



Draft Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Held at the Union Jack Club, London on 2nd August 2017.
Commencing 11.30

Present			
Councillors:	Keith Morley Derrick Brown Paul Kimber	Hon Associate (Chair) River Tees PHA Weymouth PHA	KM DB PK
Officers:	Andrew McClenaghan Clifford Smith (By Skype)	Belfast PHA Highland Council	AM CS
In attendance	Gillian Morgan Gary Gould	Swansea Bay PHA and T&F Gp BIO and T&F Gp	GM GG
Minutes taken by	Gary Gould		
O&S 17/17 – Welcome and apologies for absence			
<p>KM welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 11.30 by declaring that it was quorate.</p> <p>PK then asked if anyone on the Committee knew Roy Kaye, Chief Port Health Inspector of Hull and Goole PHA (Rtd) who had passed away. CS confirmed that he did. PK said that he had fond memories of Roy who was a <i>lovely guy</i> and that Roy was very supportive of him when he first became involved with APHA. PK went on to say that he was very sad to hear of Roy's passing and thought it appropriate that the Committee hold a minutes silence in memory of him. The Chair and Committee agreed. There followed a minutes silence.</p> <p>The Chair then resumed proceedings.</p> <p>AM commented that it was great to see such a good turn out at O&S. PK then apologised for his poor attendance of late and explained that as leader of a specific council group he was required to attend full council meetings that clashed with O&S. As he was no longer involved, it should not affect his attendance in future.</p> <p>Apologies had been received from:</p> <p>WO Dan Biggs RAF</p>			
O&S 17/18 – Declaration of Interests			
There were none.			

O&S 17/19 - Minutes of the last O&S meeting held on 10th May 2017

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true record.

Proposed DB, seconded AM.

Agreed all

Matters arising:

Item 17/07 Regarding the possibility of securing an MP to speak at the AGM: - the Chair of the Executive Board (EB) had pursued this and had a favourable response from Gavin Robinson MP. PK suggested that it would be useful to secure support from all the main parties. DB said that there were 2 labour MPs within River Tees PHA and that one, Paul Williams, was a Doctor and may be interested in supporting the Association. It was agreed that DB would discuss with the Chair of the Executive Board.

Action: DB to discuss MP support with the Chair of the Executive Board

Item 17/03e KM to contact Cllr Steve Hunt to make use of his database of elected members: - GM said that it had proved difficult making contact with Cllr. Hunt and that, because the database is likely to be out of date, questioned whether it was worth pursuing. KM replied that it may still be of use and would follow up with Cllr. Hunt if GM could provide contact details.

Action: GM to provide KM contact details of Cllr. Hunt. KM to pursue database of members with Cllr. Hunt.

PK Then asked whether the AGM would coincide with the usual 2/3 day conference. He was then briefed on the changes to conference that have resulted from austerity. CS said that because of a ban on officers travelling out of Scotland, he would be unable to attend. GG suggested that such restrictions may not apply to an Elected Member and asked whether CS could encourage a Councillor to attend. KM requested that if CS was unsuccessful, he should forward contact details of the Elected member and Leader to him so that he could try and persuade them.

Action: CS to attempt to identify an Elected Member of Highland Council to attend the AGM in November and to liaise with KM as necessary.

DB informed the Committee that he was now the Vice-Chair of River Tees PHA Board and that he would discuss the AGM with Cllr. Davies to ensure there was representation from their Authority.

Action: DB to discuss attendance at AGM with Cllr Davies.

O&S 17/20 - Minutes of the last Executive Board meeting held on 5th July 2017

Item EB 17/ 35- APHA Administration

AM asked whether the Webmaster had amended his table of hours worked to reflect the difference between "routine" and "As and when" tasks. GG replied that he had been asked to amend the list but that it had not been completed as yet. He then confirmed that the required 3 month notice of termination of his current contract had been served, in accordance with the decision taken at the last EB meeting, it would expire on 31st October 2017

PK enquired re the quality of the website there then followed some discussion regarding the functionality of the website and whether it would be better to be simplified. GM confirmed that she would be assessing what could be taken off to reduce the amount of maintenance required.

AM then asked about the "rogue subscribers"; GG briefed the committee on the issue of rogue subscriptions to the website that were from Eastern Europe and the steps being taken to deal with it. GG was concerned that these steps were another addition to his workload and had asked the Webmaster if there were an alternative more automatic method of eliminating them. GG stressed that the rogue subscribers to the website were not automatically added to the "Mailchimp" e-mail database. GM replied that owing to the changes in Local Government it was possible that many of the e-mail addresses in the "Mailchimp" database were out of date. GG replied that there was a job of work that needed to be done to verify the approximately 440 subscribers to APHA e-mail communication. GM agreed to undertake this task if the list could be exported.

Action: GG to task Webmaster to export database to an excel file and forward it to Swansea PHA who will verify the subscribers.

Item EB 17/37- APHA Membership

AM asked whether there had been any feedback from Cllr. Davies regarding his discussions with the LGA. GG replied that there had not. DB agreed to discuss this with Cllr. Davies.

Action: DB to discuss LGA with Cllr. Davies.

PK then asked whether the current numbers of members was what APHA would like. There then followed some discussion that updated PK with regards to the changes in membership that had occurred over the last 2 years and the necessity for it to grow. PK suggested that consideration be given to the production of videos on topical subjects such as Ships Sanitation Inspections. AM commented that it was a fair suggestion but APHA lacked the resources, currently, to produce it. It was agreed to leave it as a recommendation to the EB when resources permit.

There then followed a discussion regarding Manchester PHA's membership. GG briefed the Committee on the current position and that it was his understanding that their Manchester PHA's Business Sub Group will discuss membership of APHA at their next meeting, in September, and make a recommendation to their Board, who will take a decision at their next meeting, also in September. KM confirmed that met his understanding of the situation. AM asked if there was anything O&S could do in support of retaining Manchester PHA as a Corporate Member. KM said *no* PK stressed how Manchester PHA had been very supportive and at the centre of APHA's activities for many years and that O&S, as a Committee should place on record how much the support and involvement of Manchester PHA in the activities of APHA was valued and that it would be loss to the Association if they ceased to be Corporate Members.

Item EB 17/38 Task and Finish Group

AM asked for an update on the handbook. GG replied that, as there would be no newsletter this month, he hoped that it would free up some time to complete the update and prepare a draft. It is aimed to have the book published well before the AGM in November.

AM asked about the PLaN Protocol. GG replied that he had started to *chase* the secretaries for feedback and stressed that it was important that they are consulted to ensure that there is *buy in* from the PLaN Groups.

CS asked if GG could speak at the next Scottish PLaN meeting with a view to explaining the benefits of membership of APHA and securing new members. GG replied that he would seek authorisation to attend and would liaise with John Laird, Scottish PLaN Secretary.

Action: GG to seek authorisation to attend next Scottish PLaN Group meeting.

Item EB 17/43 Meeting Schedule 2017

AM confirmed that the Executive Board meeting scheduled for the 18th October 2017 in Belfast would start at 11.00. GM said that it had been difficult organising travel and would be travelling the day before and staying overnight.

O&S 17/21 - APHA Membership, Finances & Scrutiny of Payments

GG briefed the Committee on his meeting at Medway Council assisted by Cllr. David Carr. At the request of Katey Arrowsmith, Head of Finance Strategy at Medway Council, he then read out an e-mail, reproduced below and sent by her to apologise for the service to date and detail the changes that were to be implemented to resolve the issues:

Dear Committee Members,

Medway's Chief Finance Officer and I have recently met with Gary Gould and Cllr David Carr on behalf of APHA to discuss the service that the association has been receiving from Medway, and we accept that this has been far below the standard set out in the agreement between the two organisations.

When Medway Council agreed to provide the service, we allocated the work to an officer who was undertaking an accountancy qualification and was keen to take ownership of some related work to enhance their skills. There was a particularly difficult handover from the previous administrators in January of this year, in which everything from getting the bank to set up the new signatories to receiving the new bank cards and PINs was significantly delayed. Once we were up and running however, for a variety of reasons (including absences due to sickness and a bereavement) this officer has not been available to provide the services required, and we have not had sufficient arrangements in place for this work to be covered in their absence. We also discussed some capability issues which resulted in the quality of reports etc. produced for APHA falling below the standards required, and I'm afraid this issue remains in the papers provided for the meeting of O&S.

Please accept my sincerest apologies on behalf of Medway Council, and please be assured we are taking steps to ensure the service provided to APHA meets the needs of the organisation moving forward. We have taken the following steps:

- *The responsibility for servicing APHA has been reallocated to the career graded Trainee Accountants within my service; despite their titles, these officers are significantly more experienced and qualified to perform these duties than the previous incumbent. We currently have two officers in these posts, and will be recruiting a further two officers this year, and I*

envisage that all four will share the duties relating to APHA.

- *APHA will be provided with new contact details which will be a shared email account and telephone number, to ensure that when one of the officers is unavailable, the others will be able to respond and provide anything needed to meet APHA's requirements.*
- *I will be arranging for Gary to meet with the officers in post, to ensure we have a clear timetable of what we need to provide and when, and we can discuss formats for reporting etc. to ensure we provide exactly what you need.*

While the activities will be the responsibility of a small pool of officers in my team, I will be personally retaining an oversight role to ensure the quality of the service meets your needs. If I can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me directly using the details in my email signature below.

Kind regards, Katey

Katey Arrowsmith

*Head of Finance Strategy
Medway Council
Tel: 01634 33 23 55*

CS recommended that O&S welcome the proposed improvements to the services provided and thank them for their assistance.

GG confirmed that the latest APHA bank balance was £44,634.10 and that included the payment of his and the Webmaster's latest invoices as well as the Chair's Allowance for Aug-Nov but may not include income from recent membership renewals. GG said that he had confirmation that Portsmouth PHA, Highland Council and the Royal Navy would be paying. CS confirmed that he had just authorised the payment. GG then went on to explain that it looked as though the invoice for Guernsey had been sent to Dr Val Cameron who had retired. GG had been in touch with Guernsey and had now requested that Administration re-issue the invoice to Dr. Cameron's replacement.

CS offered his apologies but he had to leave to travel to another meeting scheduled later that day. He left at 13.00

It was agreed that scrutiny of expenditure to date would be deferred until the next O&S Meeting in order to provide time for the new team to familiarise themselves and produce the required reports.

GG asked if all had sight of the VAT return that was an outstanding action from the previous meeting. It was confirmed that they had. There were no questions. There followed a discussion about VAT; GG explained that APHA were in effect used as revenue collectors on behalf of HMRC in that we collect the VAT and pass it on to them but we deduct any VAT we have paid out from the total. It was therefore very important that VAT receipts were requested for all expenditure.

GG then informed the Committee that he would be contacting the rest of the Authorities who made up the outstanding membership renewals, a total of 6.

AM expressed concern that of the 22 Corporate Members, only 8 were from England and asked what was happening regarding encouraging membership. KM said that he had been making contact with an elected member in Liverpool with a view to gaining support. GG added that he understood Cllr. David Carr had made contact with a Cllr. from London. It was agreed that growing the membership was essential to the ongoing survival of the Association and that it would be useful if Elected Members would make contact with their opposites in neighbouring ports. GG confirmed that the T&F Gp were producing a document explaining the benefits of membership of the Association to be used for

recruiting.

Action: It was agreed that there was a need for all Board members to market the Association to non-member neighbouring authorities.

O&S 17/22 - APHA T&F Group

It was agreed that the key immediate parts of the T&F Gp work had already been discussed and that the Group would meet after the O&S Meeting to discuss the Action Plan in detail. This would allow non-members of the T&F Gp, to conclude attendance and not be delayed unnecessarily. O&S look to continuing support from the EB on the work of the T&F Gp.

In summary, the T&F Gp discussed actions with regards the new handbook, arrangements for proposed October training event in Durham and the AGM in November.

O&S 17/23 - Any Other Business

Ships Sanitation Inspection Charges GG raised the question of increases to the charges for ships inspections. Any increase would be valid from April next year and, though it may appear early, it was important to allow sufficient time for any consultation that may be required so that a recommendation could be made to the Executive Board by the Dec/Jan meeting. The question of increase in charges could be useful to open dialogue with the non-member bigger ports. Following discussion It was agreed to pass this task to the T&F Gp.

Action: T&F Gp to review Ships Sanitation Inspection Charges

O&S 17/24 - Meeting Schedule for 2017

21st November 2017:

AM said that the timing of his flight meant that he would be arriving in the afternoon. GG to liaise with other O&S members in order to determine a change in the time of the meeting.

AGM/CPD Event

22nd November 2017

All to be held at the Union Jack Club.

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 1340.

There then followed a meeting of the Task and Finish Group with regards the Action Plan as *per* Item 17/22. This meeting concluded at 14.30