

St Raphael's Hospice
 Minutes of a Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Held at 13:30 on 23rd July 2025
at St Raphael's Hospice

Trustees:

Norman McWhinney (NM) (<i>Chair</i>)	Alan Cogbill (AC) (<i>Vice-Chair</i>)	Paul Holmes (PH - virtual)
Sister Veronica Hagen (Sr VH)	Grahame Darnell (GD – apologies)	Steve Chambers (SC)
Carrie Chill (CC - apologies)	Manjit Lall (ML)	Bernard Marley (BM)
Sister Kathleen O'Reilly (Sr K'OR)		

In attendance:

Rebecca Trower (RT) (<i>Joint CEO</i>)	Nick Stevens (NS) (<i>Joint CEO</i>)	Kate Billingham Wilson (KBW) (<i>Director of Fundraising & Communications</i>)
Ed Cook (EC) (<i>Advisor to DoC & Finance Committee member</i>)	John Groom (JG) (<i>Director of IT & Estates</i>)	Sara Jane Harris (SJH) (<i>Director of Income Generation - apologies</i>)
Natalie Page (NP) (<i>Head of People Services</i>)	Lucy Ribaldo (LR) (<i>Head of Supporter Care – items 1-3</i>)	Alex Rudkin (<i>Director of Quality & Governance - apologies</i>)
Gaby Tamura-Rose (GT-R) (<i>Consultant – apologies from Naomi Collins, Lead Consultant</i>)	Anna Machin (AM) (<i>Governance</i>)	Karen Monaghan (KM) (<i>Governance – observing</i>)

Agenda item	Action	Responsible	Timeline	Ref.
3. Presentation on Supporter Care	Share Trustees' thanks to the Supporter Care team	Lucy Ribaldo	July 2025	23.07.25/01
5.2. Strategy Update	Consider producing two-side summary of Strategy	Rebecca Trower, Nick Stevens	July/ August 2025	23.07.25/02
6.1. 2024/25 year-end position	Upload narrative statements to portal for Trustee review	Anna Machin	July 2025	23.07.25/03
6.3. Going concern paper and fraud questionnaire	Consider finance internal audit	Nick Stevens, Neena Vadgama	By October 2025 meeting cycle	23.07.25/04
7.4. 15 th July Finance Committee Update	Consider benchmarking Sarasin performance	Finance Committee	October 2025 Board meeting	23.07.25/05
8. Hospice Risk Register	Update risk register and discuss before next meeting	Nick Stevens, Bernard Marley	By October 2025	23.07.25/06

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Lucy Ribaudo and Karen Monaghan. Apologies were received and accepted from Carrie Chill and Grahame Darnell, and Naomi Collins, Sara Jane Harris and Alex Rudkin did not attend due to being on leave.

2. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest in relation to items on the meeting agenda.

3. Presentation on Supporter Care

Lucy Ribaudo shared an update with Trustees on the role, and size, of the Supporter Care team, and the range of activities to support the Fundraising and Retail teams. The team size was reduced as part of the restructure – with strong progress being made in income generation activities, Supporter Care colleagues are now responding to and processing increasing numbers of donations from a range of sources of income, but are also being equipped with new systems that enable time on manual processes to be reduced.

Information was shared on the internal systems in place that are used by the team, including those that have been able to enhance Gift Aid donations (with claims increasing from £60k to £127k this past year), and also support compliance with data protection regulations. The review of the newly launched Consent Module of the NXT system has helped to automate acknowledgements whilst supporting stewardship. It has also sped up the monthly reconciliation process, alongside use of a new coding structure. The reports that are drawn out from the system equip the fundraising team to be able to analyse progress on their income streams, and looking ahead the focus is on upskilling across the teams. The online donations and regular giving processes and providers will also be reviewed. The team has also digitised legacy documentation and processes, with access available to Legacy Link, and Retail administration continues to be a focus. Supporter Care will also now lead the Lottery operations, which is being moved across from the Commercial team. Examples of strong practice from colleagues were shared including on Oral Gift Aid and database analysis, alongside a case study of donor development and stewardship led by Lucy Ribaudo that resulted in a number of donations and a significant legacy.

The Trustees commended the team for these achievements, in spite of the downscaling of the size of the team, and their proactivity in embracing the NXT system. This team's role in being a caring first point of contact for the Hospice is vital. Trustees' thanks would be shared to the Supporter Care team by Lucy Ribaudo.

4. Minutes of Board meeting held on 14th May 2025 & Actions List

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and approved as an accurate record of proceedings, and an update on actions was given – the Supporter Care presentation and Strategy update had both been scheduled for this meeting, and the Lottery Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) had been developed.

5. Executive Report

- ### **5.1. Finance Update and Fundraising Figures –** Nick Stevens updated first, sharing key points from the first quarter from a financial perspective. Momentum has been continued from the second half of 2024/25 into this financial year with a lower year-to-date shortfall compared to budget (-£137k compared to budget shortfall of -£558k before DoC drawdown, an improvement of £420k). The ICB core funding offer has been increased from 2.15% to 2.83%, which St Raphael's and other local Hospices have rejected again, based on the goal of securing a slightly higher amount. Costs are on budget for the year-to-date, and £238k has been confirmed to date in legacies, of which a portion may be adjusted to be included into the 2024/25 accounts. Major donor income has also increased significantly. Costs for fundraising are below budget by £60k.

The Cash Forecast graph has been updated, and is dependent on targets being met, but projections currently sit within the desired reserves range. The Database Manager had brought together an analysis of comparative year-on-year figures, with growth in Individual Giving, Corporate, and Challenges including other areas which is encouraging. The team are proud of the Brand Refresh which has been well received internally and is gradually being rolled out.

- 5.2. Retail** - The Retail environment has been more challenging in the first quarter, including due to the heatwave which reduced footfall, but Retail and Lottery income and expenditure is on track overall. A new potential leaseholder has been identified for the Wimbledon Park shop lease - the landlord is prepared to offer new tenants a new lease, provided that St Raphael's remains responsible for the tenancy, should they leave before the St Raphael's lease expires in October 2027. The team are preparing the transition of Lottery activity to Fundraising and Communications which will help alignment with individual giving and Supporter Care activity, and information was shared on the allocation of this budget across newly created roles.
- 5.3. ICB discussions** - Becca Trower updated Trustees on the recent meeting with Integrated Care Board (ICB) Commissioners, that had focused on areas including the Continuing Healthcare Funding, and work with Sutton Hub and the Merton End of Life Team (with a goal in future to have a single point of referral). The newly appointed South West London (SWL) ICB CEO will visit St Raphael's September with other local Hospices. The ICB CFO is advocating internally for funding, but it is recognised how much the ICB's own team has been reduced.
- A further live update on outcomes from a meeting held that day with the ICB to discuss potential funding sources, with it likely that the funding amount will now be confirmed and formalised in September – and that this may include funding for the Continuing Health Care (CHC) tariffs.
- 5.4. HR priorities** - Becca Trower shared progress from the HR team, who have been working hard to develop documentation, improve systems (including the Applicant Tracking System [ATS] and Volunteer Database), and move payroll in-house. Significant thought was given to the Consultant post recruitment, which has been offered to a candidate who can join from August 2026. The Board noted the Starters and Leavers information.
- 5.5. Estates and resources** - John Groom updated on the main areas of spend for the Hospice UK funding including completion of the tender for the website overhaul and changes and enhancements to internal rooms. There has been some oversight from the government on the criteria and re-assertion of the patient-facing focus of this funding stream, which can include digital transformation. In terms of sector-facing activity, the team will present at the Hospice UK Conference including on the cyber attack.
- 5.6. Patient care** - Waiting lists are slightly longer than usual, due to some complex admissions and some need for joint patient visits. The team continue to work hard to support patients. Two key resignations have been received in the Community team, and information on starters and leavers in the Clinical, Community and Medical teams was shared. The Wellbeing team continue to offer a range of activity.
- 5.7. Board discussion** - The Board asked about the income lines of greatest focus or development. Kate Billingham Wilson shared that the strategy is being revisited for corporate giving – although there is a more challenging climate for this, it could be improved. There is also interplay between budget lines that the team monitors - for example, bringing in more regular givers is positive for sustainable income, but some donors then do not give to Appeals. Trustees asked about whether the upturn in giving was still drawing from the local and national profile-raising on the Hospice's financial position in summer/ autumn 2024. It was confirmed that there has been sustained increased attention and support, but this the improvement in fundraised income is also reinforced by the excellent day-to-day care, and guided by the overall fundraising strategy and work being delivered by the team.

The Board asked to hear further information on capacity within the Consultant team and medical colleagues, particularly with it in mind that the Consultant would only join next summer. Gaby Tamura-Rose confirmed that the Consultant team had held detailed discussions, and felt the individual who would be joining was the strongest fit for the team, and also had a proven track record as they had previously worked at the Hospice. The incoming Registrar's capacity will be highly valued – and capacity will be continually monitored. The stretch on hospitals and external services also has a knock-on to the Hospice. Gaby Tamura-Rose will take on the Lead Consultant role in September, and the insights gained by the team who participate in CQC inspections are valuable in bringing practice back to the Hospice. The Board expressed appreciation for the clinical and medical team's work.

- 5.8. Strategy Update** – Becca Trower shared the Strategy summary that has been developed with the new Hospice branding – it outlines the main priorities, and initiatives that will be delivered to achieve them. It will be shared with stakeholders and can also be given to corporate donors, in the absence of a branded Annual Report. This will make it possible to report back on progress each year. A two-side summary could also be produced, which would also sit alongside the Quality Account.

6. Finance update

- 6.1. 2024/25 year-end position and development of annual accounts** – the paper was taken as read – with headline year-to-date financials haven been covered in the Joint CEO and Executive Report item. Key points were shared by Nick Stevens on the draft annual report and accounts. The narrative statements were ready for input and would be uploaded on the portal for Board review – the Trustees' Report recognises the challenging year with the difficult decision to make the restructure, alongside the gains made in fundraising. The Report summarises progress in the year on the three main priorities agreed at the start of the year. Provision is included in the financial statements for the changes to the Wimbledon Park shop lease. The balance sheet differentiates between restricted, designated and free reserves. The reserves levels sit at c. 4 months on this snapshot view at year-end which is within the Trustees' Reserves Policy of 3-6 months.

The goals for the upcoming year are then set out, including information on the use of Hospice UK funding and plans to bring Lottery in-house. Information is then included on sustainability, payment practices, key risks (updated to reflect the Hospice's current position), and workforce figures. More data can be added on these latter topics in future iterations of the annual report, with the Data & Insights Manager now in post.

- 6.2. External audit update** - In response to questions, an update was provided on the audit timetable, with Crowe LLP taking a proactive approach and delivering review of information in advance of the on-site visit. The team are content that the processes are running smoothly.
- 6.3. Going concern paper & fraud questionnaire** - Nick Stevens also presented the Going Concern paper and Fraud Questionnaire that had been tabled at the Finance & Resources Committee. The reserves projections and sensitivity analysis were presented – including the scenarios where costs increase, income reduces, of there is a 'legacy drought'. The relevant window for the 'going concern' period applicable to this set of accounts runs to October 2026, which is one year after the anticipated date of signing the accounts. The graph makes clear the timeline for actions that might need to be taken in autumn 2026 if further financial difficulty surfaces, and the Letter of Comfort from the Daughters of the Cross (DoC) outlines potential further financial support that might be provided in future, or in event of closure.

Crowe also provided a comprehensive fraud questionnaire, that was reviewed with input and follow up from the Finance Committee. The Board shared reflections on the internal checks in place, and monitoring, alongside the role of Finance Committee oversight of management accounts and variance reporting. There are multiple approvals for procurement and HR-related spend which has been further tightened in the past six months. Staff on-boarding and checks also helps to mitigate against risks, alongside keeping strong culture and ethics. It was agreed that internal audit could be considered (in a comparable way to Gift Aid audits) for in-year checking and review.

7. Committee Chair updates including minutes

- 7.1. 8th July HR & Remuneration Committee** – Paul Holmes shared that the Investing in Volunteers programme of work will now take place in the autumn, and the HR team are delivering a range of activity under Natalie Page’s leadership. The Committee had been given a presentation on the Applicant Tracking System (ATS), which would support responsiveness to candidates and reduce team workload.
- 7.2. 11th July Clinical Quality and Governance Committee** – Norman McWhinney updated on Carrie Chill’s behalf and confirmed that this Committee had also received assurance on Consultant capacity over the upcoming year, alongside required qualifications and validation being in place for the incoming postholder. Francis Quinon (IPU Lead) had attended and shared valuable information on forward planning and use of planning systems such as Acuity Tools. The Prison Project is now moving ahead, and activities from teams including Wellbeing were covered. There were no complaints reported since the last meeting.
- 7.3. 15th July Income Generation & Communications Committee** – Alan Cogbill updated on Carrie Chill’s behalf, commenting on the strong presentation on the brand refresh, and recognition of the gains being made by the team in a tough climate to secure fundraising income. The team continue to search for a new Retail location, and deliver proactive income generation activity in a more challenging climate.
- 7.4. 15th July Finance & Resources Committee** – the main Finance update had been covered by Nick Stevens, and Alan Cogbill shared that the Committee had also looked at Sarasin fund performance which has improved in previous months, despite turbulence in the markets. The fund has hit the overall target of a 4% return, with appropriate consideration to diversification of funds. Sarasin operate the fund within ethical criteria set by the Hospice. The Committee may consider benchmarking fund performance within the next year.

8. Hospice Risk Register

Nick Stevens updated on the changes to the risk register and mitigations, and the team’s overall reflections on the approach to pre- and post-mitigation scoring, as well as the methodology to calibrate risks across departments. Trustees shared that the main focus needs to be on ensuring the scoring surfaces the top risks to be explored at Board and Executive level, and prompts thinking on mitigations. Certain risks may arise from a significant one-off incident, but others may appear over time. The fraud risk would be added back to the register, given potential financial and reputational impact. Trustees can also consider risk appetite. Bernard Marley could provide input in follow up.

9. Any Other Business & Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 22nd October 2025.

Signed:

Date:
