

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 3.00pm – 6.15pm on 23rd March 2017 at Pine Lodge, Windsor.

The Thames Hospice Trustee Attendees at the meeting were Martin Jervis (chair), Chris Aitken, Jacinta Ashworth, Ken Coppock, Bob Dwyer, Richard Goss, Jonathan Jones, Craig Linton, Steve Moore and Margaret Neal.

Also in attendance from Thames Hospice staff were Ruth Bartholomew (Finance Director), Juliana Luxton (Head of Governance and Quality – who very kindly takes the minutes) and Debbie Raven (Chief Executive Officer).

On this occasion, I'll begin by mentioning two informal meetings that Trustees attended the afternoon before this Board meeting started. Firstly, a lunchtime 'Schwartz Round' meeting with Hospice staff and volunteers, which is held regularly to offer a structured forum where all volunteers and staff, clinical and non-clinical, can come together to discuss the emotional and social aspects of working in healthcare. At Thames Hospice the Schwartz Rounds help everyone to understand the challenges and rewards so intrinsic to providing care. It is evident that Schwartz Rounds help staff feel more supported in their jobs, allowing them the time and space to reflect on their role. The compassion shown by our staff, and indeed our volunteers, can make all the difference to a patient's experience of care, but to provide compassionate care staff must, in turn, feel supported in their work. I know that Trustees feel that the Schwartz Rounds are very moving, helpful, supportive and interesting, and we enjoy attending them.

The Schwartz Round was followed by 'Tea with Trustees', where several members of staff and Trustees had tea and cakes, and chatted together in a 'Speed Dating' format to get to know each other and to understand what each person brings to the Hospice. It was great fun and very useful!

Our Board meetings usually start with a presentation on patient care, but this time we watched the new Thames Hospice film, 'A Short Film About Us'. All of us commented how evocative of the Hospice the film is, and how professional. It is emotional - yet the 'natural' behaviour of everyone on the film, and the humour evident, helped to make it impactful and authentic. It really captures what the Hospice is about – a place of laughter and caring. We echoed Debbie Raven's thanks to the patients and families who allowed us to film them whilst

being cared for by the Hospice. As Debbie says on our website, we hope this film helps to dispel some of the myths around hospice care; this isn't just a place where people spend their final days. Several patients have already said how good the film is, and suggested that we show it everywhere! The Board passed our grateful thanks to the world-renowned Broadcasting and Media Production Company, Special Treats - who generously donated their time, free of charge, to create something which not only explores our work, but challenges the myths surrounding hospice care.

As usual at the Board meeting, I then presented my Chairman's Report and Debbie Raven presented her CEO's Report. As part of my report, we review minutes and items from all the board committees in a 'Consent Agenda'; and having reviewed all these items the Board agreed them.

In my Chairman's Report, I mentioned Hospice UK's Financial Index rating where Thames Hospice was rated 3rd out of 196 hospices. Our strong balance sheet with large reserves pushes us up the ratings, but this is not necessarily a good place to be. Having too many reserves for too long a time can be a negative. But this is not a concern to the Board; as you are all aware, we will need our reserves and other funds to create our wonderful new hospice.

Debbie Raven and I both mentioned the importance of focussing on recruitment of nurses as we look to grow the Hospice. So please encourage good staff you know to talk to us.

Debbie Raven updated us on the relocation of services from Paul Bevan House. It is very pleasing to note that the move to Pine Lodge in January has proved a great success. We think that this highlights the great benefits of the single-site model, where all hospice services are provided from one site. This is also one of the great features of our planned new hospice.

The new hospice plans which have been available to Hospice staff and volunteers for some time are now available for public view on the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead planning applications website. This is because since our last meeting the planning application has been submitted. Great news! Debbie let us know that the council had written to her to confirm that a Planning Decision on our new build submission will be taken by 15th June assuming there are no major issues.

As usual, there were several items sent for this Board meeting to review or agree:

- We reviewed our work with fellow community providers, noting that our agreement with BHFT on joint Palliative Care Community Nursing provision is working well.
- We agreed to a new senior role at the Hospice to reflect our focus on education of staff and members of our wider healthcare community. This new role is for a Head of Education and Research.
- We discussed and agreed the annual pay rise of 1.5% for staff from 1st April 2017.

- We reviewed the position of the Hospice in terms of patient care, and noted that we compare very favourably against other hospices.
- We agreed that the Hospice would support the new Associate Practitioner training plans, which will see several of our Health Care Assistants improving their skills and progressing in their nursing careers.
- Debbie Raven confirmed to us that the 24/7 Advice Line was preparing for go live in May 2017 as planned.
- We reviewed different methods of on-line giving, and will continue to offer choice.
- We again spent some time discussing the very important Thames Hospice lottery and our lottery canvassing programme. This time we also studied a paper comparing the performance of Hospice Lotteries overall. This paper was based upon the findings of a recent survey undertaken by the Hospice Lotteries Association.
- We reviewed Fundraising Governance (we do this at every meeting).
- We received and reviewed a report from Ruth Bartholomew, the Finance Director (we do this at every meeting as well). One area that has done very well is the Hospice's investment portfolio. As seems to be the national picture, our returns have shown an impressive increase in recent months.
- We agreed the proposed Hospice budget for 2017 – 2018.
- We reviewed and agreed the proposed Designation of Funds for Thames Hospice. This review is an annual requirement placed upon Hospice Boards.

Debbie took us through the updated 2016 – 2017 Operating Plan. Then we reviewed and agreed the Operating Plan that the Hospice will work to in 2017 – 2018. It has some challenging targets, but we are confident that staff and volunteers at the Hospice can deliver! The Board Committees had already discussed both the current and the new Operating Plans at length in their January and February meetings. We then reviewed the Board Assurance Framework (BAF), which, as at every Board meeting, was updated to illustrate the current risks the Hospice faces.

We noted that actions from our last meeting (in December 2016) had been completed, and we monitored the progress made against actions we committed to at the Board meeting a year ago. As usual all actions and decisions were completed - or were longer-term strategic decisions that the Hospice continues to progress – especially the project to build a new Hospice at a site on Bray Lake (see above).

Sadly, at this meeting Dr Neil Coleman advised us that he was to resign as a Thames Hospice Trustee, due to the pressure of his working schedule. We have all valued Neil's local and clinical knowledge as he is a GP in Slough, and we all agreed that we would miss his input. We thank him and wish him well, knowing he will continue to be a good friend. of Thames Hospice

Towards the end of our meeting, another recent informal session was also worth discussing, and we were most interested to hear about the first Hospice 'User Feedback Forum', which

took place on 16th March. There was overwhelmingly positive feedback from the forum attendees. People said that they felt safe and secure, and had praised the Hospice's whole team approach. The next User Feedback Forum meeting will be held on June 29th – all former patients, friends and carers are welcome to attend.

There was no other Any Other Business, and the meeting closed at 6.15pm.

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

Martin Jervis

Chair of Thames Hospice Trustees