# ULSTER SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT LTD

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

Minutes of a Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday 7th March 2023 at 14.00 Teams Meeting

# Present

Mr W Leatham Chairman

Mr D O’Hara Director

Mrs S Wakfer Director

Mr S Jackson Head of Manufacturing & Recycling

Mr D Cowan Head of Employment Services

Mr R Donnelly Director

Ms M Hegarty Head of Finance

Mr R Havlin Director

1. **Welcome and Apologies**
   1. J Cowan and D Duffy apologies noted.
2. **Conflicts of Interest**
   1. Noted conflict with SMT on receiving vouchers (discussed below)
3. **Business Update:**
   1. S Jackson provided an update on the potential DMR contract and the expenditure on the bins. Timeline uncertain may be 1st May. This will be additional income.
   2. S Jackson provided an update on the furniture tender recently submitted by USEL.
   3. S Jackson noted that the business case for the vans was underway but the department advised its better to hire than purchase second hand vans. However buying new vans is not an option as it has a lead time of 18 months.
   4. S Jackson took board through various items of expenditure we are looking to incur prior to year end.
      1. Marketing expenditure includes website design costs, marketing to push Belfast Castle and Ballycopeland as well as strategy Plans being printed for all of the staff.
      2. Additional uniforms and PPE to be purchased for sewing staff, factory staff as well as café staff.
      3. Tablets to be provided for board members to make board meetings easier.
      4. S Jackson raised the possibility of recognising staff’s hard work with a voucher scheme. It was noted anything above £50 should go through payroll. Board asked S Jackson to discuss and gain approval from department.
      5. Board approved expenditure listed with the exception of clarity re the vouchers.
   5. S Jackson provided an update on the payment of £552 that had been discussed in the POD committee and noted that per the department it was not confirmed within NICS and therefore USEL could not pay it to staff.
   6. D Cowan provided an update on ESF funding replacement delay, may not hear until start/middle April. 7 staff due to finish, would cost £14k approx. to keep them on month of April (they can work on LCCC LMP) which would be in line with what other consortium partners are doing with staff. Board agreed right decision to keep them on until 30 April 2023.
   7. S Jackson confirmed that CPD have agreed to keep confidential waste at current prices and have committed to discussions on price in light of RLW requirement in January 2024.
   8. S Jackson provided an update on the furniture contract. Expected to start 1 April, awaiting official confirmation.
4. **Any Other Business**
   1. Chairman noted potential constructive dismissal case lodged with LRA. Legal advice sought with Carson McDowell.
   2. D Cowan provided an update on a potential redundancy route and noted a robust business case would be required and would be presented to board for review. R Donnelly noted that always a risk when making a role redundant and asked what USEL policy is for compulsory redundancy and voluntary redundancy. Board agreed would be better if voluntary redundancy route, S Jackson to review policy and go from there.
   3. Chairman noted that whistleblowing policy had been sent to Head of Governance and issues were noted within USEL policy which she is going to raise with Stephen McGlew. 12 pages ALB guidance document received. Chairman requested POD to alter whistleblowing policy based on new guidance.
   4. Chairman thanked everyone for attending special board meeting.