



THE DEVON & EXETER INSTITUTION
LIBRARY & READING ROOMS
(Founded 1813)
Registered Charity No. 1172445

Part 2 Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting

Held in the Reading Room at 11.00 on 22 January 2020

Trustees present: Margaret Knight (MK), Derek Knight (DK), Robert Guyver (RG), Henry French (HF), Richard Templeton (RT), Shane Cormie (SC), John Reeves (JR)

Staff present: Emma Dunn (ED)

1. Apologies: Geoff Roberts (GR), Sandra Bond (SB), Emma Laws (EL)
2. Conflicts of Interest: None reported
4. Minutes of the last meeting of 13 November 2019 - were agreed
5. Matters arising
DK reported that the WebCollect online and telephone support service is still not functioning but the main functions are still operational. The annual premium renewal is due in February 2020 and we should review payment in view of the reduced service. Alternative membership management systems have been researched but no better alternative has been identified.

The 2020 AGM date has been confirmed for 2.30pm on Thu 22 October at the Guildhall

6. Chair's report: MK
MK proposed and it was agreed that the Leadership Team (approved in the Pt 1 session on governance review) would start immediately.
7. Hon Treasurer's Report: JR
JR reported that the current bank balances are satisfactory. The Investment account stands at £291k and shows a 4% growth since June 2019. JR confirmed that the level of reserves is still just within audit guidelines

Operational budgets: Subscription income of £30k is slightly higher comparative to this time last year. Current operational total income is £4k higher than total expenditure

JR noted that EL is addressing the unspent £4k in the Care of the Collection budget

Budgets heads will be re-allocated following Many Noon's resignation

JR

Grant budgets: The income from the Pilgrim Trust is still overstated in the project account and should read £21,000. The full balance of the grant will be drawn down shortly. MK confirmed that the original prints recently digitised will be returned to the DEI by TownsWeb next week.

JR confirmed that mis-postings currently shown on the budget codes O & F will be corrected. ED to confer with Lee Bingham on how the £30,000 c/f from last year is shown

ED

ED will contact James Anthony Edwards re payment of the University grant this year ED

Membership report: Heritage and open days in the autumn attracted large numbers of new members. Overall membership has remained static since last year but the profile of membership is changing with less individual and more couple membership being taken up. ED currently only analyses targeted membership but will undertake a more general membership analysis during the NLHF project.

Corporate membership: Following membership enquiries from RAMM and the City of Literature, it was decided to change the name of our current corporate membership offer to Group Membership. MK to ask the Membership Secretaries to implement the name change and revised payments for existing and new corporate/ group members and SC will review our printed and e-literature to ensure consistency MK SC

FHRM meeting: DK will request Ceri McWilliams to update the Gift Aid forms and contact donors over the last few years to complete retrospective declarations for JR to submit a Gift Aid claim this financial year. JR to compile a list of donors for Ceri DK JR

The proposal to adopt the Occupational Health policy, using specialist providers as and when required, was agreed.

JR confirmed that Katherine Chant will be taken off the list of cheques signatories. No further replacements are required as most transactions are now sent by BACS

The reallocation of budgets to create a £1000 marketing budget for staff time and materials this financial year was approved.

Risk Register: JR identified the NLHF application as a new financial risk and explained the stringent NLHF procedures (described in item 7 of the P&P minutes of their meeting on 15 January). ED is currently working on an action plan to facilitate this. As NLHF funding is drawn down incrementally and retrospectively there could be a cash flow risk but this will be mitigated by rigorous management. ED confirmed that the previous NLHF project of £800k was completed without using any DEI operational funds and stated that there is a buffer of £41k unrestricted funds still available from completed project grants.

ED has drafted tender documents in anticipation of a successful application and any recruitment will conform to standard DEI employment practice with the probable involvement of Historic England at the interview stage for a conservation architect.

JR reiterated that ongoing management must be with the full understanding of all trustees that NLHF grants must only be used for approved purposes and this is enshrined in a contractual agreement which will be signed by the Chair on behalf of all trustees. He will need to come back to the Board if the project budget required any reallocation or if there was a cash flow problem. It was agreed that JR/ ED will draft a new risk to be added to the Register JR ED

ED noted that the resignation of the housekeeper offered the potential to use the cottage premises and she would inform the NLHF of this opportunity which has arisen after our application was submitted. There was a risk of concern by members over this and other changes arising from the NLHF bid that would need to be managed. It was suggested that

annual membership fees should not be increased during disruption caused building project work.

8. Hon Secretary's report: DK

DK noted that the terms of reference for the Housekeeping Committee will need to be reviewed following changes to the staffing and governance review agreed in the Pt 1 meeting.

It was agreed not to appoint a like for like replacement following the resignation of the housekeeper as the duties of this post do not reflect the developing needs of the DEI. DK proposed to appoint Southside Cleaning Services to provide two hours daily cleaning (Mon - Sat) at the DEI starting from Monday 3 February and their cleaners would secure the building at normal closing times. This was agreed nem con.

No replacement lunch service has yet been agreed as potential suppliers have indicated that it would not provide them with an economic return. It was agreed that a Courtenay Room catering service was valuable membership asset and should be retained if possible. DK is pursuing options.

DK

Health & Safety: revisions to procedures and responsibilities for emergency evacuation, fire alarms and emergency contacts are being developed by DK

DK

9. Marketing proposal: SC

SC reported on the actions taken so far to implement the marketing recommendations outlined in the proposal agreed at the FHRM committee. Ceri McWilliams had already taken up the additional two hours for marketing duties.

10. Librarian's report: EL

EL had submitted a written report in her absence. It was agreed that the Expectations of Members form needed to be reviewed and that EL, ED and SC would review this in consultation with the Membership Secretaries

EL

ED

SC

EL's proposal to allow students and researchers to take photographs of our collection for study purposes only free of charge was agreed nem con. The proposal to introduce best practice measures for use of the library collection was endorsed by the Board

11. Partnerships and Programme Manager's report: ED

Report of the P&P committee: it was agreed that ED will now Chair this committee. ED noted that the organisation of the evening and lunchtime talks will be brought under the umbrella of the DEI programming and she will be arranging a meeting with the organisers of these events.

Illustrating our Region Revealed digitisation project: ED noted that NLHF funding has been sought for the purchase of the TownsWeb online archive website design and build and associated staff time. EL and Carol Anderson are also pursuing additional funding through other sources.

The DEI will support Exeter's recently acquired status as a UNESCO City of Literature with a programme of events

Programme Manager report: Victoria Allott has been appointed as NLHF project officer to advocate our case. Responsibility for book conservation has now been taken on by EL. A new display will be erected in the foyer in March. ED noted that there has been a significant increase in DEI social media activity in recent months

Global Lives: In a short discussion on some members' reaction to the blue plaque display, RG indicated that his main concern was that some, especially those relating to General Buller, had factual inaccuracies. HF said that this was an issue to be addressed by University tutors rather than the DEI. ED stressed the benefit of making our collection accessible and that this partnership working was fundamental to our funding strategy. ED will update the curatorial policy to reflect the Global Lives process.

ED

10. Communications Action Points

It is essential that all trustees, staff and volunteers understand the implication of all upcoming changes and are consistently positive when communicating with members

11. Any other business: None. The meeting closed at 12.55

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 4 March at 10:00.