

Present: Dr David Caldwell (Chair) Brian Lawrie, Frank Quinault, Fiona Davidson, Councillor Graham Ritchie, Councillor Lesley Backhouse, Sarah Scarlett

Attending: Heather Stuart, Kirsty Keay, Julie Aitchison, Diane White (mins) Dallas Mechan, June Souter, Joanne Tierney, Rachel Thomson, Yvonne Melville, Sabrina Maguire, Valerie O'Connell, Julia Dyke, Verdi Clark

Apologies: Councillor Ian Cameron, Councillor Jane Ann Liston, Derek Bottom, Professor Nic Beech, Michelle Sweeney

1. Arrival and Nexus Tour

Dallas Mechan led the tour of the Nexus Exhibition. The Chair and the CEO thanked Dallas for the tour. The Chair expressed his admiration for the exhibition and stated how he hoped that this would enhance the status of the Trust and its' exhibitions. The Chair asked that thanks be passed to the staff for their work on exhibitions in general and Nexus in particular.

Action – The Board's thanks to be passed to the exhibitions team for their work, and for the Nexus exhibition particularly and to Dallas for the enjoyable tour.

2. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The apologies were noted above. Introductions were made round the table.

3. Minutes

The minute of the meeting of 14th March was submitted. Brian Lawrie agreed to put a paper together to explain the investment risk more clearly and this would be appended to the Board Minutes of 6th June. The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting

Action – Brian Lawrie to put a paper together to explain the investment risk more clearly.

Matters Arising

There was some discussion around the name of the trading subsidiary. Kirsty Keay clarified that if there were any change made it would only be used internally and not with the public. It was agreed that this should be removed from the action grid as this was a matter for the trading subgroup. All other actions were complete.

Kirsty Keay gave an update on the Adam Smith hub project. A capital bid would be submitted to Fife Council for the project, the costings were thought to be £1.4-1.6m. Other funding may also be available to support the project and this would be explored.

DC clarified that he had raised the matter of non-attendance of particular elected member Board members informally politically. No formal approach had as yet been made corporately to Fife Council.

4. Libraries Revisioning

June Souter and Joanne Tierney gave a presentation on Libraries Re-visioning and the Review of Library Opening Hours. Yvonne, Sabrina, Julia, and Valerie presented the goals of the Libraries Revisioning in a bit more detail.

There was a lot of discussion following the presentation and questions and points of clarification. The Board agreed that the presentation had been excellent and extremely informative

It was agreed that communication of any changes to the service or working patterns for staff would be communicated effectively and sensitively with careful consideration of timescales and sequencing. The Board's view was that presentation and communication of the planned changes were the key actions to be managed.

Staff were thanked for their work on the project so far. The Board recognised that this was a major piece of work which had taken time and energy to progress to this point.

How the Trust measures its' successes was discussed, it was agreed that the number of activities taking place and visitor numbers were up overall, but how the Trust captures this and presents this story with the data required further exploration.

It was important to note that the review of Opening Hours was a combination of implementing the final element of the Financial Strategy, and providing a strong platform to take forward the wider service transformation, in a way which was evidence based and also response to customer feedback and needs. It was not therefore driven by savings, and in fact the aspiration was to deliver the opening hours changes within the existing financial envelope and on a zero redundancy basis.

There was some discussion about how the Libraries Revisioning and review of opening hours should best be presented to Elected Members. It was agreed that the relevant Fife Council officers should be spoken to first and then a communications strategy jointly developed to include Elected Members.

The Board confirmed it was content with the direction that the work was taking and the proposed changes regarding libraries opening hours and would be kept up to date with developments, including feedback from the planned discussions with Fife Council in due course.

The Chair thanked everyone for their hard work on the Revisioning so far and confirmed the Board's support for the direction taken with the project.

Action – The Boards thanks to be passed to everyone involved in the Libraries Revisioning and Opening Hours Review. The Boards to be kept updated on developments in relation to the review of opening hours as needed.

5. Performance Update

KK presented the Performance Update and highlighted a few areas for noting.

The end of year financial position, subject to amendment was £130k of a surplus, subject to final confirmation. The ongoing issue with the outstanding catering invoice currently sitting at £60k may mean that this amount will reduce, subject to the final number agreed.

The Library and Museum visitor numbers including those to the MAC bus were very good. The Teams involved were thanked for all their work.

The takings for Theatres in Q4 were substantially higher than previous years. The Teams involved were thanked for their hard work.

Staff absence levels in Q4 were high. It was agreed that this was not sustainable as this equated to approximately £70k in the Quarter alone. It was noted that robust arrangements were already in place to manage staff absence as effectively as possible, and that it was unclear why this dramatic increase had occurred, but this would be analysed and monitored.

Different ways of presenting information were discussed, and it was agreed that cumulative and comparative figures were needed. These to be provided in future.

Action – Cumulative and Comparative figures to be used in presenting statistics to the board in future.

6. New Approaches to Board Meetings

The Chair explained that further changes to approaches to Board meetings could be considered, subject to the views of the Board. Any suggestions were welcome and should be sent to Heather, and feedback on the changes tested at this Board meeting would also be very welcome. It was noted that there was a delicate balance between visual and engaging presentations and inputs, and a sufficient audit trail of key Board decisions supported by appropriate papers and minutes.

Elected member attendance at Board Meetings was again discussed and the Chair agreed to contact the relevant political group leader in Fife Council regarding this. The Board agreed to this course of action.

Councillor Lesley Backhouse agreed to join the Finance & Audit committee.

Action – Any suggestions for changes to the approach to Board Meetings to be emailed to Heather.

Action – The Chair to contact the relevant political leader in Fife Council regarding elected member attendance at Board Meetings

Action – Councillor Lesley Backhouse to join the Finance & Audit Committee

7. CEO Update

Heather gave a verbal CEO update. She confirmed that the terms of reference for the annual meeting of the Joint Negotiation and Consultation Forum (JNCF) require an additional member of the Board to be present and this would be confirmed and appropriate action taken as required.

Behavioural Management Training was still being rolled out under the leadership of Andrea Quinn. Executive Team Meetings were being expanded from 21st June to include the extended Management Team. The Trust's Management Fee was agreed 2 weeks ago. A draft budget had been given to the Finance & Audit Committee and they were comfortable that the required savings could be found. There has been no movement on the 3-5 year financial planning and spend to save proposals given to Fife Council, but these will be pursued with Fife Council officers through the liaison arrangements in place. The skills matrix was being looked at to identify skills gaps and Board Members will be offered a range of training opportunities informed by analysis of the matrix. Kirsty will follow that up with Board members directly. Heather confirmed that exit interviews were taking place for leavers and that no specific trends had been identified at this stage.

Kirsty ran through the areas of biggest risk at present including the lack of capacity on the Finance team. There was an option to move the Annual Audit back by one week which may be done. The Mobile Library continues to be off road and there was no funding from Fife Council available for replacement within the current fleet budget. A supporting business case was currently being prepared by the Trust. It was felt that it was important to have the Board's support on this issue. It was agreed that the Board would support the course of action taken by the ET regarding the mobile library which was a key operational and reputational issue for the Trust.

The issue of how best to involve young people in the Board of the Trust was discussed. Heather had looked into good practice in a number of other organisations, and had also had discussions in the context of their First Minister's Council on women and girls. Consequently, it was agreed that it would be useful, having heard about the approach in Girlguiding Scotland (GGS), to invite one of the young person spokespeople from that organisation to attend the next Board meeting, to inform a reflective session on how best to engage young people in decision making around the Trust at Board level and more generally. A team member from GGS could potentially also attend to talk through the approach that the organisation has taken, and lessons learnt.

Action - The terms of reference for the JNCF to be checked to ensure the most appropriate attendance at Board level

Action - 3-5 year financial planning and spend to save proposals to be pursued with Fife Council

Action – Girlguiding Scotland representatives to be invited to the next Board Meeting to present on Young People on Boards

8. Casual Workers Review

Kirsty ran through the Casual Workers review paper. The Board noted the paper and overview of progress to date.

9. OSCR Safeguarding and Notifiable Events

Kirsty ran through the OSCR Safeguarding and Notifiable Events paper. It was agreed that it was important that the Boards were made aware of key issues in order that they could meet their requirements in relation to notifiable events. A corporate risk register is in place, and risk is considered at a detailed level by the appropriate Committees. It was agreed that the Committee Conveners should be charged with ensuring that appropriate risks and related issues are escalated to the Board in a timely manner and in a way consistent with the OSCR guidance, supported by the ET. The Board would also continue to consider the key risks for the organisation as part of regular Board reporting

Action – Committee Conveners to ensure, working with ET, that all appropriate risks and related issues are escalated to Board level consistent with OSCR best practice. Such escalation could happen between Board meetings if so required.

10. AOCB

There was no AOCB

11. Strategic Session

Strategic Plan Development

Heather ran through the proposed strategic plan and articulated the intended change in approach for the plan for the next 5 years in relation to content, look, feel, and language, and the rationale for that. The Board were supportive of this change in approach which was an important reflection of the coming of age of the organisation, and the creative and cultural nature of what we do. There was some discussion around the plan and its priorities and Heather advised that, subject to Board agreement in principle, of this outline, the plan would be discussed with a range of key managers and staff at a special session on 21st June. It was agreed that the 4 broad priorities - Nurture Our Communities, Seek Adventure, Revitalise our Brand, and Create Inspiring Experiences were appropriate. It was felt to be important to make sure that staff know what this means for them, and how they fit in to the plan going forward. The Board would be kept up to date on developments as needed, and a progress update would be brought to the September Board.

Action – Board to be kept up to date with development on the strategic plan, and a progress update to come to the next Board meeting in September.

Programming

Verdi Clark gave a vibrant and engaging overview of the current and aspirational approach to programming within the Trust, including how programming decisions are made, contracts are negotiated, and the programming approach particular to the 4 theatre venues that we have. The Board was fully supportive of the approach that Verdi is pursuing, and thanked her for her inspirational presentation. The presentation is available on request.