built into a recognition of staff service award
- Employee referral scheme
This has already been introduced (£60 awarded to the referrer when the new staff member starts work, a further £60 when they have been here for 3 months). This does need to be publicised better, perhaps by way of a note with the payslips.

- Recognition for length of service
Staff across all sectors of work generally really appreciate this wherever it is introduced. A discussion was held around which milestones to celebrate and how. It was agreed that it start quite low, at 5 years, with an additional day of annual leave awarded for that year. It was agreed this be introduced by May of this year.

Action : Manager / Chair / Jo Gray & GERALYN MEEHAN to discuss and implement

It was agreed that staff benefits be reviewed each year, the next in February 2021

11. Business Risk Register

Actions arising from previous meetings:

- *Manager to arrange fire risk assessment of roof spaces – this has been carried out but we are yet to receive the report.*

Action: Manager to chase & discuss at next meeting

The current Corona Virus situation was discussed. At present Public Health Guidelines are saying to carry on as normal, with guidelines around when to self-isolate and an emphasis on more stringent handwashing and awareness.

The following actions were agreed:

- Clear signage on the front door about when visitors should not visit the home
- Posters up around the home with current Public Health Guidelines, and highlighting correct handwashing procedure
- Brief staff about handwashing and touching others only when necessary
- Temporarily pause visits from the nursery children on Tuesday mornings
- Sick pay to apply if a staff member is diagnosed with COVID19
- Further discussion to be held around what pay will apply if a staff member has to self isolate even when displaying no symptoms (which could potentially happen multiple times per staff member)
- Chair & GERALYN to add their voices to the cause of prioritising testing for care workers

12. Tea Break

13. Board Governance / update on Board Member visits

Month	Board Member	Sections to be assessed
August 2019	Melanie Mackintosh	R3, E2
January 2020	Chris Szponjarowicz	W2, R1
February 2020	Tim Wye	R2, W5
March 2020	Geralyn Meehan	S3, E4
April 2020	Melanie Mackintosh	E3, C1
May 2020	Neil Allan	S2, S5
June 2020	Michael Tuckwell	E2, C2
July 2020	Jerry Oliver	W1, W3
August 2020	Jo Gray	C3, R3
September 2020	Chris Szponjarowicz	E7, W4
October 2020	Tim Wye	S6, E6

Actions arising from previous meeting:

- *Complete outstanding visits* - There are outstanding visits from Melanie Mackintosh, Chris Szpojnarowicz and Tim Wye, with a report from December to be written up by Jo Gray
- *Jerry Oliver to write a paragraph for our Medication Policy to cover Best Interest Decision Making in the event of a resident losing capacity and declining medication, and circulate for approval* – This has been approved and incorporated into the Medication Policy.

Recommendations from recent visits have included:

- Neil Allan – encourage resident feedback re: access to Avenue House
- Tim – when a staff satisfaction survey is carried out, collate the results and present to the Board and Staff. This could potentially be done on survey monkey rather than on paper.

Action: Due to Corona Virus risk, suspend Regulation 17 visits at present

14. Developing Community Offer

Carry forward to next meeting

15. Discussion regarding de-registering Kirwin House as Supported Housing

Tim has written to the tenants about this and has not received any untoward response. However, as Tenant Representative, Christopher Denman has had other feedback:

- There is concern over losing the tenant meetings held by the Assistant Manager Rebecca Tailby, as the tenants find these really useful. Whilst they could carry on with these themselves, it is felt by tenants that Rebecca is very good at them and her attendance is valued. Some clarification around this is required.
- There is a strong feeling around fees. It is proposed that the support charges be put in with the service charge or rent, however many tenants feel that in this case they have either been paying for support they haven't been receiving, and are entitled to a refund, or are now not receiving a service and shouldn't be paying for that going forward at all if the house is de-registered.
- It was agreed that for every new tenant, the support charge be moved into the service charge. It may be that this is the sensible way forward but the issue of the alarm system might need more urgent addressing

Action: Further conversation to be held between the Chair and Tenant Representative and a proposal put together.

16. A.O.B.

Actions arising from previous meeting:

- *Jo Gray to look at engaging someone to develop choir work* – Jo has been looking into this. There are several musical people in our resident/tenant/staff group that would be willing to help. It was agreed that we attempt a trial 'in-house' group first.

Action: Manager & Jo Gray to discuss

- A question about who is responsible for the insurance if damage is caused to a tenant flat as a result of action by another tenant – e.g. if taps are left running.
Action: Chris Szpojnarrowicz to double check Society policy
- The Chair declared that he is standing for election as Green Councilor in his ward (not same as WEFHS)

Dates for next meetings

Dates are provisionally set as follows – the May meeting is in half term so may need changing, also an ongoing eye will be kept on the Corona Virus. The possibility of electronic meetings was suggested.

AGM – Wednesday 20 th May 2020	2pm
Tuesday 26 th May 2020	6:45pm
Tuesday 21 st July 2020	6:45pm
Tuesday 22 nd September 2020	6:45pm
Tuesday 24 th November 2020	6:45pm
Tuesday 23 rd February 2021	6:45pm
AGM – Wednesday 19 th May 2021	2pm
Tuesday 25 th May 2021	6:45pm

Summary of action points:

Action	By whom	By when
Write to residents re: resident representative vacancy on the Board	Chair	April 2020
Look into bank accounts	Chris Szpojnarrowicz	Next meeting
Check all EU staff members have sorted their leave to remain following Brexit	Administrator	April 2020
Promote NHS discount card	Administrator	April 2020
Cost up access to dental and eye screening	Geralyn Meehan	Next meeting
Publicise staff referral scheme better by way of note with payslips	Administrator / Manager	As required
Introduce recognition of length of service award	Manager / Chair / Jo Gray / Geralyn Meehan	May 2020
Review staff benefits annually	Board	February 2021
Chase report following fire risk assessments of roof spaces	Manager	Next meeting
Action Further conversation to be held between the	Chair / Tenant representative	Next meeting

Chair and Tenant Representative and a proposal put together.		
<p>Corona Virus actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear signage on the front door about when visitors should not visit the home • Posters up around the home with current Public Health Guidelines, and highlighting correct handwashing procedure • Brief staff about handwashing and touching others only when necessary • Temporarily pause visits from the nursery children on Tuesday mornings • Sick pay to apply if a staff member is diagnosed with COVID19 • Further discussion to be held around what pay will apply if a staff member has to self isolate even when displaying no symptoms (which could potentially happen multiple times per staff member) • Chair & GERALYN to add their voices to the cause of prioritising testing for care workers • Suspend Reg 17 visits 	<p>Administrator</p> <p>Administrator</p> <p>Manager</p> <p>Activities Coordinator</p> <p>Manager</p> <p>Board</p> <p>Chair & GERALYN MEEHAN</p> <p>Board</p>	<p>Immediately</p>

Further discussion to be held around de-registering Kirwin House as Supported Housing	Chair / Tenant representative	Next Meeting
In-house choir to be set up	Manager / Jo Gray	Next meeting
Check Society Insurance Policy around liability for damage to flat caused as a result of another tenant's actions	Chris Szpojnarowicz	Next meeting