

ULSTER SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT LTD

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

Minutes of a Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday 27th January 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

1.1 A perceived conflict of interest relating to the pension redesign for the SMT.

1.2 A perceived conflict of interest was noted by R. Donnelly who has taken up an associate role with SIB NI.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 DECEMBER 2020

- a. Approval
- b. Matters Arising
- c. Actions

2.1 Send out 36 IA areas, with 4 proposed, discuss at ARAC meeting in Feb 21.

2.2 Send safe guarding training link to members not completed.

Approved with amendments to spelling.

3. Chairman's Report

3.1 Loss of member of staff – Board expresses sincere sympathy to their family and colleagues.

3.2 PPF levy – special status confirmed based on constitution.

3.3 Ms Duff (Department) for minutes at ARAC.

4. Pension Scheme Update

No update to be given. Mercers working on calculations.

5. Chief Executive's Report

5.1 Ballymena Operation – started 2 and a half years ago. Pilot founded on Gallahers Trust support. Approval being sought to close Ballymena site based on profitability. Mr Atkinson explained current contracts in place. Mr Atkinson explained the initial thoughts regarding a Partnership agreement with M&EA council – which has not been honoured. Mr Atkinson explained that we have the current space on the Belfast site to complete the contracts currently in place. No guaranteed income beyond 2023 with a £420k commitment to rental costs for remaining 7 years of break in lease is not utilised. Proposed plan to move all

Mrs Wakfer reiterated the point about proportionate risk and then enquired about the pathways for staff members that may be terminated. Mr Atkinson explained the programmes we offer and how we would move these individuals across these programmes. Mr Leathem reiterated the support mechanisms put in place in 2019 relating to the termination staff members with disabilities.

Mr Ballentine-Kearns sent a copy of the Ballymena PPE to all Board members during the meeting.

Board to review PPE, with a decision will be made at a followup meeting next week.

5.2 Bedding Operations – continually increasing raw material costs, difficulties regarding Brexit implications and staff costs continue to increase whilst income diminishes. The bedding element of the business cannot be cost neutral and a proposal has been made to stop it in its entirety.

Mr Leathem asked Mr Atkinson to confirm that this would be a gradual wind down and that staff would be redeployed. Mr Atkinson confirmed the current use of furlough.

Mr Atkinson, Mr Jackson, Mr Cowan and Mr Ballentine-Kearns to pull together an a method of tapering down process and carrying out a cost transformation exercise.

5.3 Capital Requirements – confirmation for capital cover relating to automated baler. To be on site by 31/03/21. A capital plan has been issued to Dept for 2021/22 (all subject to business case and capital availability) for approx. £450k. Call on 18/02/21 with all ALBs relating to “budget stocktake”.

The Board approved the draft 2021-22 budget discussed in December meeting.

5.4 Legal challenge re NICS confidential shredding contract has been withdrawn – award expected on 01/03/21.

6. Finance & HR report

6.1 The Directors reviewed the summary financial position vs budget for December. This showed a £64k deficit in the month.

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

	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%

6.3 No further updates on HR

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

No issues to report.

8. Health & safety update

Structural engineer preliminary report due at end of this week relating to roof in back building.

Based on current COVID restrictions, USEL will now avail of flexi-furlough on Fridays whilst restrictions last. Submission to Dept has been sent today.

9. Risk Management/Register

Following the previous Board meeting, a meeting was held with Mrs Wakfer, Mr Atkinson and Mr Ballentine-Kearns to reformat the risk register. This has been done and approved by Board and will be discussed at next ARAC meeting.

10. Policy process

To be explained as all documents accessible on shared drive, with most up to date versions. Renewals to be made on 3 year review and only substantial/fundamental changes to be brought to the Board for approval.

Only policy changes will be flagged to Board going forward.

Change of process approved by USEL Board.

Cloud register to be included in shared drive

11. Any Other Business

11.1 Strategy Day – needs to be done in person. Business/corporate plan has been rolled over to March 2022 (focus on consolidation). To be picked up later in year.

11.2 Letter from Minister re: Climate Change. Response due 27/2/21.

11.3 Partnership agreement

A conference call scheduled to cover PPE, 11.2 & 11.3 on 3rd February at 10.30am.

Overview of ISO14001 targets to be sent to Board.

11.4 Es adjustment treatment

11.5 Mr Duffy suggested the proposal of a finance committee

Mr Atkinson and Mr Ballentine-Kearns to identify a TOR for finance committee.

Bill, SBK, William, Ray, Damian on FC.

Joan, Dermot, Sarah and Raymond on Policy Committee.

11.6 Discussion to be had with Mr Duffy regarding USEL and Belfast met working collaboratively.

Mr Duffy to set up conversation between USEL and Belfast Met.

12. Date of next meeting

ARAC 9.30am on 24/2/21.

Board on 24/2/21 at 10.30am.