

Minutes of a meeting of the board of trustees of Community Base held on 20th October 2006

Present: Sylvia Alexander-Vine (chair), Paul Evans, Hong Lu, Lucy Stone

In attendance: Colin Chalmers (director and minutes) and Annette Moss (building manager)

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Bob Cristofoli and Sarah Bourne.

2 Complaint from Brighton and Hove Community and Voluntary Sector Forum

The board considered a letter of complaint dated 9th October 2006 from Brighton and Hove Community and Voluntary Sector Forum (the forum) and written and verbal legal advice concerning the complaint from Michael Barry. The board agreed that the complaint should be dealt with as a complaint under the complaints procedure and agree to ask Colin to inform the forum of this decision and ask trustees Bob Cristofoli and Paul Evans to investigate the complaint as a matter of urgency.

Paul Evans left the meeting at this point.

3 Submission from Brighton and Hove Community and Voluntary Sector Forum concerning Change Up project manager

The board considered a submission dated 16th October 2006 from Brighton and Hove Community and Voluntary Sector Forum (the forum) concerning the decision of the board at its meeting on 11th September 2006 not to allow the forum to accommodate a Change Up project manager (CUPM) in the space it licences at Community Base. The board also considered other papers relating to the issue including correspondence between Community Base and the forum, forum board minutes and papers of the Brighton and Hove Change Up consortium business management group (BMG). The board also considered legal advice from Michael Barry on the matter.

The board noted the extensive consultation with members over the issue of groups sharing space with other organisations that had taken place earlier in the year and resulted in a change in the licence agreement agreed in March 2006. The board noted that the forum had moved the CUPM into the space it licences at Community Base soon after this consultation took place without seeking permission to do so. The board noted the extensive correspondence between Colin and the forum over this matter. The board noted that the forum had been asked by Community Base to stop accommodating this manager by the end of September 2006 and that the forum had not done so and had stated they would not do so.

Sylvia expressed gratitude to Colin for the way he had corresponded with the forum's chief officer and noted the much more reasonable tone of the recent submission from the forum's chair compared with this earlier correspondence.

Lucy pointed out that according to the BMG's minutes of 28th September 2006 the CUPM's hours of work were determined by the BMG not the forum. It was also noted that the BMG is responsible for managing Change Up locally; has a representative from the forum on it, rather than being a sub-committee of the forum; is chaired by someone representing an organisation other than the forum; comprises statutory organisations with more votes than the forum; approves the workplan for the Change Up project manager; is minuted as agreeing to write to the forum concerning the "Change Up eviction from Community Base".

Given the refusal of the forum to keep to the terms of its licence agreement despite requests to do so the board agreed unanimously to give Brighton and Hove Community and Voluntary Sector Forum three months notice of the ending of its licence to occupy space at Community Base. The board asked Colin to ask Michael Barry to write a letter giving this notice to the forum and asked Colin to write to the forum explaining the grounds on which this decision had been made.

It was agreed that it was important to make clear to participant groups that the forum was not having its licence ended for receiving funding from, or working in partnership with, outside or statutory organisations, but for refusing to keep to the terms of its licence agreement despite requests to do so. Colin was asked to make this clear to participant groups.

4 Post of receptionist/administrator

The board agreed that Sylvia, Lucy, Colin and Annette be responsible for the selection process for the post of receptionist/administrator.