

St Raphael's Hospice
Minutes of a Meeting of the Income Generation & Communications Committee
Held at St Raphael's, London Road, Cheam, Sutton, SM3 9DX
At 11am on Tuesday 6th May 2025

Members: Grahame Darnell (GD – Committee Chair & Trustee)
 Alan Cogbill (AC – Trustee)
 Sr Veronica Hagen (VH – Trustee)
 Bernard Marley (BM – Trustee)

In attendance: Nick Stevens – (NS – joint CEO)
 Rebecca Trower (RT – joint CEO)
 Kate Billingham Wilson (KBW – Director of Fundraising & Communications)
 Sara Jane Harris (SJH – Commercial Director)
 Anna Machin – Governance (AM - virtual)

Actions arising

Agenda item	Action	Responsible	Timeline	Ref.
4. Fundraising and Communications update	Share visual documents from Hospice rebrand to Committee	Kate Billingham Wilson	Immediate	06.05.25/01
6. Income Generation update	Support in identifying potential relevant firms that support aspects of Lottery activity	Grahame Darnell	May 2025	06.05.25/02
7. Departmental risk register	Develop risk register	Kate Billingham Wilson, Sara Jane Harris, Bernard Marley	For July 2025 meeting	06.05.25/03
9. Terms of Reference	Update based on Committee feedback	Anna Machin	Immediate	06.05.25/04

1. Welcome, apologies for absence and declarations of interest

The Chair welcomed Committee members to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Sr Veronica Hagen, and the Committee discussed ways in which DoC are kept updated on Hospice and fundraising activities. The meeting was confirmed as quorate. There were no declarations of interest in relation to items on the agenda.

2. Review of minutes from 17th January 2025 Committee meeting

The minutes of the meeting were reviewed and approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

3. Actions List and update on matters arising

The actions list had been reviewed in full at the prior meeting, and actions from the prior meeting were complete, or on this meeting agenda.

4. Fundraising and Communications update

Kate Billingham Wilson shared the 2024/25 year-end figures, with the team having achieved a position of £589k above budget, exceeding targets across a range of budget lines aside from Community. Income for 2025/26 is already above target, including with the major donor figure already met. The brand refresh has been 'soft launched' and will be implemented further within the next fortnight, with visuals to be circulated to the Committee.

The Committee congratulated Kate and the team on the strong year-end position, and asked for the drivers behind the successful major donor work. It was confirmed that this is driven by the major donor strategy, with more stewardship and engagement, with more work now being done to segment major donors. There has also been more external awareness of stakeholders around funding needs within the Hospice sector.

The team received assurance that new colleagues had settled well within the team under the new structure, with good cross-working. The Committee also enquired about the link with the Clinical team, and Becca Trower confirmed that this continues to strengthen, for example to deliver a recent wedding for a patient.

The Committee also commented on the revitalised work to increase brand awareness in the community for example on local buses, outside the Hospice site, and with a proposal submitted to change the name of the local bus stop. Kate Billingham Wilson also updated that more focus is going into communications KPIs, including through social media and visibility in the community with support from an external company – and how this translates through into action.

The wider funding environment was also discussed, in relation to how messaging on the ongoing funding crisis affecting all hospices in the sector would be sustained. The focus is now on raising knowledge amongst supporters of the range of ways in which the Hospice's services are offered as a positive message (for example, PsychoSocial support). The team are cognisant that individual donor income was received during 2024/25 through the door-drop and supporter awareness of the restructure, that is not guaranteed to reach the same quantum this year, and therefore donor stewardship is key. More information was shared on relationship-building with Hospice UK, and messaging around the capital funding to the sector. Whilst it was recognised that the breadth of communications coverage would not be sustained to the level of autumn 2024, the Communications team can remain on the front-foot through keeping a watching brief on sector developments, and keeping key PR/ press contacts warm.

5. Standing item - ICB income; NHS consultation

Nick Stevens confirmed that no further information has been forthcoming from the ICB despite initial indications that an outcome on the percentage increase in core funding would be received by the end of the financial year. It is expected that their current focus is more internal, whilst changes in the ICB's own structure are undertaken. £30k was received towards home visits. The direction of travel around 'block financing' versus funding individual strands of activity was discussed.

6. Update on Income Generation activity

Sara Jane Harris updated on key statistics including the improvements in Gift Aid income with a goal to move from 25% to 30% in 2025/26, increases in the clearance store customer base, decreases in footfall for boutique and high street stores (which echoes national trends), and a year-on-year increase of 13,500 bags of donations. The Retail team met the overall budget for the 2024/25 financial year, with certain shops and Ebay not meeting target, whilst others exceeded such as Rosehill. Wimbledon Village reversed trends to end the year above budget. Whilst the income budget was hit, costs were £140k below budget, and this has delivered a strong net contribution, 80% above the plan.

A second potential tenant for the Wimbledon Park shop has withdrawn, but more bookings are set to view the space. The Hospice is running well-attended clearance events and benefits from the space available in St Bede's. This has also helped with fluctuations in the rag market. Looking ahead to the potential opening of new shops, spaces are being scoped in Kingston (which may be too expensive), Epsom and Tooting.

Momentum is being maintained with Lottery now that the report has been brought together, with all potential options being considered including in-house (which would not save costs to a large extent, but is projected to bring the same net income) and outsourcing. The components of what would be required to move in-house have been considered, including for example the need to identify a someone to lead a team comprising a few passionate volunteers, alongside comparison of 'cost per acquisition', so that full consideration can be given. Further options for relevant firms that may be able to support aspects of Lottery activity (e.g. Navigator) would be pursued with support from Grahame Darnell.

The Committee discussed ways in which volunteers can support more broadly (including Ebay), alongside the timeline for decision-making on the Lottery plans at the May Board meeting, to also feed in to the timeline for the Britevox contract. Nick Stevens confirmed that the budget now includes modelling for moving in-house at a set acquisition cost, with new players to be signed up from the autumn, including through payroll and Retail locations.

The Committee also noted the excellent cost control for Retail during 2024/25, which is also mirrored in the fundraising team. There have been 250k+ touchpoints from the Retail team (for some, this is multiple engagements with one person), which is a wide reach in the community. The Committee also noted the improvements in Gift Aid income.

7. Departmental risk register

This paper would be shared for the next meeting, with a full set of updates to be included as a priority. Bernard Marley could share comment in advance.

8. Standing item – retail incident report

There was an accident at the Wimbledon Village shop when moving an item that affected the volunteer, who received medical attention but did not need to go to hospital. All elements of the procedure were correctly followed and a 'lessons learned' reflection was held afterwards.

9. Committee Terms of Reference

The Committee were content with the proposed changes, to formalise these elements of oversight. An additional bullet point would be added on 'review of outcomes of communications activities, including driving fundraising, volunteering and Retail activities'.

10. Any Other Business and Dates of future meetings

There were no items shared. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 15th July 2025.

The meeting ended at 12.45pm

Approved..... Date.....