

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE DIRECTORS OF YOAKLEY CARE TRUSTEE LTD AND
YOAKLEY CARE SHARE LTD
AS TRUSTEES OF MICHAEL YOAKLEY'S CHARITY**

Thursday 22nd June 2023 at 7pm At Yoakley House

Present: Peter Hermitage (Chairman); Beverley Aitken; David Astley
Michael Baker; Gill Durrant; Blair Gulland; David Meakin; Julie Miller

In Attendance: Julie Wickenden (Executive Manager); Tracy Huntley (Care Manager);
Tamara McGregor (Deputy Charity Manager)

25/23 STATEMENT OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The following statement was read by the Chairman:

Before the meeting begins, directors of the two companies that act as trustees of the Charity are asked whether there is any item on the agenda in which they have either a personal or pecuniary interest.

If it appears during the course of the meeting that there is any conflict of interest, then the member is asked to then and there declare that interest.

The Chairperson of the meeting will invite consideration of whether any conflict of interest is so great as to preclude the director from further involvement in debate and/ or decision making on the matter where interests conflict.

Blair Gulland is a Board member of the Almshouse Consortium Ltd. He has recently retired as Consultant at Gullands solicitors.

David Astley is Chair of the South East Coast Ambulance Trust and a Trustee Director of NHS Providers, the body representing NHS Trusts to Government.

26/23 THE MINUTES of the Board meeting held on 20th April 2023 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

27/23 MATTERS ARISING (not covered in subsequent minutes)

1. **Invitation to Anthony Curwen from Quex Estates to visit Yoakley.** Mr Curwen is invited to the Garden Party.
2. **Intensive Housing Management Scheme.** Julie Wickenden needs to review the implications further. JW
3. **Invitation to Colin Carmichael (Acting Chief Executive of Thanet District Council) to visit Yoakley.** Peter is coordinating a visit date with Mr Carmichael. PH
4. **Increased Digital Care Planning.** Tracy has identified a digital medication distribution system and staff rota system. Julie Wickenden needs to review the cost implications. JW
5. **Invite Helen Whately MP, Minister of State for Social Care, to Yoakley.** Blair contacted Mrs Whately's office to raise a couple of issues and after some time received a response by email which gave no commitment to addressing the issues raised. Mrs Whately is invited to the Garden Party.
6. **Contact Sir Roger Gale MP to raise issue of underfunding by KCC and high cost of CQC fees.** Julie Wickenden had written to Sir Roger on these matters. It is likely that this letter will be passed on to Helen Whately. No response has yet been received.
7. **Collective Bid for Funding from the Decarbonisation Fund.** There have been no meetings of the East Kent Almshouse Consortium for Peter to attend recently and Blair was unable to attend the last National Almshouse Association meeting. BG
PH
8. **Green Agenda Energy Audit.** The energy audit was carried out on 10th and 11th May by MNE Building Services Ltd. During the process they identified an issue with the Yoakley electricity meter that means we may be being overcharged so a week-long test of this meter has since been carried out. When these readings have been analysed their full report should be issued.
9. **Health & Safety Action Plan.** Tracy has updated the Health & Safety Accident recording to include the resident's age and provide further detail of the outcome of each incident.
10. **Funding from Homes England by CAF Bank.** Julie Wickenden had looked into this and it appears that this funding is in the form of loans. The Charity would qualify should they embark on a building project.
11. **List of Residents Names.** Julie Wickenden had added a list of residents' names for Board members to access to the secure passworded area of the website entitled "Resources".

28/23 CARE MANAGER'S REPORTS

Tracy added the following updates to her recent reports:

1. **Care Quality Commission.** On Tuesday 13th June, Julie Wickenden had taken a call from a CQC Inspector to arrange an online review meeting with her and Tracy on Monday 19th June. It was explained that this is part of the pilot of new ways of working by the CQC whereby only homes that have been reported as failing or having serious issues will be physically inspected. The review would not affect the Charity's current rating which remains GOOD.

Part of the review had involved asking residents and relatives to complete an online survey of how well Yoakley is doing; this was totally impractical for our residents to do unaided although Tracy did manage to assist 4 in completing it. Julie had circulated the survey link to all next of kin. By the time of the review meeting the Inspector received 15 responses which was commendable given they had less than 1 week to respond. The Inspector was not interested in the ongoing Quality Assurance reporting that Tracy already does and was not aware until pointed out to her that Julie had recently spent the best part of 3 weeks completing a Pre-Inspection Report (PIR) requested by another department of the CQC. Julie and Tracy felt the online meeting had gone very well and the Inspector was pleased with all their responses. Of the 15 surveys, 14 were glowing with 1 anonymously mentioning some issues. The Inspector subsequently sent a 2 page review report (Appendix 1) which raised no concerns. She said that nothing further was required but that we should expect an annual PIR and online review.

The next day, Tracy had received a phone call from another CQC Inspector questioning her about the 1 negative review. She was not permitted to see this review but were told it anonymously raised some issues about a resident spending long hours in her room and not being able to go into the garden as often as she wanted to. These issues have not been directly raised with management in the home. Without knowing who had written it, it was hard to respond to; it would appear to be from the relative of a lady who has dementia and often says things to her family which are not true. The Inspector said that had a name been included this would have constituted an Adult Protection alert.

Management and the Board agreed that the new system is wholly unsatisfactory. Inspectors cannot get the feel of the home or see the excellent work that is being done by the management and staff through a video screen. It is unfair that the fees being paid to CQC by good providers are being spent on dealing with badly performing providers. Peter had asked if he could join the meeting but was told that his presence was not required. Julie and Tracy had relayed their dissatisfaction with the new system which renders the rating system useless; this was mentioned on the Inspector's report.

The Board praised management for the excellent work they have done especially during the pandemic and advised that the Charity continue to promote the great work that it does.

2. **Kent Care Conference.** Julie Wickenden and Tracy had attended the annual Kent Care Conference at Dreamland on 21st June. Delegates had been asked as they arrived to show with stickers on a wall chart how they felt KCC was performing in relation to its stated goals in the Adult Social Care Strategy 2022-27. The results showed overwhelmingly how disappointed the majority of the 400+ attendees were with KCC. Ignoring this, the entire conference proceeded to focus on group work to understand the feelings of people requiring care especially from the disabled and LGBTQI communities. Empathy with people is something those working in care tend to have plenty of. It is the overwhelming bureaucracy, policy issues, protocols, endless reporting and lack of funding which prevents providers from focussing on delivering the care they want to. This is what delegates had hoped would be addressed by KCC. Overall it had been a disappointing day.
3. **Staff Mediation.** Gill Durrant had conducted a mediation between 2 members of care staff at the request of management. An action plan had been drawn up agreed by both parties and a follow-up meeting is planned for 6 weeks' time.

29/23 EXECUTIVE MANAGER'S REPORTS

1. **New Rents:**

Shop 2 – the renewed lease has at last been signed by Mr Binder. It now only has 2 years to run and will need to be renegotiated in 2025 but he had called to apologise for his tardiness in dealing with the current lease.

Shop 6 – the situation with damp in the shop front is ongoing. An independent survey has been carried out but there has been no response yet from the Charity's insurer.

Offices above 6 – Heads of terms have been agreed with “T3 Tutoring” and a new 6 year lease is being drawn up by the Charity’s solicitors. The tenant wishes to be in as soon as possible.

This means that all the units will be under lease and occupied by the end of the Summer.

2. **3 Drapers Close.** The purchase of this property completes on 23rd June 2023. It has been funded from the Charity’s deposit account funds, the majority of which were from the Michael Dickens legacy. Tenants have already been identified from recent interviews.
3. **Quinquennial Report.** Julie Wickenden has not yet had the chance to review the report in detail but an initial read through does not show any repair works which we were not aware of e.g. tiles missing from roofs, guttering to be replaced, rotten doors and windows. Peter highlighted that there will be some significant bills coming in order for the necessary work to be completed. Blair also highlighted the onus on landlords to work towards improved EPC ratings. It is hoped that some funding towards renovations will be obtained as part of the Green Agenda project.
4. **Renewal of Utility Contracts.** The Charity is currently under fixed rate contracts for gas and electricity with SSE until October 2024. These were negotiated by brokers Utility Aid as part of a consortium of charities and began in 2020 before the current energy crisis so have saved the charity a significant amount of money. Julie Wickenden had circulated details of a renewal offer for fixed price contracts with SSE to apply from October 2024 to October 2026. The rates are significantly higher than those on the current contracts but are low compared to current market rates:

Gas 6.7p per unit	(currently paying 2.37p per unit)	Increase of 185%
Electricity 26p per unit	(currently paying 14.89p per unit)	Increase of 80%

UK Domestic Price Average Increases

Gas	3p per unit Oct 2020	10p per unit Jun 2023
Electricity	17.2p per unit Oct 2020	33p per unit Jun 2023

It was agreed that fixing rates seems profitable as prices are unlikely to come down significantly. This arrangement gives us 3 years to work on the renewable energy plan which should produce long-term cost savings.

Julie is also looking into a 5 year fixed rate water billing plan. She will circulate this to Board members for agreement in the next few days.

JW

30/23 FINANCE

1. Charles Stanley Investments

Katie Presland had sent a report of issues affecting financial markets and portfolio updates to the end of May 2023 (Appendix 2). Capital values and annual income predictions on both funds remained similar to the figures at the end of March.

Main Fund	Capital Value £1.95 million	Income £70K
Emergency Repair Fund	Capital Value £349K	Income £11K

UK inflation remains high and interest rates had been raised today to 5% to try to control it.

2. Budget Update 2023.

Julie had circulated a budget update to 31st May 2023 (Appendix 3) showing an annual surplus of £20K. Adjustments to the January 23 budget projections had been made in the following areas:

Income:

Training annexe hire and almshouse housekeeping are unlikely to reach their intended levels. Both are slow to recover since the services all but closed during the pandemic. Income from rented properties will increase now all units are let.

Expenditure:

Expenditure on equipment is lower than expected but expenditure on property repairs is higher so £15K has been switched over.

There is a spike in professional fees due to several lease renewals occurring at the same time as well as the purchase of 3 Drapers Close. This will not happen every year.

The ongoing management of the Charity’s finances is going to be tough as prices continue to rise, not least in the area of staffing.

31/23 STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLANNING

The draft Strategic Plan 2023- 26 (Appendix 4) had been circulated to the Board. Peter went through each section of it using a presentation (Appendix 5) and inviting comment from Board members.

Significant discussion ensued with the following suggested amendments:

- Care Management. Highlight that the Board regularly inspect care procedures.
- Add that almshouse “care” responsibilities have limitations and boundaries
- Adherence to The Charity Governance Code should be listed. Blair had recently attended a webinar with Nick Hobden of Thomas Snell Passmore, specialist charity solicitors, who offer a free review of a charity’s governance. Julie Wickenden will look into this.
- Add staff welfare as an ongoing priority.
- Highlight management succession as a priority along with Board succession.
- Add the possibility of development of other land owned by the Charity.

JW

PH

Peter will make the necessary amendments to the plan for it to be signed off at the next meeting. The Risk Analysis will also be reviewed at the next meeting. Arrangement will also be made for nominated Board members to review the policies from time to time.

32/23 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. Nadra Ahmed (High Sheriff of Kent and Chair of the National Care Association) will be attending the Garden Party as will Frank Martin (Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Kent and former Chief Executive of Hornby Hobbies).
2. Blair reported that the new Royal British Legion home at Maidstone now has an agreement with the local hospital to provide step down beds for which they receive much higher rates of income than KCC funded beds. Yoakley has offered this in the past but has no capacity at the moment to offer such a deal.
3. Alan Clark (former Trustee Director) is completing research into land owned by the Charity through the years. This will be helpful in ascertaining if there are any small pieces available to be sold for development.
4. The Charity currently has 7 residents over the age of 100. The Board praised management and staff for the excellent care of residents that makes this possible. This is an exceptional achievement that deserves promotion.
5. The Charity’s excellent record during the pandemic also deserves to be promoted, with Covid 19 being listed as a possible cause of death for only 2 residents both of whom had multiple other health issues.
6. Tracy has agreements with 2 staffing agencies whereby we give practical experience to their new staff in return for cheap rates when we need agency support staff.

33/23 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS:

Board Meetings for 2023 (All to be held at 7pm):

Thursday 21st September
Thursday 23rd November

Garden Party

(Free for residents + 1 guest + local dignitaries) Saturday 8th July 3pm – 5pm

Open Garden

(Ticketed event hosted by League of Friends for LoF benefit)

Sunday 16th July 2pm – 4.30pm

Christmas Fair

(Fundraiser hosted by League of Friends)

Saturday 2nd December 2.30 pm – 4pm

Signed

Dated