

ULSTER SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT LTD

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

Minutes of a Board of Directors Meeting
10.30, Wednesday 27 February 2019
Cambrai Street, Belfast

Present

Mr J Perry	Chairman
Mr T Hinds	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

Dr G Adams	Director
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1. Conflict of Interest

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

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2019

2.1. Minutes from meeting on 30 January 2019 were approved.

2.2. Actions from previous meetings were noted as cleared:

- A Volunteer Policy and governance around volunteering has been drafted and included in March Board papers for review and approval;
- Policies specifically for the Training for Success programme have been referenced as such;
- The Social Media policy has been updated in relation to misuse of Company logo;
- Due diligence was completed on two potential volunteers. Induction has been organised for a date in March.

3. Chairman's Business

3.1. The Chairman updated members in relation to:

- The Chairman has liaised with Public Appointments Unit in relation to tenure of a number of Board members. It has been confirmed that Mr

Mackay and Mr Hinds terms have been extended to the end of April. Mr Adams and Mr Bennet terms have been extended to the end of July. Mr Perry has been extended to the latest, end of July. In addition, the Chairman raised concerns in relation to appointments of Board members and their potential role as a Pension Trustee for the Usel pension Scheme;

- Formal opening of Ballymena site is scheduled for 6 March;
- The Tailored Review process is ongoing. Interviews have taken place with the Chairman, Chief Executive and Head of Corporate Services. Interviews are planned with senior officials in the Department over following week. The draft report is anticipated by the end of March.

4. Pension Scheme Update

4.1. The Chair updated members in relation to:

- Mercer, on behalf of the Trustees, is proceeding with the appointment of an Independent Trustee. Once the Benefit Re-Design has been approved, the Independent Trustee will be appointed to help with implementation;
- A meeting has been scheduled with Mercer in relation to the impact of Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) Equalisation.

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:

Stakeholder Engagement

5.2. A number of visits took place this month, including the new Director of Workplace Preparation and the lead of our sponsor team. The visit involved a tour and an overview of Usel, supported with arrange of employer visits to meet some of our staff and clients. This provided an opportunity for Department officials to meet employers to better understand the benefits provided by the full range of the employment programmes Usel deliver.

5.3. Early discussions have taken place with a new strategic partner in developing a new pilot programme that links physical and mental wellbeing to the world of work. In supporting this new programme, we have engaged with University of Ulster around the area of social prescribing with the view to developing a longitudinal study of the benefits of this new approach.

New Business development

5.4. A bench marking visit to Royal Strathclyde Blindcraft Industries (RSBi) in Glasgow took place, to better understand their model of supported employment. RSBi are a strategic partner to Glasgow City Council and have a long history of adopting innovative approaches to support a growing business.

5.5. A process of piloting a new facilities management pilot with one of the large housing associations in NI is being designed. The programme will focus on supporting the housing association to reduce tenant complaints in a range of operational areas. Initially the pilot will support two new jobs, however this could evolve into a new area of opportunity.

5.6. University of Ulster has appointed an individual to the Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP). The pool of candidates was of a very high standard and we feel a strong candidate has been recruited, that will add value to the project. The start date for the new role has been agreed as 1 April.

AP: To clarify ownership of Intellectual Property rights on expiration of KTP programme.

New Site Location

5.7. Preparations for the official opening of the new site in Ballymena is progressing as planned. The official opening will take place on the 6th March.

6. Head of Corporate Services' Report

Finance

6.1. The Directors reviewed the summary financial position against budget, for **January**, and noted an operating surplus of £34k. Budget forecast for **January** was £35k surplus, therefore there is a variance of £1k. We are therefore in line with our forecast.

6.2. YTD a surplus of £11k was noted. Budget forecast for YTD position, as at 31 **January** was a surplus of £39k, which is a £28k negative variance. Whilst 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.

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:

- Completing infrastructure and security work for new Ballymena site e.g. EPOS till system, CCTV, Wi-Fi and computers;
- Development work on the Unet platform which will be formally launched on 27th March, following the Board meeting;
- Consultation held with staff on a new digital mileage system. ICT department will work on a training plan for users;
- New CCTV system now fully installed in Cambrai Street with additional cameras to cover all external areas of the site;
- Aspiring leaders programme is now complete and all attendees will present a business improvement presentation to senior management team at the end of February. Feedback is that it has been a positive experience for those attending;
- Planning for internal audit in February across ICT and HR functions.

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:

- Submission of various awards: Belfast Business Award Entry – Social Enterprise of the Year and Green Business of the Year);
- Finalists for Federation of Small Business – Green Business of the Year;
- IFA Partnership – Partnering for Social Inclusion Activity;
- Preparation for official opening of Ballymena site, including advertising and promotion; Ballymena Chamber of Commerce Membership; invites sent; and, press release.

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:

- Annual participant and employer surveys being issued;
- Volunteering Handbook Development;
- Observations in STRIDE, WNI & ES all carried out;
- Focus Groups being facilitated for all Employment Services Programmes.

U.matter.

- “New Year New U” continues;
- Action Cancer Big Bus Health Checks & Breast Screen plus additional Action Cancer Health Checks were on site;
- Time to Talk Day held at Belfast Site with a Coffee Morning;
- Thoughtful Thursdays commenced on Time to Talk Day with “Mindful Minutes” to run over breaktime in the quiet room;
- ‘Walk and Talk’ meetings are taking momentum with the Management Team;
- Management Team Volunteering Day Organised – NI Hospice.

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. Draft Business Plan and Budget 2019-20

9.1.The Board approved the 2019-20 Business Plan and Budget, subject to a minor amendments.

AP: Table 1, heading in right hand side column and minor typo re 2018-19.

10.Risk management

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

AP: GMP Equalisation to be included.

11.Policies for Approval

11.1. The following policies were approved:

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

11.2. No policies were submitted for approval in March’s Board.

12. Any Other Business

12.1. None.

13. Date of Next Meeting

13.1. 27 March 2019.