

Minutes of a meeting of the board of trustees of Community Base held on 19th November 2009

Present: Sylvia Alexander-Vine (chair), Mick Barry, Sarah Bourne, Bob Cristofoli, Ros Cook, Adrian Davies, Paul Evans, Jane Frost and Lucy Stone

In attendance: Colin Chalmers (director and minutes) and Deborah Sprackling (receptionist/administrator)

1 Apologies and welcomes

Apologies were received from Annette Moss (building manager). Everyone present introduced themselves.

2 Posts of chair and treasurer

The board reappointed Sylvia Alexander-Vine as chairperson and Bob Cristofoli as treasurer.

3 Minutes of September board meetings

The board approved the minutes of the board meeting held on 10th September 2009.

4 Matters arising from September board meetings

- a. Colin reported that the rules about smoking agreed at the September board meeting seemed to be working well.
- b. Colin reported that he had not heard anything about when the volunteering strategy for Brighton and Hove due to have been published in July would be published.

5 September, October and November 2009 participant group meetings

The board noted notes of the September, October and November 2009 participant group meetings.

6 Correspondence

The board noted a copy of the autumn 2009 edition of *Community Base news*.

7 Health and safety

Deborah reported that a fire safety training exercise held in September for people working at Community Base had proved very popular.

8 Our carbon footprint

- a. Colin reported that our Powerperfector had now been installed.
- b. Colin reported that our roof had been painted with reflective paint to reduce heat gain in hot weather on the top floors.

9 Finance

- a. The board noted a balance sheet at 31st October 2009 and an actual against budget comparison for April to October 2009.
- b. Colin reported on a seminar he had attended in Guildford about the Communitybuilders funding stream where it became clear that we would not be eligible for this funding as we offer services across a city and want funding for existing services rather than for new ones.
- c. Colin reported that we are not eligible for funding from a new Capacitybuilders funding stream as we have already received significant capital funding from the ChangeUp programme.

10 Our waste contractor

Colin reported that we have switched our waste collection contract from Wastetech to Team Waste.

11 Our broadband

- a. The board noted actions being taken to improve our broadband connection.
- b. The board agreed to amend the broadband fair usage policy to ensure that broadband users must have adequate virus and malware protection.

12 New windows

- a. The board noted a report on the replacement of existing windows at Community Base prepared by David Saxby, an architect with zero zero and accepted its recommendations.
- b. The board asked Colin to invited tenders for the phased installation of new windows in line with the policy on major contracts.

13 Groups moving in, out and about on 1st December

- a. Colin reported that Annette was liaising with groups moving into, out of or around Community Base on 1st December 2009.
- b. The board noted that our reception phone number will change to (01273) 234000 from 1st January 2010.

14 BHT Advice Centre

The board agreed to continue to provide a limited and clearly defined reception service for BHT Advice Centre on Thursdays but not provide such a service on other days or beyond that which we currently provide.

15 2009 questionnaire

- a. Colin tabled the results of the 2009 questionnaire asking groups at Community Base what they think of Community Base's services.
- b. The board noted the overwhelmingly positive response to our services, especially our reception, from groups at Community Base.

16 Support for Groups website

- a. The board noted the publication on Brighton and Hove Changeup Consortium's *support for groups* website of a list of 23 local organisations offering services to local community and voluntary groups but not Community Base, despite Community Base being one of the main providers of such services.
- b. Colin reported that this followed a similar omission from a Brighton and Hove Community and Voluntary Sector Forum paper guide to support service for community and voluntary groups in Brighton and Hove.
- c. Colin said he had put links to both lists on our website at www.communitybase.org/support.

17 Visits and events

- a. Colin reported on a visit to Community Base by Angela Smith, the Minister for the Third Sector, on 27th September.
- b. Colin reported on a visit in November from Reigate and Banstead Borough Council and Council for Voluntary Service seeking advice on establishing a community centre in their area.
- c. Colin and Deborah reported on a Brighton and Hove City Council event for frontline workers they had attended at Broughthelm in October.
- d. Colin reported that Community Base had hosted a 10th birthday event for Brighton and Hove Community Buildings Network on 29th October.
- e. Colin reported on a meeting of the National Coalition for Independent Action (NCIA) he had attended in London in November where there was an interesting discussion about how to ensure the continuing existence of an independent voluntary sector. Colin said he had invited a speaker from the NCIA to speak at a working lunch on 18th January 2010.
- f. Colin reported on his attendance at the National Council for Voluntary Organisation's Autumn Conference in Manchester on 13th November.

18 2010 poster guide

Colin reported on the publication and distribution of the 2010 poster guide to community services in Brighton and Hove.

19 Job vacancies in the local community and voluntary sector

- a. Deborah reported that a lot of people were coming into reception wanting information about job vacancies in the local community and voluntary sector and suggested we provide a service to meet this need.
- b. Colin said it should be relatively easy to do this at little cost and involving little extra work for staff.
- c. The board asked Colin to look into it.

20 2009 annual general meeting

- a. The board noted draft minutes of the 2009 annual general meeting.
- b. Colin reported that he had written to the Charity Commission and Companies House informing them of the special resolution passed at the AGM amending our articles of association.

21 Safety and security at Community Base

- a. The board discussed safety and security at Community Base. Colin reported that Annette and he were looking at ways of improving security, initially by taking up the suggestion made at the recent AGM that we put notices up between the South Wing and the rest of the building asking people not to let in people they do not know.
- b. Colin agreed to reiterate to people in the building the importance of not letting people they do not know into Community Base.

22 Statement of core values

- a. The board noted the comments about the draft statement of Community Base's core values made by members at the 2009 annual general meeting and email correspondence about the statement on the Community Base email group.
- b. The board agreed to amend the draft statement of core values by adding a new section on human rights and social justice; changing references to 'charitable objectives' to 'charity's objects'; changing a reference to 'banning throwaway plates and cutlery from our conference room' to 'making our conference room a throwaway-free zone'; removing a list of examples of support offered to local community and voluntary groups; removing the number of languages our guide is translated into.
- c. The board approved the amended statement as Community Base's statement of core values.

At this point Adrian Davies left the meeting.

23 Review of membership

- a. The board noted email correspondence with the Charity Commission on this matter.
- b. The board agreed a policy on membership and agreed to review the policy at its next meeting.
- c. The board agreed to offer membership to all groups licencing space at Community Base, the 20 community and voluntary groups currently using Community Base as a postal address and the five community and voluntary groups, excluding political parties, currently regularly hiring our South Wing conference room.
- d. The board asked Colin to send *an application form for membership of Community Base* to all groups being offered membership.

24 Policy changes relating to statement of core values and membership

- a. The board agreed to amend section 1.1 of the policy on relationship with participant groups from 'Licencees are members of Community Base the company and as such elect a board of trustees to run Community Base' to 'Licencees will not be treated differently on the basis of their membership or non-membership of Community Base.'
- b. The board agreed to amend the equal opportunities policy to replace 'sex' with 'gender, gender identity' in the list 'sex, sexual orientation, marital status, responsibilities for dependants, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or cultural beliefs, trade union or political activity, age or disability'.

25 Advertising on our north wall

- a. Colin reported that officers at Brighton and Hove City Council had refused us consent to continue to display advertising on our north wall.
- b. The board noted that consent was originally given in 2004 by councillors against the recommendation of officers.
- c. The board asked Colin to submit another application for consent to advertise on our north wall and ask for it to be heard by the planning committee of elected councillors.

26 Dates of 2010 board meetings

The board agreed to hold 2010 board meetings on the fourth Monday of every other month starting 25th January 2010.

27 Xmas party

The board agreed to hold Community Base's 2009 xmas party on 18th December.