**CULTURE NL BOARD MEETING**

**MINUTE OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**HELD IN**

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE HERITAGE CENTRE, HIGH STREET, MOTHERWELL ON MONDAY 23 JANUARY 2017 AT 1PM**

**Present:** James Law (Chair)

Gillian Hunt

Robert Burrows

David Craig

Charles Cefferty

Paul Kelly

Michael McPake

Alison Denvir

Adam Smith

**In Attendance:** Jillian Ferrie, Chief Executive, Culture NL (CNL)

David Wilkinson, Finance Manager (CNL)

Craig Smart, Venue Operations Manager (Customer Services) (CNL)

Lizanne McMurrich, Head of Education Skills, Lifelong Learning & Youth Employment (NLC)

Jennifer Lees, Corporate Development Manager (NLC)

Thomas O’Hagan, Accountant, Learning & Leisure Services (NLC)

Fiona Ekinli, (Company Secretary), Principal Solicitor (NLC)

Chris Knudsen, Trainee Solicitor, (NLC)

**Apologies:** Heather McVey

Alan Stevenson

Karen Fleming

John Lambert

1. **Apologies**

Apologies were noted.

1. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

1. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Draft minutes were presented to the Board. David Craig (DC) proposed and Alison Denvir (AD) seconded.

DC made a point on the accuracy of the previous minutes regarding Item 7 – Revenue report, stating report tabled in papers was not issued to the Board and asked for a new report to be circulated to members.

AD also made a point of accuracy asking for a breakdown of catering costs in the financial report to be mentioned in the minutes.

The Board confirmed there were no other matters arising from the previous minutes.

1. **Outcome Report on Pantomime Tender**

Craig Smart (CS) presented the report to the Board. A review process was carried out as the current three year contract in place was coming to an end. CS travelled to London and Ireland to assess two companies tendering for the contract, Jendagi and Spillers Pantomimes Limited.

Following extensive paperwork and review of the performance it was concluded Spillers Pantomimes Limited should be awarded the new contract. The new contract award with Spillers would be for the next three years, with an option of a one year extension and another one year extension in addition to the previous one.

Charles Cefferty (CC) asked if ticket prices were agreed by both parties and why this is not a Culture NL (CNL) decision. CS commented it was a joint negotiation as Spillers will get a percentage of the box office. James Law (JLaw) noted this to be a common occurrence to have shared income from ticket sales and price mutually agreed.

CC also asked if the price negotiation goes to the Board or is settled outwith. Jillian Ferrie (JF) clarified that CultureNL’s overall percentage price increase is approved by the Board.

The Board approved the report and appointment of Spillers Pantomimes Limited for a further three years. Noted to review the contract in 2019.

Craig Smart left the Board meeting at 13:12

1. **ALEO Review Update – Verbal Report (Jennifer Lees)**

Jennifer Lees (JLees) updated the Board with a report on the ALEOs review and outlined potential options for future service delivery which may be considered at a later date.

The Board noted the contents of the report.

1. **North Lanarkshire Libraries – Verbal Report/discussion**

JF presented a verbal report to the Board. After North Lanarkshire Council (the Council) initially asked CNL to extend the running of Newarthill Library to allow an interested community group to develop plans for potential community asset transfer, a decision was taken to keep the Newarthill Library at present.

DC asked for further clarity on the interim decision to engage with the community group, querying whether this meant the keeping the facility open but closing the library function? JF clarified the community group initially intended to take over the facility including the library function. Consequently CNL would operate a mobile library within Newarthill.

Adam Smith (AS) asked if the Council can make this decision for CNL. JLaw commented CNL are obliged to provide services which the Council ask CNL to deliver and these services are defined by the Council.

Gillian Hunt (GH) asked if the community group are on track to take over the facility. JF advised that she has still to receive and update regarding potential asset transfer.

The Board noted the contents of the report.

1. **Chief Executive Update Report**

JF presented the report to the Board.

Continue to meet weekly with finance and HR staff to ensure efficiency savings are on track.

Narrative to the report includes estimated achievement figures, the sum of which will total around £1 million pounds in savings for 2016/17. CC asked about the narrative in the appendix and what the actual savings figure to the end of the period is. JLaw asked for this figure to be recorded in the report for future meetings.

All actions are progressing in line with the business plan.

The British Transplant Games launched on 23rd November 2016. CNL are working on the opening and closing ceremonies, social events and a civic reception.

Although there are a few IT projects continuing at the moment, more IT projects will follow in the next financial year.

The pantomime exceeded expectations as presented by CS.

Communication is in place with NL Leisure following the ALEO review together with regular meetings in order to identify areas of potential joint working and overlap.

Janitorial costs are causing concern, with regards to the evening and weekend lets in schools and work is ongoing to address this issue.

JF attended meeting with the Council to set up a special advisory group to ensure the police, fire and ambulance services are informed of largescale events.

RB asked for further clarity on the decision take by Board to cease of the programme of play facilities last June. JF commented this saving ended the ‘pop out to play’ programme.

RB referred to the last Board meeting and the cessation of certain mobile library services, asking whether there was discussion with political representatives who are Board members.

JLaw commented there was a full and extensive Board discussion on the savings decisions made.

The Board noted the contents of the report.

1. **Finance Report**

David Wilkinson (DW) presented to the Board the Revenue Monitoring report for period 9 which is from 1st April to 9th December 2016.

Discussion from the last Board meeting led to the request for a clearer report. DW highlighted that work had been undertaken to review budgets and the report now better reflects the operational variances in each of the service areas. This aligns with JLaw’s earlier comment that variances may need expansion for each service.

DW highlighted that Catering is on track to break even. The back page of the report outlined CNL’s overall budgetary position.

AS queried the Council’s agreement to fund the shortfall from the Muirfield Centre. DW clarified that the figure comes from an estimated pro rata split for the current financial year and was agreed funding based on the three year agreement. JLaw highlighted the possibility of an identifiable risk to CNL if the commercial offices were not let, so it is important to ensure CNL are not disadvantaged.

RB commented that he is pleased with the new format of reporting.

Michael McPake (MMcP) noted from the report the significant improvement with catering and suggested that CNL should look to future catering opportunities, noting in particular the future plans for catering at Drumpellier Park. JF confirmed plans are in place. AD requested a regular review of catering.

The Board noted the contents of the report.

**9) Marketing Update Report**

JF presented to the Board a report providing an overview of the operational marketing activities, strategies and plans for the period November 2016 to January 2017.

The report is for information purposes. There was notable marketing activity around the festive period which led to CNL’s most successful December at Summerlee. CNL launched the new ‘whats on’ programme and community arts programme, and finally in terms of the press cuttings there were 102 positive stories about CNL, 42 neutral and 5 negative.

AS suggested adding information to correlate the capacity of the events to ticket sales to show their success.

The Board noted the contents of the report.

**10) IT Update Report**

JF presented to the Board a report providing an update on the status of current and planned ICT project activities which support the implementation of Culture NL’s business plan.

In relation to paragraph 1.3 to digitise museum collection, CNL have been awarded a grant of £60,000 and can now proceed with this project. CNL have also secured funding through the Council to replace the library information system. AS asked if compensation was ever pursued against the internet service provider at the Forge. JF confirmed CNL did not pursue this.

JLaw requested for the report to be written in plainer English and to include upcoming projects and timescales where possible.

The Board noted the contents of the Report.

**AOCB**

**11) Date and Time of next meeting**

RB asked if CNL apply to various external funding sources. JF confirmed that a variety of sources are approached. JLaw added CNL have been successful in obtaining funding from bodies outwith the Council, both at national and regional level.

The next formal meeting will take place on 27th March at 1pm. Venue to be confirmed.