

Minutes of the M1 2025 Trustees' Meeting

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| <p>Venue Root & Branch Office and Online on MS Teams</p> | <p>Date Monday 13th January 2025 6.30 pm</p> |
| <p>Trustees Present David Atkins Emma Welch Neil Griffiths Rosie Wheeler Martyn Cooper Nick Daisley Vicki Silk</p> | <p>Also Present Tanya Parkinson Crispian Denby</p> |

Welcome

David welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Colin Bell, Richard Taylor and Carolyn Place.

Crispian Denby attended the board meeting for the third time following his expression of interest to join the trustee board.

1. Minutes of the previous trustee meeting

The minutes from the Meeting M12 (December 2024) were agreed and ratified as accurate by trustees present, these can be published on the website.

Action Emma

Matters Arising

Nick and Richard have been reviewing the cost of utilities.
Richard will continue to action contact with BT
Nick will continue to action contact with Gigaclear and Electricity providers.
We have connected with Ethan at SEEB, an advisory organisation that helps charities cut running costs... Nick will follow this up.

Action Nick and Richard

Four items remain on the Progress Sheet (**Appendix A**) and decisions will be minuted in the sub sections that follow.

2. Financial Update

David updated the board. The current financial position in Root & Branch accounts is healthy and normal for this time of year. David and Tanya confirmed receipt of funds from The Spirit of the Vale, Wiltshire Community Trust and Five&Co. The trustees thanked these very generous donors.

Tanya thanked also Lloyds who made a donation to the account at the end of 2024 in recognition of David's volunteering on the board.

Xero

Crispian updated on the progress of the Xero project.

The Xero accounting package is now live and running for Root & Branch. The board would like to express their huge gratitude to Crispian for working on this throughout December.

Crispian confirmed that our Xero account is now getting live updates from our bank accounts. Crispian has set up our chart of accounts on Xero, created bespoke reporting and written a user manual to help office staff take on the management and operation of the system. He has set up the functionality of the package to be able to record and track spending against both restricted and unrestricted incomes.

Moving forward, Crispian will lead a training session on Wednesday 15th January at which we will explore the system with Tanya and Sarah. We are faced with the large task of now bringing the system up to date for this financial year by processing all transactions from April 2024. Emma and Richard will support Sarah and Tanya with this.

Action Crispian, Emma, Richard, Tanya

3. Operational Review

Key Dates for 2025

Tanya talked through dates for events and closure in 2025 and will circulate to the board.

Key dates:

11th May Plant Fayre

4th September (4 – 8pm) – Open afternoon for friends, family, members and local stake holders

14th October – R&B AGM

30th November – Christmas Fayre

Recent News and Update

Tanya thanked Peter for running a Stained Glass workshop for staff during a recent staff training day. This was a great success.

Tanya has received the Participant Feedback Questionnaire from 21 participants. She shared the results. Tanya highlighted all the positive feedback that had been received and praised the staff team. The survey has also given the staff plenty of scope for working on new goals and outcomes, which they will incorporate into their work with participants, particularly on the Branching Out Programme. Results of the questionnaire have been extremely useful and the trustee board raised some points around how much participants are positively challenged during their time at Root & Branch. The participant contract will be circulated to the board (particularly for new trustees) to provide information and confirmation about how participants are encouraged, supported and challenged during their time at R&B.

Action Emma

Working Patterns, staff hours and appraisals

Tanya will be conducting staff appraisals this month. This will usefully feed into the annual pay review. Any information that Tanya can bring to the next meeting around working patterns and hours worked will be very useful when considering our move into the next financial year. The staff pay review will be implemented in April 2025, so the trustees agreed that this should appear high on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting in February.

Action Tanya

Health and Safety

Nick updated the board, he has been trying to find someone to conduct a review of the machinery in the workshop and has contacted specialist companies and local colleges.

Vicki has a contact who runs a wood turning workshop in Highworth. She has invited him on site to look at the workshop and meet volunteers and advise on best next steps.

The Trustees agreed that, for the meantime, Tanya should keep the wood workshop open, adhering to all safety guidelines as laid out in the Health and Safety Policy. Trustees suggested that the participant : volunteer ratio could be reduced to 1:1 for now so that supervision it at its upper most.

Action Nick/Vicki

4. Governance, Policies, Strategy

Policy Review

The Policies for review this year are detailed in Appendix A. All Policies due for review this year were assigned to a trustee/trustees to review. The purpose being to make sure each document in up to date with current terminology and practice:

Pol 6 Health and Safety Policy (and e cigarette policy) – [To be reviewed by Neil and Rosie](#)

Pol 7 Safeguarding - [Rosie](#)

Pol 8 Risk Assessment and Risk Management of Service users – [Vicki and David](#)

Pol 9 Placement Management – [Colin and Martyn](#)

Pol 10 Finance – [Emma and Carolyn](#)

Pol 11 Service User Involvement – [Colin and Martyn](#)

Pol 12 IT Data Management – [Nick](#)

Emma will signpost trustees to the documents on MS Teams or email them as attachments so that the review can begin this month.

Action Emma

David asked Vicki to check through our Governing Document and Articles of Association to check through details with her legal experience. Emma will sign post both David and Vicki to this document. (Vicki will also review this given our current practice of having hybrid board meetings).

Action Emma/ Vicki

Safeguarding

Tanya advised that safeguarding procedures are being audited. Rosie is supporting Tanya with this. This is happening to bring current practice together across the Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership. Once the audit is complete Rosie will bring our Policy in line with it. In the meantime all trustees agreed to complete Level 1 safeguarding training. Currently all our volunteers working with participants are required to complete this training. This training is available from the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB) and Rosie will circulate the link to all trustees. Currently Emma and Rosie have completed Level 3 Training, Richard has completed Level 1 and Martyn has completed training with another organisation – he will repeat it with the OSAB.

Action Rosie/Tanya/All

LinkedIn

Caroyn has offered to run and manage a LinkedIn page for Root & Branch. The trustees all agreed and thanked her for this offer. Vicki will remove the old R&B page that is no longer being used.

Action Vicki / Carolyn

5. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting will be Tuesday 11th February. Emma apologised that she was unable to attend.

The date for the March meeting will be Monday 10th March.

Meetings will be at 6.30pm at Root & Branch but also streamed on MS Teams.

Agenda Items for the February Meeting:

Lease Review (**Vicki**)

Staffing and Pay Review (**All**)

Safeguarding Update (**Rosie**)

Strategic Plan Review (**David**)