



Minutes:
The Trees Community Association
Board Meeting of 9th June 2020
Online via Zoom

1. Introductions and apologies

Present

- Cllr Colin Swansborough – Trustee, Chair & Treasurer
- Rev Merriel Woodward – Trustee
- Lisa Playford – SCDA Senior Development Worker
- Fr Adam Ransom – Trustee

Apologies

- John Rollison – Trustee
- Cllr Sammy Choudhury – Trustee

Not Present

- Andy Millward – SCDA Community Services Programme Manager

2. Minutes of the last meeting, matters arising and declarations of interest

Colin thanked everyone for attending the meeting – our first via Zoom!

Lisa reported apologies have been received from John. Colin said Sammy had been experiencing technical problems and so gave his apologies too. Lisa advised Andy was hoping to be able to attend so must have been called elsewhere at short notice.

Colin welcomed Adam to the meeting and his first Board meeting as a Trustee. Lisa confirmed Adams DBS had come through and so with his formal welcome at this meeting she would add him to the Charity Commission and Companies House registers.

There were no declarations of interest. The Minutes of the last meeting of 11th February 2020 were agreed as accurate. Merriel asked that names rather than initials be used in future Minutes to avoid confusion between herself and Mary.

Colin referred to the action points of the last minutes and asked for an update:

Action 1 – completed. Adam is welcomed as a Trustee of TCA. Lisa to register Adam with Charity Commission and Companies House.

Action 2 – carried forward. Lisa to support new volunteer Emma to lead on website development.



Action 3 – carried forward. Lisa to contact the Hearing Resource Centre when they reopen to ask for assistance with testing hearing loop.

Action 4 – carried forward. Lisa to update Safeguarding Policy and circulate for Board review and approval.

Action 5 – completed. Safeguarding posters and wallet cards produced.

Action 6 – completed. Merriel reviewed the safeguarding course offered by the church but it was not a good fit for TCA needs as it was very specific to the Church. Lisa began researching alternative free online courses, including those offered by ESCC and 3VA, and this needs following-up. Lisa delivered a basic safeguarding training session to volunteers at the last cuppa and cake meeting before Centre closure. Lisa had arranged child protection training from SCDA's lead, but this had to be cancelled due to Covid-19 lockdown. This will be rescheduled when we are able.

Action 7 – completed. Lisa contacted Stephen Hughes at 3VA and got advice and an exemplar constitution. Lisa to formulate a draft for TCA for review by the Board. Lisa advised changes will need to be available for public scrutiny/comment and then approved by the charity commission before it is adopted.

Action 8 – completed. Merriel advised she does not wish to take on the role of Treasurer. Mary said she is not keen as she doesn't think this is her area of expertise. Mary said she would be happy to consider information on what the role entails and then have a chat with Colin before making a final decision.

Action 9 – completed, draft accounts for 2019-20 circulated.

Action 10 – completed.

Action 11 – completed. Lisa advised application drafted and provided to Merriel. Merriel advised there was not the opportunity for the PCC to consider the application prior to lockdown. When meetings resume, she will ask for it to be considered at an appropriate time.

Action 1: Lisa to register Adam with Charity Commission and Companies House, by the 23rd June 2020.

Action 2: Lisa to support volunteer, Emma, in making progress with getting a new website up and running, by the end of July 2020.

Action 3: Lisa to contact Hearing Resource Centre to ask for assistance with testing and training for hearing loop, by the end July 2020.

Action 4: Lisa to refresh Safeguarding Policy for review and approval by Board, by the end of July 2020.

Action 5: Lisa to research free online safeguarding courses for Trustees and Volunteers, by the end of July 2020.



Action 6: Lisa to draft a refreshed draft constitution for review and comment by Board, by the end of July 2020.

Action 7: Lisa to provide Mary with more information about the role of Treasurer, to be followed with a conversation between Colin and Mary to enable Mary to decide if she wants to take on the role. By the end of July 2020.

Action 8: Merriel to take proposal for funding of the Adult Literacy project to St. Mary's Willingdon PCC, when a suitable opportunity arises.

3. Centre Update

Lisa provided an update on Centre activity to the Board (see Willingdon Trees Community Centre Update June 2020). The headlines were:

- The Centre closed temporarily on 17th March 2020 following Government guidance due to Covid-19 pandemic. No visitors or income throughout April and May. Staff are generally working from home, just attending when necessarily. It remains closed currently but we are completing risk assessments and working towards being able to reopen early July, as per the Government easing plan. We are keeping a close watch on the news and awaiting expected guidance to enable the reopening of public buildings.
- Help Point – we established the Willingdon Trees Coronavirus Help Point as soon as lockdown came into effect. We have recruited more volunteers as community demand was high and are currently supporting 23 volunteers to provide assistance to 56 households with essential errands such as prescription collection and shopping, as well as befriending phone calls. We have received funding from Sussex Crises Fund and EBS to help support this activity.
- Youth - We have been working with YMCA to progress the wish list of the Trees Youth Voice. They have been busy building the indoor skate ramp they wanted and parkour and scooter skills sessions are planned at Youth Club sessions when we are able to reopen. They also want graffiti art workshops and the skate ramp could be a good canvas! We received a £5k grant from EBC last year for this youth project.
- Community Garden – permission sought to spend the £639 received from the devolved ward budget in March on children's planters, a covered sandpit and benches in the small garden. We are also seeking permission to reopen the gardens to the community, observing social distancing, over the next couple of weeks. Permission granted.
- Friday Club – members are receiving weekly calls from volunteer Mary McKay as part of the Hep Point. Mary has been asked to discuss with them idea's for



how the group can restart activities – perhaps online arm-chair exercises, attending the garden or walks in small groups.

- Sussex learning Network – we are involved with a project distributing free computers, Towner Gallery art packs and Holding Space mental health support to families in need within Willingdon Trees. Lisa and volunteers are working with partners to distribute these over the coming few weeks.
- Facilities – cleaning and refuse collection suspended, plumbing and ceiling repairs being arranged.

Action 9: Lisa to arrange for Rustic Treasures to attend the children's garden to install planters, sandpit and benches using the funding provided by the devolved ward budget, by the end of June 2020.

Action 10: Lisa to undertake Covid-19 risk assessment and put required measures in place in preparation for Centre reopening, by the end of June 2020.

Action 11: Lisa to reopen the Community Garden with social distancing measures in place, by the end of June 2020.

Action 12: Lisa to work with partners and volunteers to arrange the distribution of free computers, art packs and info on mental health support to families in need, by the end of July 2020.

4. Finance

Colin advised the Trustees were concerned at the end of March 2020 that they were down to approx. £19k in reserves. However, grant funding received since this time has increased the balance to £36k as of the end of April.

Lisa mentioned we are losing £1500 per week in income from regular venue hire, so really want to be able to reopen again as soon as we are safely able to do so.

Lisa advised the National Lottery Reaching Communities funding bid for £150k over three years has been paused whilst they focus on Covid-19 funding. TCA has applied for £22k from the Covid-19 fund. Feedback from them is tentatively positive. A decision is expected within the next couple of weeks. Lisa also advised we have applied for £15k from the Independent Age fund for the Help Point.

Merriel asked if we could resubmit to Children in Need. Lisa said she believed we could after a period of time and that they had given helpful feedback saying more information about impact would improve a future application. Merriel suggested volunteer Little Trees leader Janet would be a good person to help gather evidence of impact.



Action 13: Lisa to speak with Janet about gathering information to support a future Children in Need funding bid, by the end of July 2020.

5. Any Other Business

Merriel mentioned St Mary's Church Willingdon had not paid the last invoice requesting payment for the last 18 month period as they had a query about the amount. Lisa advised she had spoken with Hannah about this previously and Hannah had reported she had telephoned and e-mailed the contact but had not had a response. Merriel said she had been told the same by the Church. Lisa to speak with Hannah and ask her to sort this asap.

Colin said he and the other Trustees wanted to thank Lisa, Hannah, the volunteers and SCDA for all their work in developing the Centre. They know the support for the local community comes from the heart. It is frustrating that the Centre is currently closed and it may take time to build it up again. Lisa thanked them for their kind words and said she is trying to keep the momentum going with activities and progress on projects whilst the Centre is closed, and that the need for support to the local community from the Centre is sadly likely to be even greater once we reopen due to the economic fallout from Covid-19.

Action 14: Hannah to double check invoice and provide St Mary's Church with an accurate and up to date invoice, by Friday 12th June 2020.

Action Summary

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