

CAXTON TRUSTEE LTD

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors of Caxton Trustee Limited held on Wednesday 11 November 2015 at Alliance House, 12 Caxton Street, London SW1H 0QS

PRESENT:	Chris Pond	(Chair)
	Siobhain Butterworth	
	Margaret Kennedy	(via telephone)
	Vijay Sharma	
	David Atterbury Thomas	
IN ATTENDANCE:	Jan Barlow	(Chief Executive)
	June Omadoye	(Office Manager/PA)
	Victoria Prouse	(Director of Operations)

PART A

254.15 Welcome and apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Richard Finlay and Howard Thomas.

255.15 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 August 2015 were agreed as a correct record.

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

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

257.15 Chair's statement

CP welcomed everyone to the meeting. As it was his first board meeting as Chair, he asked everyone to introduce themselves. CP advised that he considered his role to be ensuring that the board worked effectively and that individual board members could make a contribution. He also stressed the importance of maintaining the distinction between the role of the board and the role of the Chief Executive and her team.

CP advised the board that Alan Rook had resigned with effect from 9 November 2015 due to pressure of work. CP would write to AR on behalf of the board thanking him for his contribution whilst a member of the Caxton board.

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT ISSUES

258.15 National Welfare Committee

- i) The board received the minutes of the NWC meeting held on 12 August 2015, which MK had chaired.

- ii) The board received the minutes of the NWC meeting held on 10 October 2015, which MK had also chaired.
- iii) The board received the management information pack. This included the consolidated grant schedules, beneficiary numbers, grant turnaround times, and appeals to the end of October 2015. With regard to beneficiary numbers, it was noted that there was a 6% increase in total numbers for the year to 31 October 2015. There had been a higher than expected increase in numbers in September; this was believed to be due to press coverage relating to winter fuel payments. With regard to the consolidated grant schedules, these now showed comparative figures from the previous year. The decrease in NWC grants and increase in Office grants compared with 2014/15 reflected the continued delegation of decision-making on routine grants to the Office, where appropriate, to enable decisions to be made as quickly as possible and without reference to the Committee.
- iv) MK, who had chaired the last two meetings of the NWC, updated the board. She felt that the current balance between NWC grants and Office grants was right, with the Committee focussing on the more complex cases. MK congratulated the team for all their hard work, and for maintaining the fast turnaround times, in spite of beneficiary numbers being so much higher than they had been 12 months ago. MK highlighted the fact that turnaround times for NWC grants was currently 9 days, with the emergency procedure still in place to ensure that urgent requests could be dealt with by the Committee in between meetings.

259.15

Political developments

The board received a report summarising the latest political developments.

With regard to the work of the Scottish Review Group, it was noted that the Alliance House organisations had assisted by sending out the Group's survey and covering letter to Scottish beneficiaries/registrants. It was noted that a number of regional meetings had also been held in Scotland, and that the Group was due to make recommendations to the Scottish Cabinet Secretary, Shona Robison, in November.

It was noted that in September 2015, the Scottish Cabinet Secretary had written to Jane Ellison MP, suggesting that some of the £25 million announced by David Cameron in his March statement to the House of Commons should be distributed by way of an increased winter fuel payment to Caxton beneficiaries. JB advised that, as yet, there was no further information as to how DH intended to proceed.

JB reported that there had been a 30-minute Westminster Hall debate on contaminated blood on 9 September 2015, brought by Margaret Ritchie MP, SDLP MP for South Down. The key points the Minister had made in her response had been:

- A Department of Health consultation would take place before the end of the year
- The provision of future financial assistance was being considered in the context of the Spending Review and in a way that was sustainable for the future

- The Government was hoping for a UK-wide approach along with the devolved administrations
- The £25 million announced in March, if not spent in 2015/16, would be carried forward into 2016/17
- As liability had not been established in the majority of cases, payments could not be discussed in terms of compensation, particularly on the scale that some campaigners were envisaging

JB also reported that she and the Chairs of the five Alliance House organisations had met with the Minister on 21 October 2015, at which the proposal to launch a consultation before the end of the financial year had been discussed.

FINANCE

260.15 Current financial position

i) Northern Ireland allocation, 2015/16 budget and winter fuel payment

The board was reminded that Caxton's annual allocation was made up of individual allocations from the four UK countries, based on the respective percentage of total beneficiaries from each country. It was noted that an adjustment for 2015/16 in respect of the Northern Ireland allocation had resulted in a reduction of approximately £20,000. As a result of this, and greater demand from beneficiaries in Northern Ireland for the year to date, projections had shown that spend would exceed the Northern Ireland allocation. JB had therefore raised this with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in Northern Ireland and had been successful in securing additional funds for Northern Ireland for 2015/16.

Because of the increase in the allocation, it had been necessary to re-work the 2015/16 budget, which the board received and approved after discussion. The increase in the Northern Ireland allocation also enabled the board to approve a £500 winter fuel payment for 2015/16 for all primary beneficiary and bereaved spouse/partner households across the UK. JB advised that spend against the Northern Ireland allocation would continue to be monitored closely.

ii) Current financial position

The board noted the analysis of the financial position as at 30 September 2015.

261.15 Risk Register

The board received the latest version of the risk register. This had been updated to reflect the ongoing uncertainty about the future of the Alliance House organisations in the context of the proposed DH consultation, and to reflect recent changes in staffing.

SB raised the issue of data protection. It was agreed that JB would send her a copy of the report which had been given to the board in February.

262.15 Chief Executive's Report

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

263.15 Any other notified business

There was no other notified business.

264.15 Date of next meeting

The dates for meetings in 2016 were agreed as follows:

Wednesday 10 February 2016

Wednesday 11 May 2016

Wednesday 10 August 2016

Wednesday 9 November 2016