

ULSTER SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT LTD

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

Minutes of a Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday 27th October 2021 at 10.00am

Via video conferencing

Present

Mr W Leathem	Chairman
Mr D O'Hara	Director
Ms J Cowan	Director
Mr D Duffy	Director
Mr R Donnelly	Director
Mr R Havlin	Director
Mrs S Wakfer	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 Corporate Services/Company Secretary

Apologies

Ms L Toner Boardroom Apprentice

1. Conflicts of interest

1.1 SMT conflict in relation to Pension scheme.

The Board and SMT have no RPTs to declare within the period since the last Board meeting.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 September 2021

- a. **Approval** – following minor amendments
- b. **Matters Arising**
- c. **Action Log** – discussed

3. Chairman's Report

3.1 The Board passed their condolences on to the families of the staff members that have passed away since the previous Board meeting.

3.2 Ms J Cowan appointed as Chair of POD Committee. Mr R Donnelly appointed as Vice-Chair of POD Committee.

3.3 Mr Leathem attended the ALB forum in October.

Mr Leathem to email presentation from the meeting to the Board.

3.4 5th October Minister Hargey attended. Mr Leathem and Mr Atkinson were in attendance. The Minister was very focussed on the people within USEL.

3.5 7th October Royal visit. Very successful event and many thanks have been expressed by both Board members and our attendees. The publicity around this event has been very good also.

3.6 Quarterly accountability meeting 11th October. Nothing to report.

3.7 Finance Sub-committee met on 18th October.

3.8 Meeting held on 18th October around staff matter.

4. Written procedures

Nothing to note.

5. Pension Scheme Update

Dealt with below.

6. Chief Executive's Report

6.1 Job start 200 roles agreement between DfC and USEL. Follow up meetings to be held. Mr Donnelly queried if the correct resources are available. Mr Atkinson explained that we will have the staff required to deliver this programme, when required.

6.2 Mr Atkinson gave an update around STRIDE programme.

6.3 Current tender out in relation to DMR. Mr Atkinson explained the tender exercise and the value of the contract.

Mr Duffy asked if the required fleet was available, and Mr Atkinson explained the current procurement issues but that we would build this into a capital plan.

Mr Havlin asked about the changing fuel costs impacting on pricing. Mr Atkinson explained that this has been factored in but that this is difficult to predict. The pricing model was then explained by Mr Atkinson.

An electric fleet was discussed, along with the pros and cons for USEL.

6.4 2 additional scoping exercises – one in relation to community tourism for North Belfast. The Board discussed several elements of this project and agreed to receive any updates going forward.

The scoping exercise other relates to a social enterprise estate agency. A review is ongoing internally about this.

6.5 Pension update – **Benchmarking exercise to be carried out by USEL.**

Organisational/Pay scale review to be looked at by POD Committee.

Mr Atkinson explained that we have appointed additional resource support to aid with the redesign process.

A meeting with Mercer was held on 26/10/21.

The Board have requested the USEL SMT to investigate the options available in relation to legal advice.

6.6 Voluntary living wage – Mr Atkinson explained that VLW is being recommended by DoF going forward.

7. Finance & HR report

7.1 The Directors reviewed the summary financial position vs budget for September 2021. This showed a deficit of £7k in the month.

7.2 Mr Ballentine-Kearns explained the movements in the month and the budget going forward and that our YTD position is a surplus of £116k.

7.3 Mr Duffy and Mr Havlin explained the benefit of the financial “deep-dive” which was carried out by the Finance Committee. This will aid with planning going forward.

7.4 HR KPIs were discussed and reviewed. Sickness levels and potential mitigations were also discussed.

The Board highlighted the risk of being unable to recruit staff given current recruitment/employment market.

8. Adult safeguarding issues – to note (if applicable)

Nothing to note.

9. Health & safety update

Awaiting outcome of ISO45001 audit.

Business case re: demolition submitted on 26/10/21.

New risk to be added for gable wall (H&S risk). This will be taken down as matter of urgency.

10. Risk Management/Register

Risk 2: Wording to be added around recruitment.

New risk to be added for gable wall (H&S risk). This will be taken down as matter of urgency.

Risk 7: Mr O’Hara to work with Mr Ballentine-Kearns ahead of next ARAC meeting.

New risk of national living wage and the impact on pay scales/entitlements.

11. Commercial Review

Some feedback has been submitted directly to Cavanagh Kelly by Board and SMT.

The Board felt strongly that a recommendation should have been part of the report.

12. Any Other Business

12.1 Climate change to be discussed next month.

Balance Scorecard to be reviewed next month.

12.2 Gala event 25th March 2021 – complimentary ticket for staff approved by Board. Multiple guests have been requested to hold the date.

SMT & Board to review list of attendees.

13. Date of next meeting

24th November 2021 at 10am- - USEL premises.