

Thames hospice

Thank you for taking the time to read this summary of the Thames Hospice Board of Trustees Meeting. Our meeting took place from 2.30 – 6.30pm on 5th December 2019 at Pine Lodge, Windsor.

The Thames Hospice Trustee attendees at the meeting were myself, Jonathan Jones (Chair of Trustees), Chris Aitken, Jacinta Ashworth, Ken Coppock, Andy Ka, Judith Kinder, Craig Linton, Steve Moore, Bruce Montgomery, and Margaret Neal. One trustee, Ishfaq Is-haq, could not attend. Before the meeting we said goodbye to Lesley Rudd, who has been a Trustee since September 2017.

Also in attendance from Thames Hospice staff were Debbie Raven (Chief Executive Officer), Ruth Bartholomew (Finance Director), Lisa Church (Director of Patient and Family Services) and Juliana Luxton (Head of Governance and Quality), who took the meeting minutes.

Our meeting started with a presentation from Simon Smith and Catherine Beer from the Hospice's Patient and Family Services (PFS) counselling team. This was a presentation on the work of the Hospice counselling team and it focused on a specific case study about a male patient and his family, which included his 10 year old son. During the presentation Catherine described the complicated nature of our work with the patient and his family. She concluded that there was always more than meets the eye among the people who use our services. Catherine and Simon advised us that the PFS team support 100 or so patients, outpatients, and family members **each week**. The presentation very ably described what the PFS team does and how it supports patients. It illustrated the integrated work of the PFS team and the very best of all-round hospice care here at Thames Hospice.

As usual, our meeting reflected the requirements of governance at Thames Hospice. After the presentation trustees received my Chair's report and we reviewed the CEO's quarterly report. We have certain items that are 'standing agenda' items that we discuss at length at every Board meeting. As usual:

- We reviewed Fundraising Governance.
- We carefully reviewed a Finance Report from Ruth Bartholomew, the Finance Director.
- Debbie took us through the Hospice Operating Plan (covering July - September 2019). The various Board Committees had already discussed the Operating Plan updates at length at their November 2019 meetings.
- We reviewed the Board Assurance Framework (BAF), which addresses the risks faced by the Hospice, and the mitigations and the controls that we put in place to manage them. In September we spent an afternoon on reviewing the Hospice's Risk Register, and we spent some time discussing the results of this review. From the review we added a new

risk, which reflects the difficulties being experienced on the High Street. So far our shops have not been too badly hit by the difficult trading conditions that some retailers are experiencing, but we continue to monitor the position closely.

A set item for each Board meeting is receiving a specific report on an aspect of our clinical care. This time the subject was an annual review of the work of the Patient and Families Services team. This report built upon the counselling presentation we had just seen, and gave us a great deal of insight into the work of the whole team. We noted the increasing volume of work for the PFS team, which is composed of:

- The Counselling team
- The Pastoral Care team
- The Children and Families Support Service
- The Bereavement Support team

The report highlighted the accomplishments of the PTS team, and outlined some of the challenges faced, especially the increasing volume of work that the team deals with. We noted the team's ambition to support even more people, and the Hospice's plans to put this into action.

Bruce Montgomery presented a Safeguarding report to the board - he is the Trustee Safeguarding Champion. Bruce reminded us that the Board have oversight of safeguarding across the organisation. There will also be a new Hospice Safeguarding Panel, which will provide leadership and governance and will review and improve co-ordination of Safeguarding across the Hospice. Debbie advised us that the Safeguarding review has both formalised Safeguarding and escalated it at the Hospice.

We also looked at the Hospice structures for reporting to the CQC, noting that Lisa Church will become the Hospice's Registered Manager in due course. We also reviewed how we handle complaints and we reviewed the excellent progress of the new building at Bray Lake and the Capital Appeal. We Trustees have closely followed the progress of the new building and the Capital Appeal – many members of staff and volunteers will have seen how quickly the new building is progressing and will have attended the Capital Appeal events that started in September.

The final item for this meeting was an update from each of the Chairs of the Board Committees. Each committee Chair gave us an update on the work of the committees and the items covered at the meetings that were held in November 2019.

I hope this is a useful update – please do let me have any feedback good or bad!

Jonathan Jones
Chair of Thames Hospice Trustees