

Minutes of a meeting of the board of trustees of Community Base held on 11th September 2007

Present: Lucy Stone (acting chair), Bob Cristofoli, Paul Evans, Jane Frost, Tina Harrison and Hong Lu

In attendance: Colin Chalmers (director and minutes), Annette Moss (building manager) and Deborah Sprackling (receptionist/administrator)

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Sylvia Alexander-Vine and Sarah Bourne.

2 Minutes of previous meeting

The board approved minutes of the board meetings held on 10th July 2007.

3 Matters arising

1. The board agreed that our tenth birthday event had been a success, especially the cake!
2. The board congratulated Deborah for her hard work in getting volunteer search ready for its online launch to coincide with our tenth birthday.
3. The board congratulated Colin on the short film *Welcome to Community Base*.

4 Participant group meetings

1. The board noted the notes of the July and August 2007 participant group meetings.
2. Jane said that volunteer search had been extremely useful to Assert, who had found two volunteers through it since its launch. Deborah said the feedback she had received from potential volunteers visiting reception and community and voluntary groups listing opportunities on it had been extremely positive.
3. Annette said she was investigating the possibility of composting kitchen waste.

5 Correspondence

The board noted a letter from the Mayor of Brighton and Hove Carol Ann Theobald congratulating Community Base on its first decade and its tenth birthday party.

6 Health and safety

Annette reported that she has been advised by experts in pest control that our mice problem was had arisen because of building works in the area and the unusual weather recently and was a limited problem, probably involving single figures of mice. Annette said we had entered into a contract with a company specialising in pest control to deal with the problem.

7 Finance

1. The board noted a balance sheet at 31st July 2007 and an actual against budget report for April to July 2007. Colin reported that our net income for the period was around 3% under budget mainly because of increased service contracts costs early in the financial year and expenditure of around £3,300 on our birthday celebrations and associated publicity campaign for our website.
2. Colin reported that volunteer search had cost around £500 to launch and was likely to cost around £100 a year to run.
3. Colin reported that he had renegotiated the cost of our contract for waste disposal down from about £6,825 a year to about £1,872 a year.
4. Colin reported that we may be getting some of the money owed to us by Brighton Body Positive from their liquidators.
5. The board agreed to amend the policy on financial controls expenditure section b to specify that quotations should be sought rather than obtained and that the likely value of a contract excluded VAT and professional fees.
6. The board agreed to amend the policy on major contracts clause one to specify that the contract value was likely to exceed rather than exceeded, that the likely value of a contract excluded VAT and professional fees and adding 'requiring the supervision of a surveyor or architect' to 'building contract'.
7. Colin reported that he had received a quotation for rewiring and fusing our electrical circuits between our supply and fuseboards. It was agreed to seek the advice of an electrical engineer with a view to specifying this work and seeking quotations for it.
8. The board noted a register of fixed assets at 31st March 2007.

8 Our carbon footprint

1. The board agreed to make this a standing item on the agenda for board meetings.
2. Colin reported that he had sought advice about the possibility of putting wind turbines on our roof but was finding it very difficult to get any company in the field to provide us with a survey or quote.

9 Charity Commission annual return

The board noted our annual return to the Charity Commission for 2007.

10 Our car park

1. The board considered an email from Sally Hiscock of the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum suggesting that all participant groups that do not pay to park in the car park be allowed one or two days free parking every month. The board rejected this idea on the grounds that it would require a great deal of management, was likely to result in groups that have paid to park being unable to park and would encourage and subsidise the use of cars rather than discourage such use.
2. The board noted that if a participant group wished to provide parking for a disabled person working for them in order to meet their legal obligations they should pay for such parking.
3. The board agreed to continue with the system initiated in July that allows vehicles that do not pay to park in the car park to load, unload or use the car park temporarily for short periods in the evening or at weekends at the receptionist's discretion.
4. The board asked Colin to offer our spare parking spaces to nearby charities at £350 plus vat per quarter or to nearby businesses at £450 plus vat per quarter.
5. The board agreed to change the agreement for use of the car park so that a group could only end its use of a parking space at the end of a quarter year period.
6. The board agreed to allow a number of participant groups who wanted to park in the car park but did not need to do so all the time to share a parking space as long as only one vehicle was parked at any one time. The board asked Colin to tell participant groups about this offer.

Jane Frost left the meeting at this point.

11 Catering in the conference room

1. The board noted the results of the consultation with participant groups and outside groups using our conference room on the idea of making it a condition of using the conference room that groups use our plates and cutlery rather than disposable ones. Out of 12 groups responding, 10 groups support the idea, some with concerns we can address, one group (Sussex Interpreting Services) was against the idea for large scale catering and one group (the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum) was against the idea as a whole.
2. The board decided to add a clause to the *agreement for use of meeting rooms* stating that "The group agrees not to use disposable crockery, cutlery or drink containers in the conference room and agrees to wash up, dry and put away all plates, crockery, tumblers and mugs provided by Community Base in the conference room by the end of any period of room hire."
3. The board asked Colin to let groups using our conference room about this decision, making it clear that meeting room facilities would be withdrawn from any group that did not wash up after itself.

12 Our broadband connection

1. The board noted that our broadband connection was being upgraded to a 1:1 contention 2mb download / 2mb upload SDSL connection.
2. The board agreed a broadband fair usage policy.
3. The board agreed to add a licence regulation stating that the licensee agrees "to abide by by the terms of Community Base's broadband fair usage policy."
4. The board noted an email from Sally Hiscock of the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum (the forum) concerning the forum's plans for a shared database to be accessed through our broadband network. The board asked Colin to discuss the forum's plans further with Sally to see if they conformed to our broadband fair use policy.

13 Meetings concerning unacceptable behaviour at Community Base

1. THIS POINT DEALS WITH A CONFIDENTIAL MATTER CONCERNING A PARTICIPANT GROUP
2. The board reaffirmed that everyone at Community Base has a right not to be bullied or harrassed by visitors or people working at Community Base.
3. The board agreed that Colin has the authority to take what action he sees fit to protect people at Community Base from bullying or aggressive behaviour including the right to ban individuals acting in an unacceptable way from the building.

Hong Lu joined the meeting at this point.

14 Sussex Police community placements scheme

1. The board considered an information sheet about a community placement scheme for local police officers and an email from Emily Crozier-Hayes of Carr-Gomm about the scheme. Colin reported that he had discussed the scheme with Gary Jones, the police officer managing the scheme.
2. The board noted that under regulation 21 of the licence agreement any participant group wishing to offer a placement to a police office under the scheme would need the written permission of Community Base to do so.
3. Hong Lu said that the Chinese Centre had been approached about the scheme and Colin agreed to discuss the matter with Hong Lu.
4. Colin agreed to seek the view of participant groups on the scheme at the next participant group meeting.

15 2007 annual general meeting

1. The board agreed to call an annual general meeting on 8th October 2007.
2. It was noted that Sylvia Alexander-Vine, Sarah Bourne, Bob Cristofoli and Hong Lu remained trustees and that Paul Evans, Jane Frost, Tina Harrison, Mel Shad and Lucy Stone were willing to be reappointed as trustees at the annual general meeting.

16 Licence regulation on smoking

The board agreed to remove the "without specific consent in writing from Community Base, such consent being withdrawable immediately at any time" from regulation 13 of the licence agreement.

17 Pub quiz

The board noted that there would be a pub quiz in the Branch Tavern on 15th October.

18 Thursday closing of Brighton Housing Trust reception

1. The board noted the increased workload placed on our reception every Thursday as a result of Brighton Housing Trust Advice Centre (BHT) shutting its own reception on Thursdays. This increased workload included our reception dealing with 10-15 appointments normally dealt with by BHT and an increased number of drop-in enquiries for BHT with 46% of such enquiries in August coming on Thursdays.
2. The board asked Colin to write to the director of Brighton Housing Trust with a view to discussing with BHT how to alleviate the strain on our reception on Thursdays

19 Promoting licenced space

Colin reported that in August he had sought interest from community and voluntary groups in licencing space at Community Base on the forum and SCIP email lists and on the London Voluntary Service Council website. Colin also reported that he had emailed the Community Base email group asking groups at Community Base if they might need any extra/less/different space to what they currently have but had no replies.

20 Measuring licenced space

The board agreed to remeasure space when a new licence is issued but not remeasure currently licence space.

21 River Ocean

Tina declared an interest in this matter, was invited to remain in the meeting and took no part in the discussion.

1. The board noted that River Ocean had given notice ending their licence agreement from 1st October 2007.
2. The board agreed to licence the space currently licenced to River Ocean to Crossroads and to licence the space currently licenced to Crossroads to TB Alert.

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