



Draft Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Held at the Union Jack Club, London on 21st November 2017

Present:			
Councillors:	Keith Morley Paul Kimber	Hon Associate (Chair) Weymouth PHA	KM PK
Officers:	Andrew McClenaghan	Belfast PHA	AM
In attendance	Gary Gould Gill Morgan	Exec Off Swansea bay PHA (T&F Gp)	GG GM
Minutes taken by	Gary Gould		
O&S 17/25 – Welcome and apologies for absence			
<p>KM welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 11.00 by declaring that it was quorate.</p> <p>There were no apologies, however:</p> <p>Clifford Smith - Highland Council was on sick leave WO Dan Biggs - RAF was on deployment in Africa.</p>			
O&S 17/26 – Declaration of Interests			
There were none.			
O&S 17/27 - Minutes of the last O&S meeting held on 21st 2017			
<p>AM highlighted one inaccuracy under item 17/17. It was CS who confirmed that he knew Roy Kaye. With this amendment, the minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true record.</p> <p>Proposed AM, seconded PK.</p> <p>Agreed all</p> <p>Matters arising:</p> <p>Item 17/19 Matters From O&S Meeting 10th May 17</p> <p>Item 17/03e KM to contact Cllr. Steve Hunt to make use of his database of elected members. KM reported that he had been in touch with Cllr. Hunt who replied that it would be a challenge to undertake the task but KM had not heard anything since.</p> <p>Action: KM agreed to follow up with Cllr. Hunt.</p>			

Item 17/07 Regarding the possibility of securing an MP to speak at the AGM: - DB had 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. DB had agreed to discuss this with the Chair of the Executive Board. As DB was not in attendance it was agreed that GG should follow up with DB.

Action: GG to contact DB and determine progress.

Item 17/19a CS to attempt to encourage a Councillor from Highland Council to attend AGM. GG reported that no one from Highland Council was attending the AGM so we could assume that CS had been unsuccessful but would try to determine the situation when he made contact re Item 17/25. GG would pass on details as necessary to KM if required.

Action: GG to contact Highland Council.

Item 17/19b O&S were pleased that Cllr. Wayne Davies was attending the AGM but disappointed there were no officers from River Tees PHA.

Item 17/35 Manchester PHA's membership of APHA. KM reported that a decision would be taken at the next board meeting scheduled for Monday 27 Nov 17 the question as to whether APHA should agree to PLaN membership for Manchester PHA had yet to be taken. The difficulty was that PLaN Membership was specifically for small ports. KM agreed to speak to members of the Manchester PHA Board that were likely to be pro APHA in order to encourage support.

Action: KM to contact members of Manchester PHA's Board.

Item 17/21 GG briefed the Committee on the state of membership renewals. He had had some success on chasing late payers but it was unfortunate that 2 members Guernsey and Renfrewshire had decided not to renew at present; although further action to encourage support would continue. This was offset by the success in recruiting new members to the Association with a Corporate and 3 PLaN Members joining this year and interest from other Authorities and organisations. KM mentioned that he had spoken to a contact at Mersey PHA with a view to encouraging Mersey to rejoin the Association. It was decided that it would be of benefit to ask the Chair of the Executive Board to give the Chair of Mersey PHA Board a call.

Action: KM to ask the Chair of EB to contact the Chair of Mersey PHA to discuss membership.

O&S 17/28 - Minutes of the last Executive Board meeting held on 18th October 2017

Item EB 17/ 35d. Minutes of O&S Meeting 2 Aug 17 AM raised the issue of the lack of marketing for APHA and that Elected Members were to contact their counterparts in non-member authorities and encourage them to join. It was agreed that O&S supported this course of action and that the T&F Group should aim to compile the list of non-member authorities and allocate them to Elected Members so that this task could be completed in good time for the end of the membership year, i.e. 31 Mar 17.

Item EB 17/49 APHA Administration. GG briefed the Committee on the outcomes of his meeting with Administration/Finance at Medway on 7 Nov 17. He was pleased to report that it had been successful and that with the implementation of the single email address, tasks were being actioned and that the team had a better idea of the Association and why the financial reports were required. It was clear, however, that they were only undertaking, at best, half of the tasks agreed under the SLA at present. For example, events were being administered by Swansea PHA and GG was picking up most of the routine administration. The concern was whether they had the ability/motivation to undertake the rest of the tasks in an efficient and timely manner. It was essential that emails were replied to and actioned promptly and that events are administered efficiently. That said, it was planned to gradually increase the amount of administrative work that Medway undertook to relieve the burden

being placed currently on GG and Swansea. O&S agreed that the situation remained unsatisfactory but that, with time, it should resolve as the team at Medway became more familiar with the needs of the Association but, in the meantime, APHA was not getting the service it was paying for and that there should be an adjustment to the fees paid. It was agreed that GG should enlist the support of Cllr. David Carr to resolve these issues.

Action: GG to contact David Carr to enlist his continuing support to resolve the remaining issues.

Item 17/51 Membership and Renewals. AM asked whether North Tyneside would be sending an observer to the AGM. GG was pleased to report that Colin MacDonald the clerk of North Tyneside had indeed booked a place at the AGM and Training Day as an observer. It was agreed that he should be hosted for the duration.

O&S 17/29 - APHA Membership, Finances & Scrutiny of Payments

GG drew the committee's attention to the Income and expenditure report produced by Medway in conjunction with himself. He explained that it was an essential part of the Committee's scrutiny role to examine all expenditure and challenge anything that they did not understand or was vague and ensure that it was both justified and complied with the Articles and Operating Arrangements of the Association. It was also incumbent on the Committee to review income. This was the first time that Medway had managed to produce an accessible report in the format that members of both the EB and O&S committee could follow therefore it was necessary to review expenditure back to the start of the financial year.

The Committee spent some time going through the report line by line and the following comments/questions were raised;

a. PK asked for clarification re the VAT charges. GG explained that HMRC estimate how much VAT they expect APHA to collect over the year and then calculate a monthly direct debit payment. At the end of the year the reconcile how much APHA has collected against how much has been paid and the Association is either presented with either a bill or a rebate accordingly. The outgoing VAT direct debit payments were therefore determined by HMRC.

b. PK queried the cost of bank charges and there was general concern that they were too high. GG confirmed the concern that both Medway and the EB had over the length of time it had taken to transfer the authorisations to Medway which were largely because of the intransigence of HSBC. It was also ridiculous that APHA's branch remained in Cornwall. There was an outstanding action for the market to be tested and an alternative provider identified. PK suggested that *Unity Trust* be considered as an alternative. It was agreed that O&S recommend that the market be tested by Medway in good time for the January EB meeting.

Action: The Finance Team (FT) test the market and make a recommendation for an alternative banking provider.

c. PK queried what the expenditure identified as *Newport Norse Sandwich Lunch* was on 10 Feb 17. GG believed it would have been the lunch provided for the Welsh Ship Inspection Workshop but would confirm and request the entry be amended accordingly.

Action: the FT amend the line entry to explain what *Newport Norse* is.

d. PK asked for an explanation with regards the financial reconciliation statement at presented at the bottom of the Expenditure Table. GG explained that it was a simple balance reconciliation to express the overall state of the finances. PK replied that it was the column that the figures were in i.e. *Gross* that was confusing and suggested that they be moved.

Action: The FT to modify the table to remove the confusion identified by PK.

d. GG reported that he had asked the FT to explain why APHA was in receipt of a tax rebate in 1 Sep 17 of £1080.00 but had not yet had an answer because the relevant individual was not available.

Action: The FT to make enquires as to why APHA received a tax rebate. This is necessary so that Committee members have a better understanding of VAT.

e. AM asked what the entry *Advice Confirms* at £230.37 was on 4 Jul 17. No one could answer this so it would be referred to the FT.

Action: The FT to investigate and provide an explanation as to what *Advice Confirms* was.

f. AM asked whether Newry Mourne & Down council had paid their fees yet. GG said that because it was not included on the income, they had not as at 8 Nov 17. He confirmed that he would ask the FT.

Action: FT to confirm that Newry Mourne & Down had paid their membership fees.

GG then referred to the latest communication received from the FT where it identified outstanding income from the following events, as follows:

AGM 2016: £24.00
Birkenhead: £350.00
Durham: £258.00

There was some discussion with regards credit control activity and it was agreed that O&S recommends that there should be 2 reminders emailed following the original invoice before a letter to the chief executive of the LA or organisation/individual.

Action: FT to draft a standard letter for this purpose.

GG explained that the next step would be to include an element of budgeting to present a projection of the state of the finances by the end of the financial year i.e. 31 Mar 17. This work is essential so that it can inform the EB of the continuing financial viability of the Association and whether membership fees should be increased. He said that although the current account balance as at 21 Nov 17 was £38,788.21, it could present a distorted view of the state of the finances because outstanding invoices were not included. As an example, his last invoice for £3750 was not reflected in these figures and he still had several expense claims that were yet to be submitted. GG was asked why he had not submitted the expense claims; he replied that his workload for the Association over the past few months had been excessive. Whilst he was contracted to work 2 days a week (14 hours), the workload over this period was such that he rarely worked less than twice that and it had often been a full time job. There were always tasks of a higher priority that need to be completed and deadlines met. This was largely due to producing the handbook to meet the AGM deadline at the same time as organising the AGM on top of the routine tasks such as producing the newsletter etc. The fact that he was also undertaking a lot of the administration just added to his workload. GG said that he had repeatedly stressed that the level of work expected from one individual was unsustainable and that he needed more support and help. PK expressed concern that the workload of the Executive Officer was such that he did not have the time to submit expense claims and asked whether there was scope for additional administrative support. GG said that the APHA could not afford to pay for additional staff nor for the hours that he was actually working. When and if Medway took on more of the administrative role, the workload may ease but it was a question of whether APHA could have confidence in them to deliver what was needed.

O&S 17/30 - APHA T&F Group

The line entries on T&F Group Action Plan (attached) were discussed at length with the following decisions/actions:

- a. It was agreed that an additional action regarding the Elected Members to contact non-members as discussed at Item 17/28 (Item EB 17/ 35d) be added.

Action: GG to add this additional task to the Action Plan.

- b. GG mentioned that when the Borough of Poole rejoined APHA he asked for and was provided the contact details of their Elected Member with responsibility for Port Health. PK agreed to contact the member in order to encourage their support for the Association.

Action: PK to contact the Elected Member with responsibility for Port Health at the Borough of Poole.

- c. There was some discussion regarding next year's AGM and whether we should try and run a small conference. GG stressed the necessity for it to be at low cost and that if it involved an overnight stay, a University campus should be used. This could mean moving it back to September. There was also concern with regards who would organise such an event because the T&F Gp were stretched organising the current AGM and it may have to go back to a Port Health Authority to organise. It was agreed that a decision should be taken regarding the size/location/duration/organisation of the event as soon as possible.

Action: Executive Board to make a decision regarding next year's AGM as soon as possible.

- d. There was some discussion regarding Ships Sanitation Inspection Fees and whether they remained appropriate and what sort of increase, if any, should be implemented next year. It was generally agreed that they should be increased in line with September's RPI rate of inflation rounded to either the next £5 or £10. The T&F Gp would continue to work on this and make a recommendation to the EB at the January meeting for a decision to be made.

Action: T&F Gp to assess Ships Sanitation Fees and make a recommendation to the EB.

O&S 17/31 - Any Other Business

There was none.

O&S 17/32 - Meeting Schedule for 2018

As a result of the recent requirement to book meeting rooms at the UJC in the future; the actual dates of meetings scheduled for next year have yet to be confirmed. The draft schedule will be as follows;

Feb 18
May 18
Aug 18
Nov 18

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 16.15.