

**Gloucestershire VCS Alliance
Strategic Board Meeting
Monday 24 September 2018 10am-12pm
GFirst LEP, The Growth Hub, Oxstalls Campus, Gloucester**

MINUTES

Present:

Tracy Clark	Young Gloucestershire	(TC)
Maz Jennings	YMCA	(MJ)
David Owen	GFirst LEP	(DO)
Cordell Ray (Chair)	CCP	(CR)

In attendance:

Mike Brain	(MB)
Susan West	(SW)

1. Declarations of interest

TC reported that she has now become a Trustee at Gloucestershire Community Foundation.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the Strategic Board meeting on 18 June 2018 were approved.

- TC and MB have not met to discuss staff resourcing. MB is looking at capacity planning to make sure that staff resources cover the workload. At present he feels there is some capacity available within the staff team and does not anticipate any changes in this financial year.
- Gloucestershire 2050 and its survey was promoted to the VCS. The Board agreed the VCS needs to be involved in any future activities and plans.
- Matt Lennard (ML) has started on development work for the #iwill website. There may be funding for the Alliance from Gloucestershire Community Foundation if match funding is available.
- The Alliance team has now agreed that ML and Jem Sweet (JS) will not attend future Board meetings as matter of course.

3. Trustee Recruitment

MB has produced a job advert and job description to recruit new trustees. These were circulated to the Operational Board on 20 September; some comments have been received on best practice for recruitment. The Board agreed the interview panel should be most of the current Board plus MJ. DO felt it was key for people to understand what the role is and what its limits are. TC hopes to recruit people to give a wider representation from the sector. It was agreed that ideally any new chair would not be a CEO so the person has more time available. It was agreed the closing date should be 9am on 22 October. TC and CR will shortlist applicants. The interview date will be 29 October at GFirstLEP either in DO's office or another room booked by Lynn Stacey.

4. Alliance Finances

MB and SW have introduced a more detailed financial breakdown which has been circulated. This shows where expenditure has been allocated, covering projects, administration and new work development.

MB reported that the financial position is much improved.

ACTION: MB to provide a forecast for the next financial year and a reserves policy at the next Board meeting

MB recommended 50% of any surplus at year end should go to reserves. TC felt the aim should be to have six months running costs in reserves. DO asked about closure costs to cover redundancy, long term commitments and contingency to cover rent and liquidator fees.

ACTION: MB to speak to Patrick Forde at GFirstLEP about closure costs and reserves.

Nick Bishop at PGT had provided draft annual accounts for 2017-18. TC had heard Nick has no concerns on the Alliance's accounts.

ACTION: SW to circulate the draft accounts to TC and DO to submit any comments by 26 September.

The Board agreed to sign off the 2017-18 accounts.

ACTION: MB to check Nick has provided the confirmation statement.

It was agreed to include the re-appointment of PGT for the next financial year as an agenda item at the next Board meeting.

ACTION: SW to include on the agenda.

5. Policies and procedures

MB reported that 12 policies have been developed but he wants to examine them in more detail. He proposed submitting them to the Board for ratification by the end of October. MB has all the new job descriptions which have been agreed with ML. MB will meet JS and SW to discuss the new employment contracts and job descriptions.

He reported that staff will not be TUPE'd by the end of September and it was agreed that 1 January 2019 would be more realistic.

TC asked whether all staff rights and legal obligations have been met, currently these are covered through employment by GFirstLEP.

ACTION: The Board through CR will issue a statement of intent to GFirstLEP and staff on timescales. Communication to staff will include the intention to transfer employment and the TUPE process. DO recommend the consultation should be completed by the end of October.

ACTION: MB to produce statement for CR's agreement

ACTION: MB speak to TC and Patrick Forde about payroll and pensions.

6. VCSE Strategy

MB has not made much progress as he has been focusing on internal systems. The intention is to agree a business strategy for the next three years with a 12 month business plan by the end of the financial year. The strategy will focus on three core areas: internal systems, delivery and development. .

The Board wanted good quality consultation with plenty of time allowed. Consultation will start at the next Operational Board meeting on 2 October. MB will set out his vision to give

the Operational Board a clear understanding of what is happening. MB/MJ are meeting more frequently and communication with the Operational Board has improved. DO suggested the Operational Board reviews the strategy and makes recommendations to the Strategic Board.

7. Current Projects

MB asked for views on the new reporting format. It was agreed Board members need the report 3-4 working days before the meeting.

ACTION: MB to issue future reports in a more timely manner.

MB reported that Gloucestershire County Council and the CCG are funding the service level agreement and an ambitious action plan. The stakeholders are happy with progress and reporting.

- JS started running District level surgeries in August. There has been a low attendance so far, which was expected. Other partners have expressed an interest in getting involved and the surgeries will become thematic. A membership engagement survey has been drawn up to capture perceptions from VCS organisations. MB wants 50% of the membership to complete the survey.
- The Alliance is finalising a specification for the taxonomy of the sector in partnership with Barnwood Trust. This will be carried out by a PhD student as part of his research.
- Gloucestershire Talks Mental Health is a mental health showcase taking place on 10 October at Forest Green Rovers. About 200 people have registered for an exhibition, series of speakers and a Q&A session.
- The plan for public sector volunteering is gaining traction with commitment from the CCG & OPCC. There will be a skills analysis aligned to VCS needs. There is an opportunity to track, monitor and promote public sector volunteering and its financial value with the potential to roll out to private sector in future.

CARMA, the transport initiative, is well underway. ITP, a firm of transport consultants, are taking on a significant proportion of the activity including technical development. The Alliance is focusing on consultation and promotion. There is likely to be a phase 2 but it's not yet clear what this might look like.

The OPCC bid has been approved and the Alliance has secured £18,000. There are five strands of work: Commissioner's Fund; further professionalism of the VCS which needs to be realistic especially for smaller organisations; supporting the Keep Safe initiative; public sector volunteering; and strategic partnerships.

MB reported that he hopes to increase funding for the Funding Bulletin to recognise its value.

MB reflected on his first few months in post and is confident about the future. He feels he has made a positive impact on finances and systems but has not progressed as far as he hoped on policies and procedures. He is building good relations with larger infrastructure organisations. He is looking for opportunities to generate more revenue and align work across the public sector to improve impact. He reported that ML has started the ILM training course, which is going well.

ACTION: Board members to email any further questions to MB and copy in all Board members.

8. Any Other Business

TC is pleased about the more secure financial position and improvements in consultation.

MB proposed future meetings be held in the third week of each new quarter, ie the third week of January, April, July and October. It was agreed to keep the meeting scheduled for 10 December as an extraordinary meeting.

ACTION: SW to resend meeting request for 10 December and set up a Doodle poll for 2019 dates.

9. Next meeting

The next meeting will be on Monday 10 December, 9.30am-11.30am in the Board Room at GFirstLEP, The Growth Hub in Gloucester.