

## CAXTON TRUSTEE LTD

### Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors of Caxton Trustee Limited held on 10 February 2016 at Alliance House, 12 Caxton Street, London SW1H 0QS

**PRESENT:** Chris Pond (Chair)  
Siobhain Butterworth  
Richard Finlay  
Margaret Kennedy  
David Atterbury Thomas  
Howard Thomas

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Jan Barlow (Chief Executive)

#### PART A

**271.16 Welcome and apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Vijay Sharma.

**272.16 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 November 2015 were agreed as a correct record.

**273.16 Matters arising from the minutes other than those itemised separately on the agenda**

There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

**274.16 Chair's statement**

CP advised the board that the focus of the meeting would be on the latest political developments, in particular the launch of the Department of Health consultation document. He reported that he, JB and the Chairs of the other Alliance House organisations had attended a meeting with DH officials on 20 January 2016, arranged at short notice, at which DH had advised that the consultation would be launched the following day. The Chairs had since met with JB to discuss the consultation document and how to respond to it. A letter had also been sent to beneficiaries, alerting them to the consultation, highlighting what the proposals would mean if implemented, and encouraging them to respond to the consultation. This would be discussed further under item 276.16

CP confirmed that following the last meeting, he had written to Alan Rook, thanking him for his contribution during his time on the board.

#### OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT ISSUES

**275.16 National Welfare Committee**

- i) The board received the minutes of the NWC meeting held on 2 November 2015.
- ii) The board received the minutes of the NWC meeting held on 10 December 2015.
- iii) The board received the minutes of the NWC meeting held on 21 January 2016.
- iv) The board received the management information pack. This included the consolidated grant schedules, beneficiary numbers, grant turnaround times, and appeals to the end of December 2015. With regard to beneficiary numbers, it was noted that there had been a 10% increase in total numbers for the year to 31 December 2015. With regard to grant turnaround times, the board was pleased to note that the lower times were being maintained.
- v) RF advised that the type of grant requests considered by the Committee continued to be very varied. He also reported that at its meeting on 10 December 2015, the Committee had reviewed the retrospective policy in relation to medical-related grants, following the discussion at the November board meeting. It had been agreed not to amend the existing policy and that, regardless of the nature of any retrospective request, cases would continue to be considered based on the situation the beneficiary found themselves in when making the purchase, the urgency of the situation, and their ability to be able to contact Caxton before making a purchase.

#### **276.16 Partnership Group**

The board received the minutes of the Partnership Group meeting held on 25 November 2015.

CP reported that it had been a very constructive meeting. The Group had made a number of suggestions, including asking Caxton to remind beneficiaries about the availability of bereavement grants, support whilst undergoing treatment for Hepatitis C, and Government winter fuel payments. These issues had been included in the news update which had been sent to beneficiaries in December. The Group's suggestion to post the Caxton newsletters on the website had also been actioned. All the links on the Caxton website had also been reviewed, as one member of the Group had highlighted that some had not been working.

It had been agreed to hold the next meeting in the spring.

#### **277.16 Political developments**

The board received a report summarising the latest political developments.

JB reported that there had been no further developments regarding the Scottish Cabinet Secretary's suggestion to distribute some of the additional £25 million announced by the Prime Minister in March 2015 via increased winter fuel payments to beneficiaries. It was assumed that this had now been superseded by the launch of the Department of Health consultation.

JB advised that the Scottish Review Group, which had been set up after the publication of the Penrose Inquiry, had published its final report on 17 December 2015. The report included a number of recommendations, which, if implemented,

would provide a higher level of financial support than that which was currently given to those beneficiaries infected in Scotland. Following a meeting of the Health and Sport Committee in the Scottish Parliament on 9 February 2016, the Scottish Cabinet Secretary had committed to making an announcement by 23 March 2016.

JB reported that on 21 January 2016, Jane Ellison MP, the Under Secretary of State for Public Health, had made a statement in the House of Commons, announcing the launch of a 12 week consultation period which would close on 15 April 2016. The Chairs of the Alliance House entities and JB had been given advance notice the previous day in a meeting with Department of Health officials.

The Alliance House team had sent out a letter about the consultation on behalf of DH to 3500 beneficiaries/registrants across the five organisations on 27 January 2016. In spite of JB's advice regarding how to reach as many people as possible, DH had decided not to send a hard copy of the consultation document to all beneficiaries. Distribution of the letter had been delayed because DH had put in the letter the wrong telephone number for people to call if they wanted to request a hard copy of the consultation document. They had rectified this by putting a label on the outside of the envelopes giving the correct number.

Caxton had also sent out its own letter to beneficiaries on 29 January 2016 setting out what changes were being proposed in the consultation, and highlighting how Caxton beneficiaries would be affected if the proposals were implemented. JB advised that the other Alliance House entities had sent out a similar letter to their respective beneficiaries. As a result, the team had been inundated with telephone calls from beneficiaries who were concerned about what the proposals would mean for them, and where they would get support if Caxton and its sister organisations were closed down.

With regard to Caxton's status in relation to the consultation, CP confirmed that the organisation was a consultee. The Chairs of the Alliance House organisations and JB had met on 2 February 2016 to discuss the consultation and what the organisations' response should be. It had been agreed to submit a joint response to the consultation, including the likely impact for the beneficiaries of the individual organisations if the proposals were implemented.

## **FINANCE**

### **278.16 Current financial position**

The board noted the analysis of the financial position as at 31 December 2015.

JB reported that that spend overall, and by individual country, was being kept within budget, including in Northern Ireland, where the level of funding presented some challenges. If expenditure at the year end was in line with the forecast as at the end of month nine, this would be in the region of £2.2 million, compared with £2.023 million at the end of 2014/15.

### **279.16 Risk Register**

The board received the latest version of the risk register. This had been updated to reflect the risks that the Department of Health consultation posed in relation to staff retention and the organisation's ability to maintain the same level of support to beneficiaries during any period of transition.

**280.16 Chief Executive's Report**

The CEO had no further items to report which had not been covered elsewhere on the agenda.

**281.16 Any other notified business**

There was no other notified business.

**282.16 Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 11 May 2016