

WADDINGTON STREET CENTRE LIMITED



Minutes of a Meeting of the Board of Directors held on Monday 6th March 2023

Present: - Directors: - Fred Robinson (Chair), David Rushton (Deputy Chair), David Blazey (Company Secretary), David Shipman, Kay Parker, Louise Toms, Daniel Rippon, Janet Dodson

In Attendance: - Ali Lee (Manager), Steve Wakefield (Assistant Manager), Claire McGrother (Finance Officer), Sam Mason (WFGS Coordinator) Peter Graham-Smith (Admin), Tom Raine (Waddy Member), Ellen Thomas (Waddy Member)

Apologies for

Absence: - Jen Lamb

1) **The Minutes of the previous meeting of 16th January 2023** – were read and agreed as a correct record with some corrections. Item 7f: - replace *departing* with decorating on the second line. The minutes were signed by Fred Robinson

2) **Trustees' Reflections on the Meeting of 16th January 2023** – Nothing to be report.

3) **Matters arising from the Minutes (not covered in the Agenda)** – Nothing to report.

4) **Valued Views Report**

The Open Meeting with Fred Robinson and David Rushton took the place of the Valued Views Group this month. This meeting gives members a chance to speak to the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Board about any issues that they have at the Centre. One of the main issues brought up during the meeting was the café. It is currently being run as a Tuck Shop. Currently trying to set up a regular order of items to save staff time having to go shopping for items. It is currently staffed by Waddy Helpers. The free hot beverages scheme that has been running during the winter months is coming to end at the end of March. This scheme had funding which has now been used and donations are covering the cost until it ends. Staff are reassuring members that there are no plans to close the café. Ali and Steve are always looking at options for the running of the café. They and Fred visited Refuse Café in Chester le Street to see how that worked but were informed that it is a full-time effort to make work. They also looked at setting the café up as a training kitchen through New College but this turned out to not be viable.

Other topics that were discussed were the importance of the New College courses to the Centre and future summer trips out plans. Fred felt that the meeting went well.

5) **WFGS Report** – (presented by Sam Mason)

Sam was thanked by the board for all the work she did to close down the housing service. There are a number of new taster activities that have started in the last few weeks. These include a weekly New Age Curling and Seated exercise run by Age Concern and a weekly Dance session run by NE Dance. These will run to the end of March or slightly longer to get a sense if they would be regularly attended by members. It is hoped to set up another walking group for people interested in more shorter walks than the main group take. It is hoped to have the cycling sessions set up

and running shortly with the bikes stored at Lanchester Road and the sessions using the area around the hospital. A gardening session may also be set up at Lanchester Road using the gardens there. Sam will be visiting the hospital to check up on this in the near future. Sam has also set up a Home Achievement Scheme for members at the Centre. Members need to sign up to the scheme by 24th March and then are able to pick from different modules that they can complete which go towards an accredited qualification. The student placement Reece's time as part of the WFGS will come to an end this week.

Sam is trying to fine a balance between setting up the Centre's own groups and facilitating outside organisation run groups. The hope is that the Centre doesn't provide everything and can use other community opportunities.

People on the WFGS service do not have to attend the Centre to use it.

6) Treasurer report – (presented by Claire McGrother)

- a. Donations – Donations to the Centre to the end of January currently stands at around £20,000 reaching the budgeted target for the year. The Centre has recently received a £5,000 donation.
- b. I.T and Lighting upgrade – The Centre I.T and the lighting on the top floor will be upgraded in the next few weeks. The I.T upgrade will cost £4,304.48 and the lighting upgrade with decorating will cost £1,944
- c. Reserves – The Board was asked if the Centre's reserves could be used to fund Helen Ogilvie's post from the next financial year which was agreed by the board.
- d. The financial controls document was agreed by the Board.
- e. The accounts to the end of January show a deficit of £72,285 against a budgeted deficit of £80,000 which is in line with the budget. This is not a surprise but is alarming and the next few years are looking similar. The Centre is in a good position financially but it is not sustainable. There is no additional funding from the Alliance unless the Centre provided a new service through the Alliance but then that funding would be restricted to that project. Other organisations in the Alliance are in similar positions.
- f. Financial and Funding Strategy – Currently setting up a funding strategy for the Centre. Most funders look at a charities accounts and what is in reserves dated for the end of the previous financial year 31st March. A charity can still apply for funding if their reserves of up to £135,000 are designated for certain activities of the charity. We currently can't know where finances for the Centre are until end of next year 23/24. Steve was thanked for the document as it was helpful to understand the situation.

7) Manager's Report (presented by Ali Lee – in meeting papers)

- a. Grant Funding – The Centre has successfully found funding through County Durham Community Foundation to fund a new support worker. The new role will take a lead on engagement and co-production. The Centre will receive the money in April. It is hoped that the role will continue in the future through working with the Alliance. Ali is currently looking at the application and interview process and someone with lived experience will be welcome.
- b. Fundraising – As previously mentioned the Centre recently received a donation of £5,000 from an individual after they visited the Centre to find out what we did. The individual was recommended to visit the Centre through a mutual friend of Fred. It is hoped that the Centre will be able to have a patron of the Centre in the future. Ali still finds it hard to keep asking people for money.
- c. New College – The current term ends on 24th March. We have started to see a trend of members signing up to the courses but then not attending. Members are

- being reminded that the courses need to be used or they could be lost. Have to make sure that any WFGS activities do not compete with the courses. A focus group of new members is to be set up to look at any issues they have being new to the Centre. A new induction process has been set up and it is hoped that Waddy Helpers can be buddies for new members
- d. Y-ASC – The Centre can't continue the funding for the group going forward. Investors in Children also will stop funding the group. The group has had low attendance for a while and so it will come to an end on 28th March.
 - e. Alliance
 - i) Leadership Team are thankful for the reduced rate for the room hire of the Campbell Room. Ali has completed the contract and sent it on.
 - ii) A new referral coordinator is to be recruited in the near future.
 - iii) It is hoped that the new database will be set up shortly. One issue with the database concerns the contract and if it should be an extension of the contract that Richmond Fellowship have with the company that developed the database and their own or if it needs to be a new contract through the Alliance as a whole. The group is split on this and a outside solicitor has quoted £2,500 to look at any contract. This situation has shown that making final decisions in the Alliance takes time.
 - iv) Man Health has become a new sub-contractor of the Alliance.
 - v) All organisations in the Alliance as well as all sub-contractors pay towards the Central Management Team cost so the more organisations and sub-contractors there are the less each one has to pay in.
 - vi) There is to be an Independent Validation Research project to take place in the near future to look at the Alliance tendering process and implementation and Ali asked if any trustees would like to take part. Fred and Jeff volunteered to take part.
 - vii) A new social work student has started their placement at the Centre. They will help to support with any Alliance issues such as questionnaires or visits to other organisations.
 - f. As mentioned in the WFGS report the Home Achievement Award will be offered to members of the Centre. As a part of this a member of staff from Home Group will be at the Centre every 2 weeks to help any member that is a part of the scheme.
 - g. Staff Away Day – Working with Stamp it Out to look at stigma and self-stigma. Also looking at an activity for the afternoon and currently looking at doing and environmental activity and speaking with the Friends of Flass Vale to see if this could be an option.
 - h. Ali is currently still working on the Business Development Plan.
 - i. Crisis Team – A group of organisations met recently due to the report that was published last summer in relation to deaths and a protocol that TEWV use for people with a diagnosis of BPD. It was agreed that TEWV needs to work better with the Voluntary Sector. The crisis team in County Durham have a new management team and new staff. They visited the Centre recently to speak to Ali and Steve to discuss issues and what is happening at present. It is hoped that the crisis team members will visit a Countywide forum meeting in the future. The Centre now has named contacts with the crisis team so will be able to contact the right person around any issues. The Alliance as a whole is also looking at issue of the crisis team. One member of the Centre brought up that the Centre needs to be more proactive around safeguarding of people in relation to their experiences of the crisis team and not to let the team get away with things to keep a good relationship with them.

- 8) **Any Other Business** – Nothing to report
- 9) **Dates of Board Meetings in 2023** (All on Monday at 4 pm unless otherwise stated)
24th April, 12th June, 7th August, 25th September, Friday 24th November AGM - 3pm,
27th November.