

MINUTES OF STONEWALL EXTRAORDINARY MEETING: Monday 7th December
1992.

Present:

Keith Thomlin, Sara James, Stewart Loveday, Helen Kay, Steve Iontton, Elaine Johnson, Robin Houghton, Peggy Keane, Ching Ling Fong, Olympia Lambropoulos.

1. Role of management committee.

1.1. It was agreed that by definition the MC has to provide guidance to the organisation - this is its legal responsibility. Also for Stonewall to continue there has to be a functioning management committee. For this to work there has to be clear lines of responsibility - which is by its very nature a hierarchical structure. ?

1.2. The MC acknowledged that in terms of its role there had been failings - eg supervisions, however it was also agreed that there was a lack of information made available to the MC on what was going on within the org.

2.0. Discussion re; workers attendance at the meeting. MC members stated that they had made it clear that this meeting was a significant meeting where important decisions would be made in the letter that had been sent out to staff - thus workers were expected to attend.

3.0. Fianancial Review.

3.1. It was reported that Peter Brookes had been engaged to look at Stonewalls fianances. He had been asked to carry out 3 tasks as locum worker didn't have time to do these.

- i. Budget comparison for year.
- ii. Follow up to end of fianancial year predicting budget deficit.
- iii. Cash Flow.

3.2. PB did budget until 30th nov 92 as didn't have time to predict budget til end of year or to do cash flow.

3.3 SL recommended that Stonewall reengaged PB - the cost of which being met by credit P has built up.

PB has done great deal of work on this - with full set of working papers.

3.4. Discussion then ensued on fianancial review. Agreed that the budget deficit of £8925 needed to be qualified.

Note 9 - photocopying of record badly done, PB might have double counting - this figure under staff (£21,320) possibly wrong by £4,000.

Also noted that the split between management and welfare - £7770 to £4778 - this figure should be over ie another discrepancy. A further area of discrepancy was the budget fig of £5439 and the actual figure of £2992 - noted that management and services should be under due to staff costs.

3.5. Under the revenue accounts there are fairly substantial overspends on projects.

3.6. It was noted that the budget highlights two areas that have to be examined - i . Major overspends - what financial controls?

ii. Lordship Park - losing money - question has to be asked as to why? Is this due to late start? Even if it was for good reason still means that revenue has been lost.

3.7. MC noted its concern over big discrepancies. Also the issue of the apportionment of staff costs is difficult as don't don't what the situation is - ideally need to have breakdown of these figs for next Tuesday - this noted as clear area of concern that these figs aren't readily to hand.

3.8. MC therefore proposed meeting in the New Year to present financial info. Jan.

3.9. Also noted that the lack of control of expenditure worrying as if Stonewall is not seen to be controlling its expenditure it will not be seen as being a viable organisation.

Role of MC to be seen to overviewing expenditure.

Accounts currently kept in cash book - plans being made to computerise this.

Financial controls tied into communication with staff. Financial reporting not isolated from the inadequacy of reporting within Stonewall. Noted that bookkeeping and reconciliation work was satisfactory - improvements need to be improved around reporting.

4.0. It was decided that some of the allowances from the Housing Associations might be understated, but it was also stated that although these amounts might reduce the deficit, this doesn't detract from the main problems. These were listed as being:

4.1. Keeping of accounts and record keeping being accurate.

4.2. Concern around the breakdown of what the figures represent. To ask collective to produce report around the figs for next mtg.

4.3. MC to be responsible for drawing up budgets for next financial year.

5.0. Stated that no additional amount for office equipment. New Islington and Hackney allowance won't meet the full furniture costs.

Implication of this being that if the furniture allowance is not enough, there will be no extra money for office equipment.

6.0 Computer Expenditure. MC didn't doubt that there was need for computer but noted the problem with the £8000 overspend. Stated that it was currently hard to predict what the end of year finances would be like at this stage.

7.0. Discussion on future structure of Stonewall.

Workers stated that it wasn't a problem of structure - it was a problem of long term planning. A lack of common aims and objectives.

MC replied that the systems were in place but they were clearly not happening. Mc stated that they were looking for better internal management, and in order to achieve this it was a better proposition for the MC to have the focus of management.

MC didn't doubt that there might be problems with this changing structure - however saw this as being temporary.

MC also stated that there was a growing responsibility for Housing Associations to monitor projects - which in turn had to be seen to be performing well. It was suggested that this wasn't happening within Stonewall at the moment.

In terms of the changing structure, it was agreed that might be good idea to set up recognised procedure ^{between?} ~~tw~~ union and management.

7.1. The aims of this meeting were ~~clearly~~ stated - to put forward a proposal for Stonewall to change from a hierarchy to a collective.

The aim had been to have as many staff members involved in this meeting as possible.

7.2. A proposal was therefore put forward that the MC wanted Stonewall to move from a collective to a hierarchy, and that a consultant would be worked with to achieve this.

Workers wishes?

That the MC would look to appoint a manager to see through this process.

7.3. MC was therefore in agreement that they would want to appoint an acting manager, however they would want to involve the staff in drawing up a brief for this manager.

7.4. Also agreed that Stonewall's finances would need to be examined to assess complete feasibility of this.

7.5. Issue of interim period was discussed.

It was made clear that the staff's primary responsibility was towards the residents, and this responsibility would be maintained throughout the transitional stages. It was also stressed that it was hoped that staff would be in agreement with these changes, and that the MC would be able to work together with the staff to implement them.

7.6. However, it was also stressed that during the interim period, the MC had a responsibility to determine how to manage this. There was a clear issue of information and how the MC would be kept informed as to events within Stonewall.

7.7. It was decided that staff would be expected to come to MC meetings to report on work.

7.8. It was also agreed that in next MC meeting, role of MC should be discussed in relation to interim period. It was also stressed that staff should attend this meeting.