

Minutes of the Trustees Meeting 06/05/2018

Participants

Tim Read (TR) – Chair
Eddie Hartley (EH) – Treasurer
Gillian Leonard-Schroder (GLS) - Secretary
Terry Sweeney (TS)
Joanna Hartl (JH)
Andy Johnson (AJ)
Matthew Huish (MH) – National Director

1. Ratification of previous minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 11/03/2018 were adopted

2. Review of financial issues raised by EH in 1/5 email

EH: One of the roles of the trustees is to ensure the liquidity of the charity. However, we are losing £40,000 of income each year; i.e. £16,000 a year at 11b Wontner Road and £2,000 a month from LG. The FC should be giving TS the support which he needs to deal with the properties.

AJ: If we employ a general manager, this issue will be solved.

Action Point: Simon Rosselli to ask Anthony Okotcha to find out what money we are getting in.

TR: We need a CEO of Operational Affairs dealing with all properties in London and the rest of the country, plus they would manage HR, General Affairs and the Accounts Department. It is very far reaching and would be a full time post - £30,000-£35,000 a year. The £12,000 a year from ██████████ would contribute to this.

EH: There is also some money to be saved ██████████
██████████ [ed: from someone's role]

EH has already put a job description together for this post.

GLS: Why can't we get someone to deal exclusively with the properties rather than all the other departments as this will cause a big delay.

EH: We need to get someone who can manage Grant as the costs at LG are £1,500-£2,000 a month too high (based on an up to 15% of income rule).

TS: We already have two maintenance men at LG – Grant and Valdek, but we are still bringing in outside contractors.

TR: We really need to concentrate on getting the Operations Officer in place.

AJ: A good project manager would pay for themselves with the savings they would make.

Action Point: TS to meet with Grant on Wednesday to discuss costs.

Action Point: TR to write a letter to Simon Rosselli about the CEO.

3. Contact Wandsworth Council seeking arrears for 11b Wontner Road (TR) [from TS working doc]

The arrears for 11B Wontner Road have been building up since Sept 2017 at a rate of £1400 per month. We have been trying without much success to get Wandsworth Council to deal with these arrears from the tenant. A County Court Judgement is expected.

TS asked Julian to send him a report, but Julian says that Wandsworth Council will not speak to him.

TR: Tom needs to contact Westminster Council and let them know who is representing us so that they can talk to that person. Once the situation of the arrears is clarified we can take it out of Julian's hands.

TS: Wontner Road should be handled by a local letting agent.

EH: We need to prepare for the time when the Wiedicke's contract expires at the end of the 6 year period.

TS: Westminster Council are supposed to pay us £1300 p.c.m but have only been paying us £1141, which is £159 per month or roughly £2000 per year in under-payments.

Action point: Tom needs to do a report about the history of the Wiedickes' situation.

Action Point: JH to ask him and clear up situation so far and future proof for next year.

4. Formalising Trustees' operating procedures (for the governance document) initial discussion (TR)

TR: An operating procedure should be incorporated into our governing document. We agreed on the following principles:

- Trustees 7
- Term of service 7 years
- One trustee retires each year

- Quorum 4 – chair has casting vote
- National Director can attend the trustees meetings, but cannot vote
- AGM at Cleeve House – 2 trustees should attend
- No confidence vote by 5 of the trustees
- Trustee to be removed if they miss 3 consecutive meetings
- We will write an annual report
- Meeting expenses to be paid

MH: These should be passed on to the NC for acknowledgement

5. Change of legal structure with a ‘working party’

TR: Changing the legal structure takes a few years.

EH: I would tend to incorporate the trustees (see Point 6).

Action Point: AJ to ring our solicitors Bates Wells to get advice on changing to a new structure.

6. Vesting the property into the Official Custodian vs incorporating the trustees (TR)

This has not been decided yet.

7. Progress on FFWPU objectives and activities 2018 (GLS)

EH: On 29th May the auditors will come to LG. Then on 11th June they will go to Natural Numbers in Chippenham to check the numbers. The Annual report for 2017 needs to be finished by then.

GLS formulated some Objectives for UPF based on their Principles. We will add these to the Annual Report. We will keep the FFWPU objectives as they are for now.

EH: MH needs to write the Plans and Activities section for 2018 onwards.

8. Potential development at the farm (AJ)

AJ: I met the Director of commercial development of Sovereign Housing Association recently and he agreed to have a meeting to discuss the land at the farm.

Persimmon Homes are the only ones really interested in buying our land. However, Hannick Homes might be interested in the land opposite the industrial estate.

Action Point: AJ to speak to Ben Denton first.

9. Safeguarding (TR) [see attachment]

JH to keep an eye on the safeguarding issue. Tom has also been working on this. There is documentation on this that JH can get from Sylvia.

Action point: JH should speak to Tom.

10. Trustees report

EH: The Treasurer's report is in progress.

11. Declaration of any interests

Nobody had any interests to declare.

12. AOB

Action Point: Sylvia will provide introductory documentation on HR policies and procedures to AJ and JH.

JH: We need to adopt correct HR procedures such as writing to staff members to let them know exactly what a meeting is about and whether they are entitled to a witness.

Staff who have been self-employed for more than a year are not considered self-employed any more. You need to have more than one client to be self-employed. We should ask for advice from Jenny about this.

JH: Re: Employment Law: JH also raised several points regarding the difference between people working as self-employed contractors to FFWPU; as opposed to being employed by FFWPU; also that we need to be aware of the legal and regulatory compliance for income tax purposes and to consult with a chartered accountant regarding the finer details, before any decisions would be made regarding any changes.

Re: Blessing: Separately MH asked JH to try and formulate something written to act as a safeguard for FFWPU regarding the qualifications to receive the blessing. This was with reference to the possibility that same sex couples may have a legal basis to request inclusion.

EH: Do we want a salary scale for employees of FFWPU? We pay roughly half of what is paid by other charities.

TR: We should have a goal to bring ourselves in line with other charities within the next 10 years.

EH: It would be advantageous if the trustees were supplied with FC minutes and NC minutes.

Action Point: TR will ask Tom to fix the lift and the cracks at LG.

Action Point: JH to get HR policies and procedures from Sylvia

JH: Can we start the trustees meetings at 3pm instead of 2pm? All agreed

13. Date of next meeting

17th June 2018 - 3pm to 6pm.