



## **HOOPLE BOARD**

Minutes of a meeting of the BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF HOOPLE LTD held via Microsoft Teams on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 1.30pm

### **Board Members present:**

Andrew Cottom (AC)	Chairman and Non-Executive Director, Wye Valley NHS Trust
Cllr David Hitchiner (DH)	Chairman and Non-Exec Director, Herefordshire Council
Richard Ball (RB)	Non-Executive Director, Herefordshire Council

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

Audrey Clements (AEC)	Chief Operating Officer
Stephen Weller (SW)	Head of Commercial Development
Simon Mortimore (SM)	Head of IT
Tracey Sampson (TS)	Assistant Director for People (joined during item 4)
Kerry Lawrence (KL)	Company Secretary Support / Minute Taker

### **Invited:**

David Warden (DW)	Associate Director IM&T, Wye Valley NHS Trust
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*The Chair requested a change in order to the agenda, item 3 minutes of the previous meeting and action sheet to be discussed at the end of the meeting to capture matters arising during the meeting.*

## **1. Apologies**

1.1 There were no apologies for absence.

## **2. Declarations of Interest**

2.1 There were no new declarations of interest.

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

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2020 were agreed as an accurate recording of the meeting.

3.2 Board noted the contents of the action sheet.



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

- 4.1 AEC reported a slightly improved outturn position and board noted the debt position.
- 4.2 AEC acknowledged that staff had begun to move to Nelson, however limited staff are using the building due to the latest lockdown with the majority of staff continuing to work from home.
- 4.3 The first meeting of the employee engagement group took place in January with representatives from all parts of the business. The group will discuss the vision and values, PRD's and communications.
- 4.4 In response to a question, AEC acknowledged the wellbeing and mental health of staff was a concern particularly given the third lockdown. It is always featured high on the agenda at management team meetings, and managers are encouraged to keep the lines of communication open, have regular informal team catch-ups and escalate any concerns they may have. In addition, the training team are in the process of running some mental health awareness sessions for staff and line managers which were being well attended and initial feedback has been extremely positive.
- 4.5 TS advised priority covid vaccinations had been secured for front line staff within Hoople.
- 4.6 In response to a question, TS confirmed side from Hoople cares teams, there had been no evidence of increased sickness and no sickness has been categorised under mental health.
- 4.7 SW highlighted that an interim Ofsted inspection took place remotely in December and the feedback had been positive. A monitoring visit is expected to take place this year and a full inspection in another two years.
- 4.8 SW confirmed meetings with teams regarding the Kickstart scheme had taken place and planning was progressing well.

#### **5. Draft Business Plan and Draft Budget 2021/22**

- 5.1 AEC presented a revised and more streamlined business plan with a strategic focus on the direction of Hoople and sought board's views.
- 5.2 RB suggested expanding the list of areas of developments more widely.  
**Action: AEC**
- 5.3 AC suggested including some strategic KPI's to measure how well the company is performance against its key business objectives.  
**Action: AEC**



5.4 AC suggested there were some language issues needed to be reviewed.

**Action: AEC**

5.5 RB suggested consulting with the Shareholders on the business plan, AEC would support this arrangement in the future with plans to hold regular Shareholder events.

5.6 A ratified business plan would be brought back to the next board meeting in March.

5.7 AEC commented that year end planning had begun with Bishop Fleming and expected there to be a focus on demonstrating going concern of the company.

5.8 There was a discussion around investment opportunities and engaging with Shareholders over projects that could benefit both NHS and the council.

## **6. Employee Engagement**

6.1 AEC set out the employee engagement strategy used as the basis of the employee engagement group consisting of representatives from each area of the business.

6.2 As part of the strategy, also looking to build in a training package for staff outside of professional qualification arena and ideas how the idea could be taken forward was explained.

6.3 AEC confirmed an Employee Opinion Survey is planned to take place in February.

## **7. Nelson Move**

7.1 AEC acknowledged that some staff had relocated to Nelson with IT and Training set to follow in the coming months. AEC stated that consideration would need to be given whether Nelson building was a long term solution for Hoople in conjunction with options around leasing or purchasing arrangements.

7.2 The board felt location was imperative to maintain the strong and developing relationships with shareholders.

## **8. Armed Forces Covenant**

8.1 AEC presented the Armed Forces Covenant Hoople would like to adopt to recognise the support it can provide to the Armed Forces community from an employment perspective.

8.2 Board members were happy for the covenant to be signed.



## 9. Forward Plan

- 9.1 It was agreed to add a virtual Shareholder meeting to the forward plan for May/ June, and an 'in person' event in September.

**Action: KL**

## 10. Any Other Business

### ➤ Communication and Announcements

- 10.1 It was agreed to communicate the appointment of the Chair with staff.

**Action: AEC/KL**