# ULSTER SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT LTD

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

Minutes of a Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday 26th July 2023 at 10.30am at Cambrai Street

# Present

Mr W Leatham Chairman

Mr D O’Hara Director

Ms J Cowan Director

Mrs S Wakfer Director

Mr R Donnelly Director

Mr R Havlin Director

Mr S Jackson Head of Manufacturing & Recycling

Mr D Cowan Head of Employment Services

Ms M Hegarty Head of Finance

Mr D Duffy Director

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

Chairman gave his thanks to all for attending the additional board meeting.

1. **Conflicts of Interest**
   1. Conflict of interest noted for SMT with regards discussing the pension, salaries, and temporary promotions/additional payments.
2. **Minutes of the previous meetings held on 28th June 2023**
   1. **Approval:**
      * 1. Minutes approved by board post few amendments.
        2. M Hegarty to send minutes from November 22 – June 23 to board for review before uploading to website.
   2. **Matters Arising** – on agenda or action log.
   3. **Action Log** – action log reviewed and updated accordingly.
      1. D Cowan provided an update on the possibility of using Beaman’s for carrying out job evaluations for middle management and below.
         * 1. It was noted as it will be under £10k 2 quotes will be required and an internal business case.
           2. D Cowan noted that money is in the budget for middle management and below.
           3. Board members had a discussion on the potential benchmarking exercise and what pay scales should be used in the benchmarking exercise.
           4. Board acknowledged the risk around recruitment and retention because of our current salaries.
           5. D Cowan to discuss with quote providers to see if they can incorporate NJCS and charity sector in benchmarking and email the board.
           6. D Cowan to meet Chairman and Chair of POD separately to move job evaluation process forward.
         1. Mandatory training for the board discussed.
            1. D Cowan to get IT to update the mandatory items for the board.
            2. Board to have completed for September board.
3. **Employer representative DB Pension**
   1. Chairman noted with J Cowan departing there is a vacancy for a member as the employer representation trustee for the DB pension scheme. Anyone wants to volunteer approach the Chair.
   2. Chairman provided an insight into the training involved and the role. J Cowan noted that the chair of the DB trust is the expert and provides guidance and support.
   3. Chairman discussed pension provision.
   4. Chairman discussed the possibility of including in board advertisement as replacement for J Cowan if no volunteers.
4. **Temporary Promotions/Additional Payments Policy**
   1. D Cowan provided an update on the policy and the feedback received from the department.
   2. The board discussed the roles of the various people receiving the payments at present.
   3. Chairman noted consensus of the board is we need something around additional payments and should work with department to bring this in.
   4. Chairman noted that we continue with payments until resolved.
5. **Raising a concern Policy**
   1. Feedback received from department on draft policy was discussed by the board and boards response to feedback was collated.
   2. Louise to amend raising concern policy for updates as agreed by board and Send to Chair of POD and Chairman for review before it is sent back to Department.
6. **Action plan USEL policies**
   1. Action plan on updating USEL policies was presented to board by SMT.
   2. Board requested any changes to current policies should be tracked and if no changes should note no changes.
   3. Policies to be updated, reviewed by SMT with recommendations to be presented to relevant committee and then the board.
   4. HR officer will look after listing of policies going forward, to ensure they are tracked and reviewed timely.
7. **USEL current pension**
   1. Chairman noted that the board had agreed to review the USEL pension once the DB was closed.
   2. Chairman noted that he has already raised this issue with the department, and they are aware this is something the board want to look at.
   3. Chairman noted that the previous benchmarking paper which was issued to the board in Nov 21 was done in-house.
   4. Independent benchmarking exercise on pensions to be carried out by Mercers and presented at August board.
8. **Risk register**
   1. Risk register was noted by board.
   2. Chair of ARAC provided update on ARAC meeting held on 26/07/23:
      1. ARAC self-assessment checklist was discussed and updated.
      2. Requirement for training and skills matrix for members was noted.
      3. Department have sent through some internal audit recommendations which the ARAC are looking at.
      4. USEL fraud arrangements to be reviewed as part of a working group arranged on 4th September 23.
      5. ARAC recommended board members should be provided with USEL tablets for use during board/committee meetings to reduce cyber risk. Board agreed, David Cowan to action.
9. **Any Other Business**
   1. Chairman acknowledged J Cowan contribution to the board and committees over the last 4 years and noted his thanks.
10. **Date of next meeting – 30th August 2023**
    1. Raymond on holiday sends his apologies.
    2. POD meeting to move to 23rd August 10.00am, Finance committee meeting 23rd August at 12pm.