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Ymddiriedolaeth Brifysgol GIG
Gwasanaethau Ambiwylans Cymru
Welsh Ambulance Services
University NHS Trust

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHARITY COMMITTEE HELD ON 4 April 2024 VIA TEAMS

MEMBERS:

Ceri Jackson Non-Executive Director (Committee Chair)
Bethan Evans Non-Executive Director

IN ATTENDANCE:

Lee Brooks Executive Director of Operations
Colin Dennis Trust Chair
Jill Gill Head of Financial Accounting
Estelle Hitchon Director of Partnerships and Engagement
Caroline Jones Corporate Governance Officer
Navin Kalia Deputy Director of Finance and Corporate Resources
Olaide Kazeem Financial Services Project Accountant
Jo Kelso Head of Workforce Education and Development
Carolyn Lewis Wellbeing Practitioner
Trish Mills Director of Corporate Governance/Board Secretary
Hugh Parry Trade Union Partner
Alex Payne Corporate Governance Manager
Liz Rogers Assistant Director of People and Culture
Andy Swinburn Executive Director of Paramedicine
Chris Turley Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources
Damon Turner Trade Union Partner
Marcus Viggers Trade Union Partner

APOLOGIES:

Julie Boalch Head of Risk/Deputy Board Secretary
Hannah Rowan Non-Executive Director

19/24 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Ceri Jackson, Committee Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that Colin Dennis was observing the meeting today.

Apologies were noted from Hannah Rowan and Julie Boalch.

20/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no additional declarations to those already recorded on the Trust Register of Interests.

RESOLVED: That no new declarations were received.

21/24 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2024 were approved as a correct record.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on the 18 January 2024 were approved as a correct record.

22/24 ACTION LOG

The action log was considered, reviewed, and updated.

Actions 28/23, 06/24, 10/24 and 11/24 were all proposed and accepted for closure.

Action 35/23 was closed with the action being transferred to the forward plan to be revisited at the October meeting.

RESOLVED: That action log was reviewed all actions were closed as set out above.

23/24 BIDS PANEL LIVED EXPERIENCE

Members received a presentation from Carolyn Lewis, the Trust's Wellbeing Practitioner, which explained the background to making the application for use of charitable funds through the Bids Panel in support of staff wellbeing at the Clinical Contact Centre (CCC) at Vantage Point House. Carolyn explained what the experience entailed and how members had considered whether to seek therapy through Reflexology, Reiki or Soundbath therapies, which would provide the best experience for staff.

The Soundbath therapy was chosen; a form of meditation using sound vibrations which can reduce stress and anxiety related symptoms, in addition to improving sleep.

The timing of the event allowed staff to be released on a rotational basis to allow up to eight staff to attend each session. Forty-eight members of staff enjoyed the experience with 16 staff providing feedback, which was all positive, with the downtime and relaxation being a huge benefit.

Members were keen to express their thanks for the support to staff within the CCC recognising that this was a challenging environment to work in. Carolyn expressed her thanks for the use of charitable funds to support this initiative and noted that a further application to the Bids Panel for sessions to be opened up Pan Wales and be accessible to all staff was being considered.

Members discussed the possibility of training staff to deliver in house sessions and the Ceri Jackson agreed as Chair of People and Culture Committee to discuss the possibilities with Angie Lewis, Director of People and Culture.

RESOLVED: The positive impact of the Soundbath experience and the benefits to the CCC staff were noted through the delivery of the Bids Panel Lived Experience story, from Carolyn Lewis.

24/24 CHARITY PERFORMANCE REPORT

The report presented by Estelle Hitchon detailed the grant income from NHS Charities Together and the expenditure against those funds. Estelle noted that this report is the first dedicated charity performance report from the point of view of the receipt of grant monies and their use.

Development Grant

The Development Grant (£22,981) was awarded prior to the strategic review and the subsequent decisions to invest in leadership. An extension had been granted to utilise the fund by December 2024; however, with the Head of Charity post still vacant, Estelle Hitchon had agreed to take ownership of the development of branding as an interim arrangement.

Stage 3 Recovery Grant

It was noted that the Stage 3 Recovery Grant (£88,000) was split into three projects:

- a) Volunteer Development Programme;
- b) Mind Over Mountains; and
- c) Welsh Ambulance Services University NHS Trust Sports

The sports element of the funding was on hold due to assurance needing to be gained on liability issues for the Charity in respect of any injuries sustained as a result of charity supported sports, and the potential requirement for indemnity.

Ambulance Grant

An updated contract had been requested for a start date of 1 December 2023 against the Ambulance Grant to allow time for the recruitment process. It had verbally been agreed with the Grants Officer; however, the updated contract was still awaited. It was asked that Estelle Hitchon follow up the contract position.

Key dates and risks were highlighted within the report. Members welcomed the first performance report and recognised it would be developed and refined over time.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) The Committee welcomed the first Performance report, noted the progress and key risks in the Charity Performance Report together with the mitigations in place to minimise the risks identified; and**
- 2) Estelle Hitchon would follow up the contract position relating to the Ambulance Grant.**

25/24 CHARITY FUNDS FINANCE UPDATE

Chris Turley highlighted to members the key points within the report which included:

- a) details of the fund balances as at the end of February 2024. The balance of funds on 29 February 2024 was £552K comprised of £301K unrestricted funds; £26K in designated funds; and £225K in restricted funds. 1,090.14 investment units in the Charity Investment Fund (COIF) are held at a market value of £276k. Whilst the market is quite volatile there were no issues requiring escalation to the Corporate Trustee.
- b) the COIF Charity Investment Fund and the continued increased monitoring;
- c) the potential for a full audit of the 2024/25 accounts and increased cost for this,
- d) a proposed update on the Financial Impact on New Strategic Direction – Year 1.

Chris Turley highlighted the original agreement to fund the agreed charity share of the new posts from both the National Fund and a small residual balance from the revaluation reserve. However, due to the volatility of the revaluations reserve, c£16k alternative funding had been identified within the NHS Charities Together grants which could be utilised. The Committee approved the allocation of the money from the grant funding in line with the recommendation from Chris Turley.

Chris Turley spoke of the possibility of now requiring a full audit for the 2023/24 accounts (and not just the 2024/25 accounts as flagged within the paper) as balances were close to the threshold of not being able to undertake an independent examination. Once it was known if a full audit would be required Chris confirmed that he would engage with Audit Wales at the earliest opportunity to ensure it could be carried out within the timeline available.

Members expressed their concerns around the delays that had occurred with the last full audit, which had resulted in a late filing of the Charity accounts, due to additional work and the timing of the delivery of this from Audit Wales. This was then compounded by the resulting qualified audit opinion at the time, which attracted additional work and associated costs within Audit Wales.

Ceri Jackson highlighted the importance of the costs of the full audit and was concerned that if the charity was only just over the full audit threshold that a proportion of the income would be spent on a full audit, as had been seen from the last full audit. Chris Turley assured the Committee that whilst the cost of a full audit was notably more than an independent audit, the figure would be less as some of the previous costs were attributed to enabling the qualified opinion to be issued, together with the number of previous years that had been reviewed by the auditors. However, representations would be made to Audit Wales to seek to ensure that any required full audit would be done at the lowest cost to the charity as possible

Estelle Hitchon made reference to a couple of legacies which had been left to the Trust, one of which was in discussion with solicitors to review the restrictions placed on it. She also noted the need for guidance around legacies.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the contents of this finance update were noted; and**
- 2) the use of the c£16k contribution from its NHSCT Grants to support the funding of the two new posts was approved.**

26/24 UPDATED POSITION ON RECRUITMENT TO HEAD OF CHARITY POST

The Head of Charity post was due to be considered in the banding process at a meeting being held on 5 April 2024. The initial delay in progress was the result of the need to complete further paperwork and take advice on the content of the job description (JD) to meet the requirements of the process.

As a delay in recruitment for the Head of Charity post was anticipated, it was proposed by Estelle Hitchon to commit the equivalent of two days per week to charity matters as agreed with the Chief Executive.

The Trust's Communications Team would assume responsibility for branding, website development and marketing in order to utilise the grant funding in the most appropriate way and timescale. Branding would be commissioned externally for reasons of both expertise and timeliness.

It was recognised by Members that should any further delays in recruitment occur, then consideration would need to be given to the continued support of Estelle Hitchon, in order for there not to be an impact on business as usual for the Trust.

Members considered the possibility of the banding not being achieved. Estelle Hitchon agreed that there would be an opportunity later in the month to resubmit the JD with adjustments should it be necessary.

RESOLVED: That the Committee gained assurance from the update report provided.

27/24 RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT

The report presented today provided Members with an update in respect of risks aligned to the Charity Committee. Work had progressed and continued to do so, to develop the Charity Governance Risk and Charity Accounts Reputation Risk.

Executive Leadership Team Members had discussed both the lack of internal processes, governance structures in place to support the application for grants and fund administration. They also considered the risk together with the reputational damage of the Trust's Charity and Trustees due to the late filing of the Annual Return and their recommendation was for the Charity Governance Risk to be included on the Charity Risk Register. The next report to Committee would describe the controls, assurances, and mitigating actions of the Charity Governance Risk.

Whilst the Charity Accounts Risk had been developed and worked through; the issue of the late filing of accounts no longer presented a risk to the Charity, and therefore this risk had been closed. It was included in the summary report for information. Members did agree that should a full audit of the accounts be required this year; the risk could be revisited if necessary.

Chris Turley said he was confident that the cause for the delay and qualification from the audit in 2021/22 should not reoccur, and he also noted that the Trust does not have an equivalent risk on its Corporate Risk Register for the Trust accounts.

The Committee noted that the risks to be developed include:

- a. Resource and capacity to manage the Charity.
- b. Trustees – skills, roles and responsibilities and training.

- c. Compliance with legal and regulatory framework.
- d. Governance and management of funds

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the contents of the report were considered and discussed;**
- 2) the inclusion of the Charity Governance Risk on the Charity Risk Register was approved; and**
- 3) the closure of the Charity Accounts Risk was approved.**

28/24 BIDS PANEL HIGHLIGHT REPORT – 19 MARCH 2024

A comprehensive highlight report was provided for Members following the first meeting of the Bids Panel following its reinstatement in January 2024.

The Bids Panel gave assurance that the Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA) guidance on the use of charitable funds had been considered and applied when reviewing the applications.

The Bids Panel considered and approved three bids which included Mind over Mountains (£3,300), WISH blankets (£565) and a TV top box recorder (£47). Two applications were referred to the Executive Leadership Team as they were over the £5K threshold for the panel. The Committee were assured that the Bids Panel had applied the Healthcare Financial Management Association guidance for use of charitable funds in the NHS when considering applications, to ensure that the bids were considered in relation to the charity's objects and the public benefit requirements.

The Executive Leadership Team had been asked to look at options on how to utilise the Barmouth restricted fund for equipment, which would be fed back to the Panel.

Damon Turner referred to the highlight report and position regarding the sale of kayaks. Members discussed the position and recognised there were lessons to be learned and that the advice on liability would be critical going forward.

RESOLVED: That the

- 1) AAA report was received and the Committee gained assurance from the robust discussions held and that the HFMA guidance was applied.**

29/24 BURSARY PANEL UPDATE

The Bursary Panel met on the 3 April 2024, following its reinstatement. The purpose was to review successful applications from last year, which were recommended by the Bursary Sub-Group for financial support. A verbal update was provided by the Panel Chair, Jo Kelso.

The Panel approved allocation of funding, within the funding previously identified for this round of the bursary scheme, to six applicants to a total value of £9,190, with a further two applications requiring further investigation to review what existing alternative funding routes could be accessed.

- ILM Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management (£650)
- Glyndwr University Minor Injuries and Management module (£500)
- Counselling Package Pro (£500)
- BSc (Hons) Acute and Critical Care (£1,200)
- Level 6 Diploma in Occupational Health and Safety Practice (£1,340)
- PG Dip Infection Control (£5,000)

In looking at opening up round one for this year, communication needed to be aligned to clarify for staff, what to apply for and when, to ensure the best outcome for staff and to identify if other funding streams were available. The funding source for future rounds of the Bursary Scheme, overseen by the Bursary Panel needed to be considered and brought back to the Committee for a decision, noting that if there was urgency to comply with academic year applications, a Chair's Action could be progressed.

The current process and the barriers this may present were discussed by the Sub-Group and they asked that the Bursary Panel explore potential alternative application formats for consideration.

RESOLVED: that the

- 1) progress of successful applications was noted; and**
- 2) funding options needed to be considered, and if necessary, a Chair's Action could be progressed.**

30/24 COMMITTEE CYCLE OF BUSINESS 2024/25 & MONITORING REPORT

Updating of the cycle of business for the committee was the final step in the 2023/24 effectiveness reviews that were conducted in quarter four (Q4). Amendments to the Committee's terms of reference agreed in Q4 have been incorporated into this updated cycle of business.

The cycle has been developed with direct correlation to the duties in the terms of reference (indicated by the red text in the cycle of business). This would allow

members to review the appropriateness of the proposed reports and their frequency.

The cycle for the Committee is a maturing document which will grow organically over the next 12 months. There were some areas of the cycle where reporting remained to be developed as the charity resourcing developments throughout 2024/25.

There were no matters to escalate to the Committee on the Cycle of Business Monitoring Report for quarter one.

RESOLVED: That the

- 1) Cycle of Business was reviewed and approved for 2024/25; and**
- 2) Cycle of Business monitoring document was noted.**

31/24 MINUTES OF THE EXTRA ORDINARY BIDS PANEL HELD ON 4 OCTOBER 2023

The minutes were received for information by the Committee.

32/24 KEY MESSAGES FOR THE CORPORATE TRUSTEE BOARD AND AGREED ACTIONS

Members noted the range of business discussed at the meeting, which would be included in the highlight report.

33/24 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Trish Mills agreed to write a letter to Carolyn Lewis to thank her for sharing her experience with the Committee, recognising that it was unnerving to present to a Committee and quite often out of people's comfort zone.

Damon Turner raised the possibility of insufficient funds being available for Christmas dinners for staff this year. Chris Turley was confident that this would not be the case and agreed to speak to Damon Turner outside of the meeting.

34/24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for 2 July 2024.