

ULSTER SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT LTD

(Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a Share Capital)

Minutes of a Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday 24th February 2021 at 10.30am

Via video conferencing

ULSTER SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT LIMITED

Present

Mr W Leathem	Chairman
Mr D O'Hara	Director
Ms J Cowan	Director
Mr R Donnelly	Director
Mr R Havlin	Director
Mrs Sarah Wakfer	Director
Mr Damian Duffy	Director
Mr W Atkinson	Chief Executive
Mr D Cowan	Head of Employment Services
Mr S Jackson	Head of Manufacturing & Recycling
Mr S Ballentine-Kearns	Head of Finance/Company Secretary

Apologies

No apologies.

1. Conflicts of interest

No conflicts of interest to note.

2. Minutes of the previous meetings held on 27 JANUARY 2021 & 03 FEBRUARY 2021

- a. Approval – Both Approved
- b. Matters Arising
- c. Actions

3. Chairman's Report

Mr Leathem updated the Board on the Partnership agreement meeting which he had with the Sponsor Branch. Review to be held after 1st year and then every 3rd year for monitoring.

Test drill on policies – Mr Atkinson explained rolling review of policies over 3 year period. Department wish us to review 3 or 4 policies and submit them for review to the Department. Board agreed that SMT should send the most recent 4 reviewed and a list of all reviewed in previous 24 months.

Business Plan passed and approved.

4. Pension Scheme Update

No update to be given. With Department at present (Mercers responses sent back in February 2021).

5. Chief Executive's Report

5.1 New Business – 1500 sites to be covered through new Confidential shredding contract through NICS (including all Schools). Discussions with NIHE, they are asking for a pricing exercise for 12 months.

5.2 Employment Support Programmes – Department have confirmed increase price per individual on ES programme. Disability Action ES contract is up for a 12 month tender. Mr Atkinson explained the current setup of ES and that there are queries over the tender process. Mr Duffy explained a similar situation with DfE and stated that precedents were set 5 years ago.

The Board agreed that should USEL tender and not be successful that a legal challenge should be considered. To be raised at next quarterly meeting on 22/03/21.

ESF programme coming to an end in the next 13 months and Workable is due to finish in 4 months time. Ongoing work on a redundancy business case.

6. Finance & HR report

6.1 The Directors reviewed the summary financial position vs budget for January. This showed a £80k surplus in the month (excluding ES).

6.2 Mr Ballentine-Kearns gave a summary of the performance in the month and explained our YTD position (excluding ES).

6.3 The Board discussed the benefits and problems caused by COVID and how this will impact next year's budget and our decision making going forward as restrictions are eased. Reviews to be made on the Cafes and ECOS as restrictions are eased.

	Usel KPI	Usel December 2020	Usel Jan 20 – Dec 20
<i>Absenteeism rates - short term</i>	3%	0.7%	0.95%
<i>Absenteeism rates - long term (+4 weeks)</i>	2%	0%	2.8%

6.4 No further updates on HR

7. Adult safe guarding issues – to note (if applicable)

No issues to report.

8. Health & safety update

One member of staff self-isolating due to track and trace but has tested negative. They should return next week.

No other issues to report.

9. Risk Management/Register/ARAC

Mr O'Hara gave a verbal update. Both Mr O'Hara and Mrs Wakfer have been ratified at ARAC meeting as Chair and Vice-Chair.

At ARAC, risk register broadly accepted. Amendment to COVID probability from 5 to 4 and one additional risk regarding sustainability/business development (risks/opportunities) and finally Brexit impacts (no great impact).

Internal audit plan – Board decision for 4 items. ARAC discussed Finance/Internal Controls, Budgetary Controls, Delegated Authority/Sign off, GDPR and H&S. ARAC suggested these areas for Board consideration. Board approved these 4 areas for Internal Audit in 21/22.

10. Any Other Business

10.1 Cyber Security responses – Board approval given.

10.2 Terms of Reference – Finance Committee

10.3 Review of TOR for ARAC – based in line with review of FC TOR.

10.4 Board apprentice scheme will be applied to by USEL.

10.5 Governance training – to be completed by Ms Cowan, Mrs Wakfer and Mr Duffy.

10.6 150th Anniversary – **update to be given in March by Mr Atkinson.**

10.7 Update from Mr Atkinson regarding meeting with Perm Sec on 18/02/21 – there may be a reduction in GiA.

11. Date of next meeting

31st March 2021 at 10.30am.

Apologies from Mr Donnelly.