

### Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting

Wednesday 16 September 2020: at 10:00: meeting held by Zoom

Trustees participating - Margaret Knight (MK), Derek Knight (DK), Henry French (HF), Geoff Roberts (GR), Sandra Bond (SB), Shane Cormie (SC), John Reeves (JR), Richard Templeton (RT), Christopher Chanter (CC) joined the meeting at 10:20

Apologies: Robert Guyver

Staff participating - Emma Laws (EL) Emma Dunn (ED)

#### Presentation of Accounts

Liam Dingle (LD), of Griffin Chartered Accountants, presented the Independently Inspected Financial Statements for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020. He drew the trustees' attention to the following points:

- Unrestricted Reserves of £334,000 are within the limits set in the DEI's Reserves Policy
- The revised presentation of accounts more accurately reflects how our funding is spent on the activities of the DEI
- There are no concerns to which attention should be drawn to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.
- The Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

MK agreed to sign both copies of the report and return to LD who will post the report with the Charity Commission. JR, MK, RT, ED and DK were thanked for their contribution to the preparation of the accounts.

1. Minutes of the last meeting on 19 August 2020 – were agreed

2. Matters arising

MK confirmed that Jeremy Lawford had accepted the offer of Life Membership in recognition of his long and outstanding service to the DEI in various capacities, notably in managing the change to CIO status and his development of the Membership system both of which have been instrumental in transforming the fortunes of the Institution.

JR noted that re-labelling of some budget codes remains to be done

JR

3. Hon. Treasurer's report: JR

The current bank balances are: Coop 1- £19535; Coop 2- £52756; Coop 3- £20,502 (including some NLHF grant for operational contingency)

Amendments were needed to the latest budget report to reflect the correct posting of the two emergency grants received from the NLHF. JR to action

JR

JR reported that Lee Bingham (LB) has advised that the £4200 income from Pilgrim Trust should be deleted as income as this money was received in the 2019/20 fiscal year and is shown in the bank balance. This was agreed by trustees but JR and ED will discuss how to reflect digitisation expenditure

JR/

in the current year for future budget reports

ED

RT queried why the monthly bank reconciliation is not shown in the report. JR to check with LB

JR

#### 4. Recruitment of new trustees and AGM arrangements

MK reported that three applicants had been approved for nomination as trustees following an interview with MK, ED and DK: Max Goodison and Ruth O'Neal for 3-year term of office and Imogen Dudley for a 1-year term. To be confirmed by MK following the deadline for applications on 21 September.

MK

DK proposed that, due to the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 virus, the AGM on 22 October should take place by zoom. DK explained the process of informing all members of the arrangements and various options were discussed. After discussion, the following resolution was proposed by DK, seconded by JR and agreed unanimously:

*The Board agrees that, to ensure good governance, the DEI will hold the 2020 AGM virtually by Zoom on the 22 October. The DEI will follow Charity Commission guidance to ensure that:*

1. *All the requirements of Clause 11 of the DEI constitution are met*
2. *Additional Reports from Officers and staff are circulated at least 14 days in advance of the date of the AGM*
3. *Voting on resolutions and election of trustees are held at the zoom meeting in accordance with Clause 11 (6) of the constitution*

The Board further agreed that the AGM will be recorded and will be made available on the DEI website at later date.

#### 5. Directors' report:

EL reported that the DEI is now open 5 days a week and the booking system is working well. Two sets of notelets have been produced and are now available for sale at the DEI.

EL has been contacted by Andrew Dove, the UoE Library Management System Administrator, to confirm that the DEI wishes to participate in the replacement of the Millennium system. EL has noted that we wish to retain the local class mark field in the new system and to have our holdings available on open access terminals

ED noted that the preparatory planning by all staff has been crucial to the success of the re-opening plans.

ED reported that she has joined several high-profile Devon based cultural and business recovery groups. Heritage assets are a key element in a report by these groups being sent to central government requesting support for local economic regeneration. It also feeds into the Exeter Cultural Strategy and the City of Literature programme where the work of the DEI is being proposed as a best practice model for cultural development.

Phase 3 of the recovery programme has started, combining a mix of live and online activities. The DEI building and grounds are being used to support this e.g. exterior tours, activities in the garden etc. Filming of the first three lectures starts next week and these will be presented online before Christmas. It is hoped that some small live events will be able to take place in the New Year. Virtual school visits continue to take place, using whiteboard technology in schools. Volunteers from the University have been recruited and will be supporting our activity programme both at the DEI and remotely.

The Project work strands are still meeting the critical path required to access drawdown of NLHF funds. The PSG meets next week with Marcus Chantry in attendance. Quotes for heating replacement have been received and plans are underway to create architectural drawings of the entire building and preparing a conservation report on the whole site. ED is meeting with all DEI staff next week to match individual progress against project targets. ED reminded trustees that 72% of the payroll budget is met by NLHF funding and the focus must remain on meeting project targets to maintain drawdown.

ED confirmed that the Exeter Literary Festival has been cancelled this year and it is likely that this event will be subsumed into the City of Literature programming in the future

GR and CC complimented all the staff on the cleanliness and the COVID19-ready organisation of the building noted on their recent visits there.

#### 6. Leadership team

The recent membership figures were discussed. It was agreed that, although membership renewals continue to decline due to the pandemic, there is every reason to be positive about future growth of membership and widening participation given the leading role that the DEI is taking in the cultural regeneration of Exeter, the continuing development of the Next Chapter project and the current financial resilience of the organisation.

#### 7. AOB

ED noted that a business planning/strategy meeting had been planned for November. ED will draft a summary of the aims of this meeting and will contact Diana Moore to arrange provisional dates and these details will be discussed and confirmed at the Annual Meeting of Trustees

ED

In discussion, trustees were open to holding future meetings at different times and days using zoom if required on occasions. Final decisions for 2021 to be made at the AM when new trustees are present

#### 8. Date of next meetings

- AGM - Thursday 22 October at 2.30pm – to be held virtually
- Annual Meeting of Trustees – Tuesday 27 October – *timing to be decided after AGM*
- Board Meeting – Wednesday 11 November at 10.00am (*to be confirmed at the AM*)