**CULTURE NL BOARD MEETING**

**MINUTE OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**HELD IN**

**THE MUIRFIELD CENTRE, SOUTH MUIRHEAD ROAD, CUMBERNAULD ON MONDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2016 AT 1PM**

**Present:** Heather McVey (Chair)

Jim Law

Gillian Hunt

Robert Burrows

David Craig

Alison Denvir

Adam Smith

Karen Fleming

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

David Wilkinson, Finance Manager (CNL)

Hugh MacMaster, Finance Manager (CNL)

Wendy Bennett, Customer Services Manager (CNL)

Jennifer Lees, Corporate Development Manager (NLC)

Barbara Philliben, Community Learning and Inclusion Manager (NLC)

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

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

Chris Knudsen, Trainee Solicitor, (NLC)

Ross Dunn, Play Services Officer (CNL)

**Apologies:** Michael McPake

Paul Kelly

Charles Cefferty

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

John Lambert

Alan Stevenson

**Board Tour of new Muirfield Community Centre facility**

1. **Presentation on Play Services from Ross Dunn**

Ross Dunn (RD) made a presentation to the Board on Play Services and the Scotland Excel Framework Agreement April 2017. The Board posed questions to RD following the presentation. Robert Burrows (RB) sought clarity on a point in the presentation slides which could be misconstrued as a lack of investment from NLC.

RD clarified there is £120,000 invested from NLC per year from the education and employment budget. Further to this RD highlighted the Play Services future aspirations, the plan to deal with safety issues at current sites and the areas with a high priority need for play services.

Adam Smith (ASm) spoke about the possible issue of resource and capacity, suggesting whether there could be funding for an additional officer to the two currently working on these services. RD answered that the external funders will not cover the appointment of another officer as these funders are paying for a physical asset.

Heather McVey (HMcV) clarified that based on current funders, every stakeholder does recharge for professional fees and CNL has not done so yet. HMcV proposed a focused conversation through a task group or separate meeting on Play services which would discuss sustainable play and maintaining a high standard. HMcV to lead the discussion with JLaw and David Craig (DC) volunteering to participate in the task group. HMcV also noted that the invitation to join the discussion will be extended to the members of the board who were not present at the board meeting today, while also thanking RD and his colleague for their efforts. Community Learning , Procurement services and colleagues in Regeneration would also be involved in the task group

1. **Apologies**

Apologies were noted.

Gillian Hunt left the Board meeting at 14:00

1. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

The Chair reminded the Board to return any outstanding Register of Interest forms.

1. **Minutes of previous meeting**

Draft minutes were presented to the Board. Alison Denver proposed and Adam Smith seconded.

Adam Smith made a point on the accuracy of the previous minutes. He noted that his question on recharging the Council for Culture NL staff support during elections was not shown in the minutes. Jillian Ferrie advised that staff attendance during elections is discretionary and would be a decision for the line manager. The Council does not reimburse CultureNL for the cost of any staff who work during elections.

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

1. **Performance Report for Quarter 2 (July – September 2016)**

Jillian Ferrie (JF) presented to the Board a report providing information on the performance of Culture NL Limited (CNL) during the second quarter of 2016/2017, covering the period 1 July to 30 September 2016.

JF gave an overview of the report including highlighting play areas that have been completed; success of the summer activity programme; upholstered seating in Motherwell Theatre; a partnership with the Scottish Opera; and over 7,500 people attending the Heritage Centre over the summer.

In Quarter 2 attendance slightly decreased but income slightly increased Sickness absence has reduced; complaints have reduced while compliments increased. The main complaint was noted to be the car parking at Summerlee. Heather McVey (HMcV) stated that CNL should look into signage and the possibility of referring to the licensing committee and Roads to assist.

JF directed the board’s attention to Appendix 1 and the KPIs, noting that the Facilities KPI indicates that a number of pitches within schools are in poor condition and that changes to lay out of new schools means a reduction in letting spaces for CNL.

JF then highlighted the Business Plan and the progress of actions to date. Jim Law (JLaw) stated that if the KPI is not being adhered to due to infrastructure could CNL not change the KPI. JF advised that this can be reflected for the new financial year.

The Board noted the content of the Report.

1. **Update Report by Culture NL Chief Executive 20 September – 17 November 2016**

JF presented to the Board an operational update for period 20 September to 17 November 2016.

JF explained a new library structure is now in place, with two posts remaining to be filled.

Two key sections for future review are Community Facilities and Museums and Heritage.

JF brought to the attention of the Board the appointment of Hugh MacMaster (HMac) and his role as finance manager, and also advised that CNL are appointing a modern apprentice to work with the marketing team. Also noting CNL are currently recruiting a new marketing assistant and a temporary marketing manager due to the resignation or maternity leave of two other staff members.

There will be more detail to follow in respect of the savings for CNL and at the next meeting there will be an additional column added to the report noting the year to date savings.

The ALEO Review continues, with Jennifer Lees (JLees) to update.

The British Transplant Games launched on Wednesday 23rd of November 2016

CNL continues to work with finance to review the Service Level Agreements to ensure best value.

The catering stock audit report is now finalised.

CNL will be working with the National Theatre of Scotland on a 9 month community arts project which is a great opportunity and will be a positive partnership for CNL. HMcV asked whether JF would require assistance from the Board. JF responded that potentially there is scope for assistance in the future, with a meeting on the 7th December scheduled to discuss funding arrangements.

Robert Burrows (RB) referenced appendix on page 16 and asked for clarity on the ceasing of the play services summer programme. HMcV commented the saving was audit and governance approved as CNL was approaching a time where investment was needed for the mobile playgrounds.

The Board noted the content of the Report.

* 1. **Revenue Monitoring Report – P 7 1 April 2016 To October 2016**

David Wilkinson (DW) DW presented to the Board a Report on the current budget monitoring position for the company for the period 1 April 2016 to 14 October 2016.

DW advised the Report covers the period up to mid-October, with Table 1 giving the projected variances

HMcV commented the Report needs to be made clearer for future reports.

DW explained the income overall is lower than the budget, however in previous years the income level has been good because of the significant income linked with the elections. With no elections this year that is reflected however next year should be an improvement.

Overall catering is projected to break even.

Attention was drawn to Appendix 2 where further catering information was provided to give an idea of year to date, with a like for like comparison.

The Catering Function had a larger subsidy last year, while areas such as the Civic Centre, Airdrie Town Hall have improved, as has the new Wishaw Library facility which has greater footfall.

HMcV further commented that a catering review ~~was~~ had been the right decision from reflecting on the content of the report.

DC asked if an electronic copy of this agenda item could be circulated

Alison Denver (AD) in reference to the individual breakdown by catering facility, commented that some are in decline and asked what is behind the decline. DW responded these are relatively small declines and improvements have been made in ~~on~~ areas of most concern, with the exception of Palacerigg’s partial closure which will account for some loss of income. HMcV commented that it is important to see the narrative to show the income decline. DW commented that there was a larger subsidy last year in that area which could explain the decline.

Thomas O’Hagan (TO’H) highlighted that it seems to be a common request that more financial detail is included in the Reports. TO’H offered that if CNL needs support from Corporate Finance then they would be happy to assist. HMcV happy to accept if required.

JLaw comments that the current way of showing figures of CNL are not standard practice for commercial organisations. JLaw further noted that these need to be presented in a common sense way that meets accountant criteria. HMcV reiterated that CNL have not had a full capacity team recently.

The Board noted the Report.

* 1. **Audit Management Report for the year ended 31 March 2016**

DW presented to the Board a copy of the Audit Management Report for the year ended 31 March 2016.

DW to formally distribute this Report which highlights some key points.

HMcV stated that areas are being progressed appropriately.

AD asked about the recommendation to set up a separate account for the trading company. DW explains the requirement to have a segregated account so when the trading company is making an increased profit, there is a mechanism in place to pay this back to the Council to meet the requirement.

The Board approved the Report.

1. **Mobile Library Review Report**

Wendy Bennett (WB) presented to the Board a Report outlining the changes to the mobile library provision in North Lanarkshire following the review of the service as a result of the reduction in the fleet and staffing.

This involved a reduction in the fleet of mobile vans from 5 to 3. The Report highlights how the reduction will be carried out.

The first step involved benchmarking and contacting the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) who have carried out a survey on mobile library services elsewhere. From this it is possible to conclude that CNL are proceeding in the same way as the rest of Scotland in providing this service.

Little trade from the mobile libraries occurred at night and there was no support in terms of transport and at the base to help the drivers. Moving to daytime should address this which means reviewing the existing stops and boundaries.

Another way to address this is to move from weekly stops to now having fortnightly stops, hoping that this will encourage people to visit while the opportunity is there albeit less frequent.

From engaging with people and asking what they want from the service, home delivery was a mainstay and will continue.

CNL will continue with deposit collections, appendices of the report showing the range of various places where small collections get dropped off for older people, children and to prisons.

In conclusion CNL hopes to provide the same type of service but with fewer vans and drivers.

The maps attached to the report demonstrate where the stops will be. WB commented that one error in the areas of removal of services is that St Theresa’s Primary should be replaced with Newarthill Primary.

RB requested a more complete picture of the reasoning behind the review . WB directed RB to the table key in the report.

JLaw noted that while some stops do have multiple reasons for change, some do not therefore including this would bring consistency to the report. HMcV asked WB if that would be able to be incorporated.

RB also referred to 3.1.1 and the second last paragraph where the wording states that the distance is now two miles. WB clarified that it used to be two miles and is now 1.5 miles. HMcV added that it is about sustaining footfall and providing outreach to vulnerable people, with it being important to get the balance right but need to consider the rural population.

Adam Smith (ASm) noted the stop in Airdrie next to Tesco and suggested the idea of having a stop in the site car park at Tesco. WB confirmed this would not be feasible as it is difficult to arrive and leave from a car park if it is busy. ASm further added that the venue such as Tesco could be used to put up posters or leaflets. WB confirmed the plan to use twitter when the mobile library is off the road, actively using social media for updates. HMcV commented that it is important to know the social media demographic when doing so.

RB commented on his experience of speaking with other local authorities in England and how the marketing and re-vamp of the service worked. HMcV agreed that transparency of what the libraries provide is key. HMcV noted the Board’s thanks to WB and her colleagues for their work and the report.

The Board noted the content of the report with the provision of additional information to be added.

Robert Burrows left the Board Meeting at 14:55

**Update on ALEOs Review**

Jennifer Lees updated the Board with a Report on the ALEOs review.

J Lees reminded the Board that Katrina Hassell had previously provided an overview of the review process which is being undertaken by NLC to review ALEOs over the next 3 years. J Lees noted comments from the last meeting that enhanced communication between NLC and CNL and ALEOs Committee would be welcomed.

The next step shall be looking at stakeholder involvement with employees and users, and obtaining feedback from managers regarding CNL’s progress and ideas for development. .

The ALEO review team are keen to engage with employees, having already drafted an introductory newsletter which is currently with JF for review. Once the newsletter is finalised, JF has offered to assist in distribution. J Lees also asked the board and staff to engage in focus groups or online surveys. In terms of consultation with customers, JF had invited J Lees to go to a number of events and request audiences to provide feedback about CNL

Re engagement with the Board of Directors and Officers there is scope to meet outwith Board meeting dates to have an informal discussion or sub-group regarding this process. The partnership unit are in the process of completing a desktop analysis of the CNL documents dating back three years. There is the suggestion to report back to the Board before the next Board meeting to allow for discussion of the findings of the review before moving onto the detailed options appraisal, further noting the Board’s interest to be involved in the last step of the process.

J Lees confirmed that she is happy to report back on January 23rd provisionally, and asked if there were any questions.

DC asked about the scope of stakeholder engagement and commented that it seems to be narrow to each venue. Also adding that schools use CNL and if time would allow to expand the engagement. J Lees mentioned the intention is to go outwith the scope in the report and that she is mindful of schools usage of CNL, this would include talking to teachers and CNL services who provide services in schools. JLaw asked if there will be consultation with user groups. J Lees answered that yes, there will be in each of the service areas (arts, museums, libraries etc). JLaw explained that CNL have a large volume of databases for assistance with this, J Lees commented that where the Board is content to accommodate the partnership unit would be happy to tap into the resources from CNL. HMcV made the point to take into consideration Data Protection when doing so.

J Lees noted full board participation would be welcomed. HMcV commented CNL should use the CEO to act as a filter between the partnership unit and CNL. JF agreed and offered to meet with J Lees.

J Lees stated that there are two levels of communication, with the first stage being a discussion with JF where the CEO will be able to advise and report back to the Board, and secondly the specific engagement with the Board on strategic direction. J Lees suggested a formal consultation before Christmas.

J Lees confirms that a high level approach is being taken currently and detail is required. HMcV notes that it is got to be proportionate as CNL are one of the Council’s biggest ALEOs and suggests that KH or J Lees could visit CNL to see the information on the system.

The Board noted the contents of the Report.

1. **Catering Update Report and Action Plan**

JF presented the Report to Board which details the progress made to date with regards to the review of CNL’s catering operation.

Noting this is an operational report which highlights where progress is made. The structure was being reviewed and is now complete. Service is running more effectively together with staffing costs, and also noted where there are areas for development and areas of improvement.

Some developments will require investment but overall the review is going well to date.

HMcV noted potential development in the Strathclyde Park initiative. JF noted the change in procurement rules, and advised that CNL weren’t advised of this.

JLaw commented on the electronic till systems being efficient and asked if a business case needs to be developed outlining benefits. JF advised that current IT costs are prohibitive however as CNL are about to appoint an ICT officer so they will do this task on their remit.

The Board noted the contents of the Report.

**10) Marketing Update Report**

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

Noted there was nothing to add.

Adam Smith (ASm) commented on the detail in the Report, particularly Facebook and its impact. Whilst also noting his preference to have a reputational element included for example where CNL are featured in the press and media, and also asking when and where CNL are advertising?

The Board noted the contents of the Report.

**11) 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.

JF advised the Wishaw Library wifi is being addressed.

ASm asked what the wifi status was in the Muirfield Community Centre. JF answered that there is currently wifi in the community centre and the heads of terms and leasing documents for the business units are with external solicitors, having been received from NLC.

The Board noted the contents of the Report.

**12) AOCB**

ASm queried whether tickets to Board members for the Pantomime should be a declared in his interests. HMcV advised that it was a matter of conscience. FE advised ASm that this interest should be noted.

2017 meetings will include the dates: 23rd January, 27th March and 22nd May

The next formal meeting will take place on 23rd January at 1pm. Venue to be confirmed.