**CULTURE NL BOARD MEETING**

**MINUTE OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**HELD IN**

**MEETING ROOM, CONCERT HALL, MOTHERWELL ON MONDAY 23 MAY 2016 AT 1PM**

**Present:** Heather McVey (Chair)

Alan Stevenson

Jim Law

Gillian Hunt

Robert Burrows

Charles Cefferty

Michael McPake

David Craig

John Lambert

**In Attendance:** Jillian Ferrie, Chief Executive, Culture NL

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

Lizanne McMurrich, Head of Education (Skills and Lifelong Learning), NLC

Hugh McMaster, Accountant, Culture NL

Russell Brown, Children’s Library Services & Performance Manager, CNL

Fiona Ekinli, Principal Solicitor, NLC (Company Secretary)

Evelyn Ross, Solicitor, NLC

**Apologies:** Alison Denvir

Karen Fleming

Adam Smith

Paul Kelly

1. **Apologies**

Apologies were noted.

The Chair welcomed Robert Burrows (RB), Charles Cefferty (CC) and Thomas O’Hagan (TO) to the Board.

1. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

1. **Minutes of previous meeting**

Draft minutes were presented to the Board.

Jim Law (JLaw) proposed and David Craig (DC) seconded

JLaw asked for an update on the request for Play Services to be transferred back to North Lanarkshire Council. Jillian Ferrie (JF) advised that following discussions with Lizanne McMurrich (LMcM), a change control request would be submitted to commence the process.

The Chair asked that the Register of Interests forms circulated for completion by the Company Secretary be returned by 10 June 2016.

1. **Redundancy Policy**

JF presented to the board a report requesting Board approval to introduce a revised Redundancy Policy with effect from 23 May 2016.

The Chair stressed to the Board that it is not intended to make redundancies, but a policy is required and has been developed in consultation with the unions.

JF advised that the report required two corrections. Firstly, at paragraph 2.6 the reference to the 10 year maximum no longer existing was incorrect and will be amended, and secondly that NLC do indeed comply with the statutory redundancy scheme.

The Board approved the report, subject to the changes outlined above.

1. **Employer’s Discretion Policy**

JF presented to the Board a report seeking Board approval for a Model Employer’s Policy Statement LGPS with effect from 23 May 2016.

CC asked what benchmarks had been used and what major changes there were between this policy and the Council’s policy. JF advised that a number of policies published by local authorities and similar ALEOs had been examined prior to writing the policy and that she can provide further information to the Board on the key changes at the next meeting.

JLaw asked for clarification on references to the age “50/55” which appeared in various places throughout the Statement. Hugh McMaster (HM) advised this was to reflect that the age would be 50 for those who retired because of the re-structure or efficiency savings, and 55 in other circumstances.

The Board approved the report subject to the key changes being highlighted to the Board in due course.

1. **Request to Issue Tender for Pantomine**

JF presented to the Board a report seeking approval for the Venues Team to engage in a tendering process to procure a Pantomime Producer for the years 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20.

John Lambert (JLam) asked what the value of the contract is and whether there would any change to the specification. JF advised the value of the contract is £226,000 and there were no plans to change the specification as it currently works well.

LMcM asked what the quality/price split would be when evaluating the tenders and what was the split of the box office takings. CC asked for details of the financial benefit to Culture NL referred to at paragraph 3.3. of the report. JF advised she would update the Board on these matters at the next meeting.

JLaw suggested that proper criteria be established ahead of the production visits, given that this constituted the highest proportion of the quality weighting, and so as to ensure the evaluation was not subjective.

The Board approved the report.

1. **Governance Arrangements**

The Chair reminded the Board of the changes to governance arrangements discussed at the previous meeting. She advised she had resigned as the Chair of the Audit & Governance Panel and had previously suggested that Alison Denvir (AD) would be a suitable candidate to take on that office. The Chair proceeded to nominate AD to the office (subject to her agreement) and the Board agreed. She advised that any other directors who wished to join the Audit & Governance Panel should advise the Board of this.

The Chair also asked for Board approval to write to the independent directors in order to identify candidates for the office of Vice-Chair of the Board. The remit of this office would be considered and a report detailing this would be presented to the Board in due course. The Board agreed the action.

The Chair moved for Paul Kelly (PK), CC and RB to be appointed as directors of Culture NL Trading CIC. The Board agreed the appointments.

1. **Chief Executive Update Report**

JF presented to the Board a report with an operational update for the period 12 March 2016 to 15 May 2016.

The Chair highlighted that Culture NL had given notice that it intended to withdraw the services at the libraries and community facilities referred to in the report. The decision as to whether to close the facilities was a North Lanarkshire Council decision.

There was a discussion regarding the consultation procedure that had been followed prior to the decision to withdraw the library services. It was noted that the Culture NL budget reduction for the next two years, plus the impact of cost pressures, had necessitated a full scale review of service provision, which was carried out in accordance with the proper procedures and after lengthy discussions with North Lanarkshire Council. Russell Brown (RBr) advised the Board that there is a public consultation regarding alternative services to replace the withdrawn services.

The Board noted the report.

1. **P12 Finance Report**

HM presented to the Board a report providing the current budget monitoring position for the company for the period 1 April 2015 to 4 March 2016.

TO asked what would happen to the surplus referred to in the report. HM advised this would be rolled over to reduce the reserves required to embed the efficiency savings.

JLaw asked what was happening with the 36 FTE vacancies. JF advised there is currently a recruitment freeze and the vacancies will be held for re-deployed staff.

Michael McPake (MM) noted the improvement within the Catering Section. He suggested that consideration be given to rolling the Beer Festival out to Airdrie. The Chair agreed that there were several events which could be rolled out to different localities.

The Chair noted the improvements set out in the report and passed on her thanks to all staff involved for their efforts.

RB asked for further information on the payments made to other bodies. HM advised he could provide the Board with further information on this and would circulate via email.

JLam asked if the reports could include the profitability of activities because this was a concern for the Board but was difficult to assess on the figures currently provided. The Chair asked JLam and HM to discuss what information should be included in reports going forward to be of most use to the Board.

The Board noted the report.

**10) Q4 Performance and Year End Report**

RBr presented to the Board a report providing information on the performance of Culture NL during the fourth quarter of 2015/16, covering the period 1 January to 31 March 2016 and year end of 2015/16.

JLaw and JLam noted the Red status in the KPI table for community facilities, and asked if the KPI targets could be adjusted to take account of the impact of community facility closures. RBr advised that the targets are agreed with the Council and variances are reported on.

RB asked if CNL pay for the costs of refurbishment of facilities. The Chair advised that the fit out of the interior of the facilities is funded by CNL – JF also advised that CNL bids for the NLC Capital Fund but some of the costs will be revenue costs.

The Chair noted that the report demonstrated the close connection between Play Services and NLC, which are part funded by LDP community grants, which is an NLC programme. She also noted the Nancy Ovens Award won by the Coatbridge Parkour course in Westend Park in Coatbridge and passed on her congratulations to those involved.

ASt asked how attendance at museums was being counted – RBr advised there was a digital footprint for all visitors and visitors to outdoor play areas were counted by visual counts.

The Chair noted the diversity of work being carried out in terms of Community Arts and the culture of participation for young people this was generating.

CC asked how CNL generates income from the museums when entry to the museums is free. RBr advised consideration is being given as to how to increase the secondary spend of attendees, as there is not always a direct increase in income where there is an increase in footfall. JLaw noted the report was well prepared and information but suggested that the KPI targets needed to be explained and accurate, for example a more suitable objective could be attendee participation, rather than income.

The Board noted the report and the Chair congratulated all services on their hard work and success.

**11) Marketing Update Report**

JF presented to the Board a report providing an overview of the operational marketing activities, strategies and plans for the period March – May 2016.

GH asked if the report could be made available to staff. JF advised she would ensure managers were passing to staff.

The Board noted the report.

**12) IT Update Report**

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

The Chair advised she had raised the issues with the public wi-fi at the Houldsworth Centre at the NLC Corporate Services Committee. JLam asked if access to wi-fi was an issue in any other facilities. JF advised that the service had been rolled out across most facilities and there was funding in place for it to be installed in a further six sites.

The Board discussed their ongoing concerns about the level of service being provided by NLC. It was noted that the wi-fi issue had taken some time to resolve and that consideration needed to be given to whether there were alternative service providers in the market that could provide a more cost-efficient and innovative service.

The Board noted the report.

**13) AOCB**

The next meeting will take place on 25 July 2016 at 1pm.