

## **HOOPLE BOARD**

Minutes of a meeting of the BOARD OF DIRECTORS of HOOPLE LTD held in Training room 3, Nelson Building, Hereford on Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at 9.00am

### **Board Members present:**

Cllr David Hitchiner (DH)	Chairman and Non-Executive Director (Herefordshire Council)
Andrew Cottom (AC)	Non-Executive Director – Wye Valley NHS Trust
Andrew Lovegrove (AL)	Non-Executive Director – Herefordshire Council

### **Hoople Officers Supporting the Board:**

Audrey Clements (AEC)	Chief Operating Officer
Stephen Weller (SW)	Head of Commercial Development
Mark Aldsworth (MA)	Head of Buildings Operations
Simon Mortimore (SM)	Head of IT
Tracey Sampson (TS)	Director of HR & OD
Kerry Lawrence (KL)	Company Secretary Support / Minute Taker

### **Invited:**

David Warden (DW)	Associate Director of IM&T- Wye Valley NHS Trust (via video link)
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## **1. Apologies**

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Andrew McLean.
- 2.1 Daley Jones (DJ) was welcomed to the meeting recently having been appointed as Head of Training and Education on a secondment basis to allow the Head of Commercial Development, Stephen Weller to focus on the development of care services.

## **2. Declarations of Interest**

- 2.2 There were no new declaration of interest received.

## **3. Minutes, Action Sheet and Matters Arising**

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2022 were agreed as an accurate recording.

### ***Matters Arising***

- 3.2 In response to a query raised by a board member in relation to the Education Centre Project, SW advised that a Campaign Director was being recruited through Hoople resourcing, however a business case was still awaited to understand the financials. It was suggested that AC make contact with Jayne Clarke and Alan Dawson for an update.

**Action: AC**

### **Actions**

1/H - The board congratulated the team following the result of the Ofsted inspection of the Foundation Learning Programme, achieving 'good' in all aspects.

2/H – AEC advised that the building works were going ahead as planned, however to relieve some of the pressure, there were plans for four extra beds to be made available at the beginning of January, timings subject to change dependant on the contractors work plan.

AEC reported that there had been some success with the recruitment drive initiative receiving 25 care applications during the last week, believed to be aided by offering greater flexibility in terms of types of roles and different shift patterns.

## **4. Finance and Business Update**

4.1 The board noted the finance and business update report including the 2022/23 outturn position, the progress to date made by the business and key issues and risks.

4.2 AEC shared that the recent virtual staff events had been well received and as part of the event staff were given the opportunity to comment how they felt going into next year, there were mixed emotions with some feeling excited and enthusiastic, whilst others felt worried and concerned. It is hoped that the results of the Employee Opinion Survey would pick up such concerns and an action plan would be devised, and shared.

4.3 AEC acknowledged demand across all services continues to be high and the pressure on the revenues and benefits team having made over 69,000 payments for the Energy Rebate Scheme, whilst doing the day job. The board expressed their thanks to the team.

4.4 It was agreed that the Chair to provide a Christmas message to be shared with all staff.

**Action: DH**

4.5 In response to a question, SM detailed the rigorous testing process undertaken prior to launching the Business World 10.7 upgrade and the support available when launched. The 10.7 version is principally around changes to tax codes and not expecting any significant changes to the interface.

4.6 Following a question regarding IT staffing levels, SM explained that the desktop support team had been working at reduced capacity at the time the team supported the recent in-person council meeting due to staff absences and vacancies within the team, however acknowledged that the desktop team were one element of the wider IT support team which were functioning at 80% capacity. SM highlighted that he had raised with the IT client in Herefordshire Council and WVT that there was a potential risk to service delivery due to recruitment difficulties, particularly in the desktop team, however there had been no material impact to services at this stage due to some temporary measures taken internally to manage the situation.

- 4.7 SM added since the last board meeting and due to the ongoing recruitment and retention issues, particularly in the desktops team having had three vacancies, it was agreed to temporary uplift the market forces supplement. Since this change has taken effect, two of the three vacancies have been filled through a standard recruitment process. With this in mind, a more permanent solution is being sought alongside a review of other elements of the terms of conditions to support the recruitment and retention of staff.
- 4.8 DW stated that the out of hours cover may need to be downgraded as the stage it was at crisis point has now passed and confirmed there was no adverse effects.
- 4.9 SM noted in addition to the report, there were conversations regarding potential projects for the remainder of the financial year with many grant applications across Hoople's customer base in the pipeline but not yet confirmed. SM also reported SLA discussions for 23/24 had begun.
- 4.10 The board congratulated DJ on his recent promotion.
- 4.11 SW reported that a care management session was recently held to bring the four very different services together, with a focus on Hoople's values and culture.
- 4.12 SW reported as previously advised, Hillside is currently undergoing a refurbishment and Hoople continue to work with WVT in terms of capacity.
- 4.13 SW acknowledged that Hoople continue to work in partnership with key stakeholders to support care recruitment with various campaigns. Hoople are also running a health and social boot camp with Herefordshire and Ludlow College and working closely with WVT to give individuals aged 19 plus, who are out of work, an opportunity to attend a two week programme to study towards a care certificate with the potential to be recruited into a vacant post if they are successful at interview at the end of the programme.
- 4.14 AC advised there had been a query raised by WVT in relation to the reporting of information and whether the right data and assurances were being provided. It was agreed AEC would discuss further with Jane Ives.  
**Action: AEC**
- 4.15 DH asked that the care programme be updated to provide clarity what the service provides and related assurance matters in six months' time. SW suggested a walk around Hillside might be beneficial.  
**Action: SW**
- 4.16 SW spoke of the reablement video Hoople put together to explain what the reablement service was. It was agreed to share the link to the video.  
**Action: SW**

- 4.17 MA highlighted that 50 procurements had been awarded this year and acknowledged the amount of work and detail that goes into each procurement. MA wished to record his thanks to the procurement manager and supporting team who played an instrumental part in the process, alongside keeping IT equipment full stocked.
- 4.18 MA reported that there had been a failure to deliver gas services due to capacity issues. An invitation to tender was published for reactive gas work and awarded, but unfortunately withdrew at the last stage. Local companies were contacted and agreed to provide best effort support in the short term whilst a longer term plan was being sought. A contract has now been negotiated with a small local firm who can provide the quality and assurance work required, and this arrangement is in place for six months from January whilst a recruitment process was taking place to replace Hoople's engineer due to resignation.
- 4.19 MA confirmed that Public Rights of Way service was going well and were in discussions with the council to review the budgets to explore if further capacity could be created and additional stock procured.

## **5. Budget Setting and Business Planning Process**

- 5.1 The board acknowledged the budget and business planning process.

## **6. Scheme of Delegation and Reservation**

- 6.1 The board agreed the changes to the Scheme of Delegation and Reservation for Shareholders approval.

**Action: KL**

## **7. Executive Management Team (EMT) Membership**

- 7.1 The board approved Daley Jones appointment to EMT membership as the Head of Training and Education on a 12 month secondment.

## **8. Public Sector Equality Duty / Gender Pay Gap**

- 8.1 The board noted the contents of the report and acknowledged Hoople's Gender Pay Gap's position.
- 8.2 After some discussion, it was agreed a report would be brought back to the next board meeting to address Hoople's Gender Pay Gap and identify the direction of travel.

**Action: TS**

- 8.3 A board member queried the percentage figure for median pay gap in hourly rate, whether this should be higher.

**Action: AEC to query with TS**

## **9. Internal Financial Audit reporting**

- 9.1 The board noted the contents of the report and acknowledged the processes of internal audit and financial controls.

## **10. Policy update**

- 10.1 The board noted the contents of the report.

## **11. Forward Plan**

- 11.1 The board approved the forward plan.

## **12. Any Other Business**

- 12.1 There was no other business raised.

## **13. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

- 13.1 Meeting scheduled for 23rd January 2023 is to be rescheduled due to absences and not being quorate.

**Action: KL**