



## ONGO COMMUNITIES COMMON BOARD

**COMPRISING OF: ONGO COMMUNITIES LTD (Company Number 08619739)  
ONGO RECRUITMENT LTD (Company Number 04750128)  
CROSBY BROKERAGE LTD (07307333)**

**To be held at 2.00pm Thursday 2 February 2023  
The Arc, Westcliff, 2 Lichfield Ave, Scunthorpe DN17 1QX  
and Microsoft Teams**

### MINUTES

**Present:**

**Common Board:** Helen Lennon (Chair), Jan Williams, Karen Locking, Debbie Clegg

**Officers:** Fiona Ruddick, Kerry Copson, Carl Willerton, Jo Sugden, Kevin Hornsby, Steve Hepworth, Mark Perrin

**Apologies:** Hayley Phillips, Kacper Merta

**Absence:** None

**Also present:** Lisa Whelan (Teams), Sarah Wilson (Teams), Mike Finister-Smith

The meeting was confirmed as quorate – three members are required as per standing orders item 14 and the specific resolutions agreed by the entities in November 2022.

**Declarations of Interest:** Helen Lennon declared she is a member of the Group Common Board and Jan Williams is employed by Ongo.

**Time meeting opened:** 2.00pm

1. **Agenda item 3 – Minutes of Previous Meetings**

The minutes of the meetings held on 4 November 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record and will be signed by the Chair.

2. **Agenda item 4 – Action List**

The action list was noted.

3. **Agenda item 5 – Budget 2023/2024**



*Summary: The Board must approve a budget for the upcoming financial year for the Ongo Communities businesses. This paper considers the initial version of the budgets for these entities.*

Discussion points/questions:

- As Ongo Homes did not approve the request for £200k additional funding, Ongo Communities Ltd the entity needed to decide whether to reduce the level of activities or find alternative ways to fund it.
- One option is to use the reserves from Ongo Communities. Another option is both Ongo Recruitment and Crosby Brokerage are expecting to make a profit this financial year. Both entities could gift aid an amount to Ongo Communities.
- This gift aid can be made within 9 months of the end of the financial year and the date should be chosen to maximise tax efficiencies.
- The Post Office and The Arc are always forecast to be loss making. Whilst there is a strategy for The Arc, the Post Office is never expected to make a profit and is provided as a service for the community.
- The Multiply project will be delivered to the end of March and then an application can be submitted for a further two years provision.
- In response to a question around risk, Kevin Hornsby suggested the way the reports are written by authors, the same approach may not be taken so this is something he will review in future.
- There is currently £500,000 of reserves in Ongo Communities. £150k is needed for the Endeavour project. This still leaves some comfort before the golden rule of maintaining £100k in the bank is reached. This means if a project arises that needs match funding, that option is available.

**Agreed:**

**Ongo Communities (Charity)**

- Board approved the initial draft of the budget and the assumptions upon which it is based
- Board considered the £146k adverse impact of not securing the additional funding requested from Ongo Homes and agreed to use gift aid profits from Ongo Recruitment and Crosby Brokerage to cover this shortfall.
- Board advised on any amendments to the budget to be considered prior to final approval as outlined above.
- Board advised there were no specific requirements and considerations in relation to the compilation of the longer-term business plan.
- Board confirmed the sensitivities applied to performance are valid scenarios which can be used to support the assessment of going concern when signing off the 2022/23 statutory accounts.
- Noted that final budgets will require approval prior to the commencement of the financial year and if any amendments to these initial versions are required, in the absence of a Board meeting this communication will need to be managed electronically

via Convene.

#### **Ongo Recruitment (Social Enterprise)**

- Board approved the initial draft of the budget and the assumptions upon which it is based
- Board agreed to gift aid an element of profit to Ongo Communities – anticipated amount £88k
- Board advised on amendments to the budget to be considered prior to final approval – taking into account the above decision.
- Board advised there were no specific requirements and considerations in relation to the compilation of the longer-term business plan.
- Board confirmed the sensitivities applied to performance are valid scenarios which can be used to support the assessment of going concern when signing off the 2022/23 statutory accounts.
- Noted that final budgets will require approval prior to the commencement of the financial year and if any amendments to these initial versions are required, in the absence of a Board meeting this communication will need to be managed electronically via Convene.

#### **Crosby Brokerage Ltd**

- Board approved the initial draft of the budget and the assumptions upon which it is based
- Board agreed to gift aid an element of profit to Ongo Communities – anticipated amount £15k
- Board advised on any amendments to the budget to be considered prior to final approval taking into account the above decision.
- Board advised there were no specific requirements and considerations in relation to the compilation of the longer-term business plan.
- Board confirmed the sensitivities applied to performance are valid scenarios which can be used to support the assessment of going concern when signing off the 2022/23 statutory accounts.
- Noted that final budgets will require approval prior to the commencement of the financial year and if any amendments to these initial versions are required, in the absence of a Board meeting this communication will need to be managed electronically via Convene.

### **Agenda item 6 - Performance & Monitoring Report**

#### **6.1 Agenda item 6.1 – Management Accounts**

*Summary: This report presents the management accounts including financial golden rules of Ongo Communities, Ongo Recruitment and Crosby Brokerage for December 2022.*

Discussion points/questions:

- During December 2022 a £98k gift aid payment was made from Ongo Recruitment to Ongo Communities. This was from the 2021/22 financial year.

**Ongo Communities, Ongo Recruitment and Crosby Brokerage:**

Board approved the management accounts of Ongo Communities Ltd, Ongo Recruitment Ltd and Crosby Brokerage Ltd for December 2022.

**4. Agenda item 6.2 – Business Performance Report**

*Summary: The Board has approved targets for Ongo Communities to provide support for at least 700 people per year, as set out in the Corporate Plan. The Create Opportunities Strategy for 2020-2023 details the plans and ambitions to design and deliver projects and activities, utilising £1 million per year income from Ongo Homes and through externally funded grants and contracts. Through coaching and supporting customers, and managing community buildings, the purpose is to create truly vibrant communities.*

Discussion points/questions:

- When the report was written it was intended to apply for a grant of £8k. A decision was subsequently taken to not submit that application. The funding had to be spent by the end of this financial year and there was not enough staff available to work on the project and ensure that happened.
- Carl Willerton spoke about the proud to care contract and explained the 12 month extension was granted from the date the application was made, which is why it expires in November 2023.
- A Member commented that sustainable employment figures were down and felt the skills gap that was missing would be hard to meet.
- MaryAnn Fitzgerald works between Ongo Communities and Ongo Recruitment and links in with employers to support both companies and try and work towards improving skills.
- A number of clients have been upskilled as they have attended training courses run by Ongo Communities which has seen them gain qualifications at a higher level than they previously had.
- A Member asked what strategic level discussions were taking place with the local authority to consider the skills gap. Kevin Hornsby said this was something he could take forward via his links on the Health and Wellbeing board.

**Ongo Communities, Ongo Recruitment and Crosby Brokerage Agreed:** Considered the content of the report, discussed and debated performance as recorded above and agreed the report demonstrates sufficient progress against targets and outcomes, and that risks are understood and managed appropriately.

**5. Agenda item 7 – Ongo Communities Strategic Risk Register**

*Summary: Risk is the possibility of an event and the consequences it has on the achievement of objectives, at both strategic and operational level. Robust risk management is an essential element of effective governance and a strong internal control environment.*

Discussion points/questions:

- The Board agreed the covid risk should be removed from the risk register entirely.

- A Member queried the comments in the risk register about Wates. It was explained this was an extract from the Group Strategic Risk Register. That risk related to failure of subsidiary companies. As Ongo Communities, Ongo Recruitment and Crosby Brokerage are subsidiary companies, they are included in that risk.
- Jo Sugden pointed out the commentary against the risk all related to the commercial entities and this should also include commentary from the communities side in future.

**Action 1/23.**

**Ongo Communities, Ongo Recruitment and Crosby Brokerage Agreed:** Board reviewed the updated risk register, considered and debated, did not highlight any emerging risks and confirmed risks are managed appropriately.

## 6. **Agenda item 8 – Health, Safety and Environment**

*Summary: Ongo has a duty of care to all stakeholders, including our employees, customers, and contractors. We have a legal obligation to comply with various Health and Safety legislation and regulation, with serious consequences if we fail to do so. It is the role of the Communities Board to review Health and Safety arrangements to ensure they are satisfied it is effectively managed and we meet our obligations and duty of care.*

Discussion points/questions:

- Marie Riggall who normally writes this report has been second to the Multiply project until 2025. Roger Dawley is Ongo's Health and Safety (H&S) manager and has plans to meet with Communities managers to work together on H&S issues.
- The incident involving the pocket park had raised a question whether there are any other playground areas that sit on Ongo's land. This has previously been reviewed and will be checked again. **Action 2/23**
- At the last meeting Kerry Copson has updated the Board on an incident that had taken place with two youths since the report had been written. This incident is now included on the report to this Board. She explained there had been no issues since.

**Ongo Communities Ongo Recruitment and Crosby Brokerage agreed:** Board confirmed they are satisfied with the management of Health, Safety and Environment arrangements set out in the report.

## 7. **Agenda item 9 – Trustee Rotation**

*Summary: Article 11.5 of the Articles for Ongo Communities Ltd requires one third (or the number nearest one third) of the Trustees (Board Members) to retire every year effective from 4 March 2015. Those longest in office will retire first.*

Discussion points/questions:

- Members received the report.

**Ongo Communities agreed:** Noted the re-appointment of Jan Williams and Kacper Merta as Trustees to Ongo Communities Ltd in accordance with Article 11.5 of Ongo Communities'

Articles of Association. Ongo Partnership Ltd have confirmed this re-appointment as parent of Ongo Communities.

#### **8. Agenda Item 10 – Deep Dive – Community Development Team**

*Summary: The Community Development team was created to tackle issues such as high unemployment, tenancy turnover and crime levels whilst creating opportunities for local residents and raising their aspirations within specific areas.*

Discussion points/questions:

- Members were impressed with the work the team did.
- They had met many of the staff earlier today on the visit to communities projects and felt there was a good atmosphere.
- The stand alone project of We Are Westcliff ends in March this year but work will continue in the area.
- Steve Hepworth explained the Northern Housing Consortium are looking to run a project called love the place you live. This might be suitable for Westcliff.
- Officers were asked to consider if they can link their performance against a reduction in crime and other relevant statistics such as reduction in the number of empty properties.

#### **Action 3/23.**

- A suggestion was made to link The Pantry project to child poverty.
- A Member asked if those people having difficulty paying their rent to Ongo Homes were automatically signposted to communities projects. Kevin Hornsby explained there is a triage service and tenants are signposted as appropriate to the relevant projects on a case by case basis.

**Ongo Communities Agreed:** Board considered the content of the report and discussed and debated the issues. Board agreed the report demonstrates a clear description of the projects and services in the Community Development team and that risks are understood and managed appropriately.

#### **12. Agenda item 14 – Attendance List**

The attendance list was noted.

#### **13. Agenda item 15 – Time for Reflection**

Members had enjoyed today and felt the tour around the projects in the morning had been beneficial. There is a conference planned for Ongo Communities on 24 March and the invite to this will be extended to all Board Members.

#### **14. Any Other Urgent Business**

With no further business the meeting closed at 3.05pm.

Signed by Chair: ..... Date: .....

As a true and correct record of the Ongo Communities Common Board meeting held on 2 February 2023.