

## **ULSTER SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT LTD**

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

Minutes of a Board of Directors Meeting  
10.30, Wednesday 30 January 2019  
Cambrai Street, Belfast

### **Present**

Mr J Perry	Chairman
Mr T Hinds	Director
Dr G Adams	Director
Mr D Mackay	Director
Mr A Bennett	Director
Ms C Magill	Director
Mr W Atkinson	Chief Executive
Mrs SJ Mowbray	Company Secretary/Head of Corporate Services

### **Apologies**

#### **1. Conflict of Interest**

1.1. No perceived/actual conflicts of interest were noted.

#### **2. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2018**

2.1. Minutes from meeting on 19 December 2018 were approved.

2.2. Actions from previous meetings were noted as cleared:

- Functionality on the Intranet, in relation to a section for Board papers, will be developed and tested.

#### **3. Chairman's Business**

3.1. The Chairman updated members in relation to:

- In relation to Board appointments, the Department have proposed that the three Board members whose term which were due to expire on 31 January 2019 will be extended by six months, subject to Board members agreement. All three members agreed, in principle, to the further extension;
- The Chairman, CEO and Head of Corporate Services met with the Sponsor Branch and Business Consultancy Service to discuss the Terms of Reference for the Tailored Review and the process involved.

## **4. Pension Scheme Update**

4.1. The Chair updated members in relation to:

- The Chairman provided an update on status of pension scheme to the Department;
- The Department have appointed an actuary to review the pension benefit re-design business case. Comments from the economists and actuary will be received in due course. The deadline for approval of the business case is 31 March 2019, to allow sufficient time for a 60-day consultation and implementation of any re-design by 5 July 2019;
- Pension Trustees attended a meeting in relation to the outcome of a recent guaranteed minimum pension equalisation (GMPE) legal case. The Board noted that there is a potential issue associated with GMPE for Usel's pension scheme. Further advice is due from Usel's pension administrator and pension scheme's legal advisor;
- Usel's pension administrator is proceeding with the potential appointment of a professional Trustee.

## **5. Chief Executive's Report**

5.1. The Directors reviewed the Chief Executive's Report which had been circulated with Board papers. The following was noted:

### **New Business development**

- 5.2. Usel has been in discussions with several new mattress recycling partners and can now confirm we have secured a new pilot project with another Council and another possible partner looking to confirm in the coming weeks.
- 5.3. Discussions continue with two new partners regarding growing our Ability Café network. A further update will be provided at the February board.
- 5.4. A follow up meeting with potential new partner who is facilitating an upcoming major sporting event took place. The meeting was very positive and a further meeting has been agreed to finalise the detail around a range of products that will be sold at the event. This will provide Usel with a huge PR opportunity and one which allow further development of Usel story and brand.

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

- 5.5. Usel are in the process of developing and implementing a volunteer framework in order to offer volunteering opportunities to individuals seeking to support Usel.

- 5.6. This will be a new area of development and will commence with a scoping exercise, for an initial three month pilot project. Two individuals have volunteered and a terms of reference has been drafted for the volunteering model.
- 5.7. Initial discussions have taken place with a large charity with a number of retail outlets, to explore how both organisations can work together more effectively in relation to sourcing items for its retail outlets and also how we might work together on a range of recycling opportunities.

## **AP: Develop a Volunteer Policy and governance around volunteering.**

### **New Site Location**

- 5.8. Usel's location in the Portadown area is under review, with the intention to relocate. Several possible options have been explored, factoring in a range of considerations, including ease of access, travel links and cost.
- 5.9. Official opening of new Ballymena site is scheduled for 6 March 2019.

### **Re Branding**

- 5.10. As Usel may be required to amend its Memorandum of Understanding and Articles of Association in due course, this may provide an opportunity to rebrand and revisit the option of an organisation name change. The Board are content for initial, exploratory work to commence to further understand the benefits and risks involved.

## **6. Head of Corporate Services' Report**

### **Finance**

- 6.1. The Directors reviewed the summary financial position against budget, for **December**, and noted an operating loss of £54k. Budget forecast for **December** was £33k deficit, therefore there is a variance of £21k. This variance was driven by inaccurate profiling for December's income, resulting in a £9k under performance. In addition, Usel staff received a cost of living pay increase, greater than what was originally budgeted.
- 6.2. YTD a deficit of £24k was noted. Budget forecast for YTD position, as at 31 **December** was a surplus of £3k, which is a £27k negative variance. Outturn is largely in line with budget. There are two significant contributing factors: cover for long term sickness absence and the cost of living pay increase.
- 6.3. Any additional clarification requested by Board members was provided, including detail on the Pay Remit.

### **HR**

6.4. No substantive issues to note.

6.5. Usel are continuing to engage with its out-sourced HR business partner as required and monitor the contract spend each month.

### **ICT & Compliance**

6.6. In addition to delivering the ICT Strategy, recent activity included:

- Project Planning and work arrangements for new Ballymena site to include security, infrastructure and insurance;
- Working with DPO to implement suggested changes from ICO in relation to GDPR;
- Continued work on the U.net staff portal project. This will now feature a new 'U.Save' element which will be a rewards programme for staff with discounts from various outlets in Northern Ireland. Estimated launch is for end of February 2019. A launch event is being planned;
- Managing the procurement and installation of new external CCTV cameras in Cambrai Street;
- The sourcing and implementation of a new postal service for Usel. This will now be a franking machine with pay as you use and will replace the current Postal Sort system;
- Working on a new software trial for quality assurance verification in relation to mattresses in production, using a tablet and eForm. A four week trial will take place between January and February.

6.7. There were no incidences of ICT Breaches to report.

### **Business Development and Marketing**

6.8. In addition to delivering the Communication Plan, recent activity included:

- Preparation for the opening of Ballymena Site – new signage, PR and promotion of site, launch event
- New bedding brochures for contract and retail customers
- Sustainable Ireland Feature
- Communication of Social Impact 2017-18
- National Bed Month Campaign
- SE100 Submission
- FSB Award Submission

6.9. Communications to staff continues to operate in line with plan. No issues or concerns have been raised.

## **Quality & Policy**

6.10. Recent activity included:

- Rollout of disability awareness sessions to all staff
- Completion of all Disability Action Plan Actions
- Autism Awareness Training to all new support staff
- Preparation of annual participant and employer surveys
- Policy review and development
- The following “U.matter.” initiatives were delivered:
  - Lunch & Learn session Budget Better (Financial Wellbeing)
  - “New Year New U” Launched
  - Action Cancer Big Bus Health Checks & Breast Screen
  - Yoga block 2 commenced

## **7. Adult Safe Guarding Issues**

7.1. No new issues to report.

## **8. Health & Safety**

8.1. Health & Safety forum continues to operate on monthly basis.

## **9. Balanced Scorecard 2018-19 Q3 update**

9.1. The Board noted the progress against targets outlined in Q3 of the Balanced Scorecard.

## **10. Draft Budget 2019-20**

10.1. The Board noted the potential deficit projected for 2019-20.

10.2. This deficit will be communicated to the Department in the 2019-20 Business Plan, as part of the process to bid for the 2019-20 grant-in-aid allocation.

## **11. Risk management**

11.1. The Board noted the changes to the risk register.

## **12. Policies for Approval**

12.1. The following policies were approved:

- None

12.2. The following draft policies were submitted for approval in February's Board:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Positive Behaviours Policy
- Marking for Improvement Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Young People and Adults Safeguarding Policy

**AP: Policies specifically for the Training for Success programme should be referenced as such.**

**AP: Social media policy should be updated in relation to misuse of Company logo.**

## **13. Any Other Business**

13.1. None.

## **14. Date of Next Meeting**

14.1. Change of meetings to 17 April and 30 May.