

Board Meeting

26th September 2018, 5.30 pm, Rothes Halls

Present: Dr David Caldwell (Chair) Brian Lawrie, Frank Quinault, Fiona Davidson, Councillor Lesley Backhouse, Councillor Ian Cameron, Councillor Jane Ann Liston, Derek Bottom, Professor Nic Beech

Attending: Heather Stuart, Kirsty Keay, Julie Aitchison (mins), Karen Taylor, Verdi Clark, Ailsa Gormley, Lesley Mcnaughton, Gillian Love

Apologies: Michelle Sweeney, Councillor Graham Ritchie, Sarah Scarlett

1. Arrival and Board Induction

Introductions were made round the table and Gillian Love was welcomed as a potential new board member.

DC thanked the staff members involved in the induction session that afternoon.

2. Strategic Session

Involvement of Young People on Boards

Fiona Davidson began a conversation around diversity that moved on to how we engage with a greater age range on the Board. This included ensuring gender balance, how we gather insights and how we share them. The purpose of the session was to provide insights about how we engage with a more diverse range of people.

A Mastermind quiz then took place featuring Karen Taylor as quiz master, Nic Beech and Brian Lawrie and Derek Bottom answered questions.

Ailsa Gormley spoke about her experience encouraging teenagers (13-18) to come into our libraries via the reckless readers online book group.

Verdi Clark spoke about how our theatre programme connects and engages young people.

Lesley Mcnaughton spoke about the diversity of volunteers, their different roles and their contribution to the trust.

Karen Taylor ran through the key considerations when involving young people on the board.

David Caldwell asked if anyone had any objections to having young people on boards, no objections were recorded.

Gillian Love and Brian Lawrie felt that it would be difficult for young people to attend Board meetings in their current format. Frank Quinault thought that it may be an idea to include them in other working groups before having them on the board. Councillor Jane Anne Liston asked what the definition of young people was, and Fiona Davidson advised that the only criteria is to lower the average age of the board.

Councillor Ian Cameron asked if an online solution might make the Board accessible to young people, a vlog, blog or a special board meeting that is specifically aimed at young people.

Action – Heather Stuart and Michelle Sweeney to meet with Derek Bottom and Fiona Davidson for a follow up discussion on Involvement of Young People on Boards. The outcomes of this meeting to be shared with the next meeting.

3. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The apologies were noted above.

4. Chair's Business

There was some confidential discussion around the CEO job profile and pay review along with absence and staffing within the Trust.

The Nominations remit has been submitted to Burness for review. They have come back with advice on how this should be formatted and ensure that what we say in our remit is true and correct in our articles. Agreement of written procedures should be confirmed over the next few weeks.

Action – The work on the Nominations Committee to continue, and an update to be provided to the next Board Meeting.

5. Minutes

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting

Matters Arising

Changes had been made to the Agenda and CEO report based on feedback from the last meeting.

Action - It was agreed that the items in green from the last meeting should be removed from the document, and that only the first three columns should be highlighted.

6. Budget

The 2018/19 budget was discussed along with the implications of the unconfirmed pay award. It was agreed that support from the Board would be required to take this to Fife Council and acknowledgement was needed from Fife Council that FCT will not absorb this cost. It was agreed that any inflationary constraints should be funded by Fife Council.

Action –Negotiation with Fife Council to take place with Board Support to ensure that costs of the unconfirmed pay award are covered.

7. Management Fee Review

the CEO presented the Business Plan and highlighted the 3 financial strategies given to FCT from Fife Council and the implications of each.

There was some discussion around the plan and it was thought to be an extremely helpful and enthusiastic document. The ambitious nature of scenario one was felt to be the direction of travel most suited to the Trust.

There was some question that the numbers were in the report were optimistic, but it was confirmed that the numbers had been underestimated to show an understanding of pressure areas. It was agreed that we do not want to promise what can't be delivered. It was felt that catering was a positive example to highlight.

Everyone involved in pulling the Business Plan together in a short period was thanked for their hard work. The Board approved the Business Plan to be submitted to Fife Council

Action – The Business Plan to be submitted to Fife Council at the meeting on 5th November.

8. Strategic Plan Development

HS gave an update on progress and next steps, and confirmed that Michelle McWilliams would be working on the story and narrative around our strategy ensuring this is reflected in our values.

Action – DW to send mind map of the Strategic Plan Overview/priorities to Board Members

9. New Approaches to Board Meetings

It was agreed this had been covered earlier in the meeting.

10. Performance Report

The Chair asked for questions or thoughts on the performance report

It was agreed that there should be some action identified around absence levels at Iona House. It was also suggested that it might be beneficial to have a Board member attend exit interviews, although it was noted that light turnover and people leaving for the right reasons can be beneficial. The length and level of detail in the report was thought to be good.

11. Chief Executive's Report

Heather gave a verbal CEO update highlighting the staff day event, libraries opening hours review, proposed St Andrews development and commercial opportunities.

It was suggested that the back of any business cards created for Board members should be used as an advertising space for commercial opportunities.

Action – A new paper to come to the next Board Meeting on the St Andrews Development providing there is new information to offer. The Board to be informed if significant change happens before the Board Meeting.

Action – Business Cards to be developed for Board Members.

12. Updates from Conveners

The Minutes from the FCSTL and HR Committee were considered and it was confirmed that the membership of the trading sub was being reviewed, along with the Employee Privacy Policy.

13. AOCB

The Board trip to the Rip it Up exhibition in Edinburgh would go ahead on 27th October. Board Members to confirm to Diane White if they are attending dinner as well as the exhibition.

Date of next meeting (including the AGM) – 6th December, venue: Rothes Halls