

**MINUTES OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTH MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY  
RELATIONS COUNCIL BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2019 13:00  
EQUALITY HOUSE, SHAFTSBURY SQUARE, BELFAST**

**3136/19**      **Present:** Mr P Osborne (Chair), Ms D Close, Rev N Hamilton, Ms L Keys, Ms S McClelland, Mr N McKenna.

**3137/19**      **In Attendance:** Ms J Irwin (CEO), Ms J Adamson (HR Manager), Mr P Day (Director of Engagement), Mr P Jordan (Director of Funding and Development), Mr G McKeown (Director of Finance and Personnel)

**3138/19**      **Observers:** Mr M Brown (TEO), Mr A Cole (TEO).

**Apologies:** Ms K Garbal, Mr R Campbell, Mr D MacKay

**3139/19**      **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed The CEO back after her extended sick leave, and expressed his best wishes. He also thanked everyone who filled the gap in the CEO's absence, in particular CRC's Directors and Ms H George. He thanked Mr G McKeown for temporarily taking on the role of Accounting Officer and Mr A Cole and TEO for their support over the weeks.

The Chair reminded attendees that this is the final meeting of the current Board. He stated that the appointment process was a long time coming, but that he appreciated that the delays were not something TEO wanted either. He added that he enjoyed his time on the Board, and was looking forward to seeing CRC's direction of travel, development, and increasing partnership with TEO.

He thanked staff and all Board Members for their work over the years.

**3140/19**      **TEO's address**

Mr M Brown address the Board, expressing the importance of CRC's work over the past 28 years. He stated that CRC continue to play an extremely important role. He paid tribute to CRC maintaining the ship over the last two and a half years, without Ministers. He added that CRC's Board have been conducting good work with funded groups, on governance, and with the organisation's accounts.

Tribute was paid to staff and best wishes were expressed to Board members.

The Chair added that Mr A Cole has been a great addition to the sponsor department.

The CEO thanked the Board and TEO for the welcome back and for their work over the years. She commended Board members for continuing to work to their purpose during a period of change and delays that had been challenging. She stated that she would miss all Board members and hoped to work with them again in the future.

The CEO thanked staff and the Chair for keeping the work going in her absence, and thanked the TEO for their supportive messages during her illness

Mr A Cole & Mr M Browne left the meeting.

**3141/19 Standard Checks**

- (a) *Members should declare any conflict of interests in any discussions where decisions were required.*
- (b) *Members need to register any offers of gifts or hospitality since the last Council meeting*

Nothing to declare

**3142/19 Minutes**

- i) 16<sup>th</sup> May 2019 – Minutes of EGM

The Board reviewed the minutes of the 16<sup>th</sup> May EGM, and made the following amendment:

- Page 1, 6<sup>th</sup> line up – include ‘that’ before allowed.

On completion of this amendment, the Board approved these minutes.

- ii) 16<sup>th</sup> May 2019 – Board Meeting

The minutes of the 204<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2019 were reviewed, and agreed as being a true and accurate record of the meeting.

**3143/19 Matters Arising**

All matters arising will be addressed in other sections of the meeting’s agenda.

### **3144/19 Fraud Prevention Policy**

Mr G McKeown presented the Board with a draft Fraud Prevention Policy, drawing the Board's attention to the following points:

- The policy includes changes to bring practice in line with TEO's policy and best practice.
- The policy provides greater clarity for whistleblowers, both internal and external.

The CEO added that this policy is about alignment with wider Government processes and protecting confidentiality of the whistleblower.

The Board were content to approve this policy.

### **3145/19 Labour Relations Agency Report**

CRC's Board met prior to this meeting, to discuss the Labour Relations Agency's report into staff morale.

The Board thanked Ms J Adamson for compiling the summary paper on the LRA report.

The Board welcomed the report after it was requested last year, and take the issues raised seriously. The Board added that some points in the report need exploration.

The Board agreed the recommendations of the report presented by Ms J Adamson:

1. Engage the services of an external 3<sup>rd</sup> party to distil and fully explore the LRA report. The 3<sup>rd</sup> party will provide practical recommendations for the resolution of the identified issues and provide the necessary recommendations to resolve them.
2. Refocus on staff development via meaningful training and development, including a skills audit.
3. Consider how the incoming Board support the Senior Management Team and staff
4. In conjunction with all staff, the organisation will adopt and implement a Dignity at Work Charter
5. All staff will receive mandatory training on Equal Treatment in the Work Place
6. Implement management training for those managers who have not undertaken such before and in addition, specific themed sessions with external input will be put in place for all managers
7. Provide encouragement and opportunities for individual staff members to build skills in areas outside their specific role
8. In conjunction with staff put in place an open plan office protocol

9. Encourage better working relationships by exploring the opportunities for all staff to get together through the creation of a lunch space and introduction of a monthly staff lunch/coffee catch-up (currently this is done on an ad-hoc basis).
10. Liaise with TEO to resolve outstanding Pay Remits.

The Board stated that the new Board may wish to add their own recommendations to this list.

In response to a query about the circulation of the Report, the CEO advised that this was agreed with participants at the beginning of the process, the report had been shared with staff members, the union, and Board members in line with that.

### **3146/19 Correspondence**

#### **i) Pay Remit**

The Chair shared correspondence from Mr M Browne, TEO, with Board Members. This letter was in response to the Board's correspondence on the outstanding Pay Remits.

The correspondence was noted, and the Chair thanked Mr G McKeown for his work on this issue, and expressed a desire that the outstanding Pay Remits are resolved as quickly as possible.

### **3147/19 Funding Application**

Mr P Jordan stated that ArtsEkta have made an application to CRC for Community Relations/Cultural Diversity Funding. Due to the size of the bid made, the application will need Board approval.

The Board were content to approve this grant.

### **3148/19 Chair's Business**

The Chair updated Board Members on a number of events and meetings he attended, following the previous Board Meeting:

- CRC Management Team meetings
- US Delegation meetings on Peace Process
- Met Harold Good regarding a potential funding application for a conference
- Meeting with the Permanent Secretary of Finance, Sue Gray and Core Funded groups
- Meeting in Derry with Youth Organisations. Another meeting has been set up for 7<sup>th</sup> June. The Chair stated that he would be attending this meeting.

- LGBT awareness week launch
- Holocaust Memorial Day organisation meeting
- Iftar event
- Meeting regarding the talks process and political parties
- TBUC Engagement Forum. He added that this event was well attended, and a number of new groups were present.

The Chair updated Board Members on a number of events and meetings coming up:

- Meeting with the Chair of CRC's new Board
- Launch of Seamus Mallon's book

The Chair presented to the Board a press release on the appointment of new members. The Board were content with the draft press release.

### **3149/19 Annual Report and Accounts**

Mr G McKeown presented to the Board CRC's draft Annual Report and Accounts. He talked Board Members through the report, explaining each section.

The Board noted this draft.

Ms D Close stated that the report shows a lack of grant take up in certain geographical areas. She asked how CRC could increase take up in these areas.

Mr P Jordan stated that CRC have been attending a number of information sessions organised by TEO, and some with attendees from a variety of grant bodies. He added that this has been successful, as CRC have received a number of applications directly as a result of these visits.

Ms L Keys stated that TEO should consider whether they are asking too much of groups. Mr P Jordan stated that TEO are consulting with CRC regarding a more joined up approach.

### **3150/19 Pay Remit**

Mr G McKeown presented the Board with a paper outlining CRC's current situation in terms of the Pay Remit.

The Board noted this report.

### **3151/19 Health and Safety**

Mr G McKeown report that there had been no health and safety incidents in CRC following the last report.

A fire risk assessment was conducted and CRC passed with only minor recommendations, which Ms J Adamson will be reviewing.

### **3152/19 CRC Premises Relocation**

Mr G McKeown informed Board Members that the lease of Equality House is up in July 2012. The Department of Finance have secured a venue for the move of a number of ALBs, including CRC, to James House in the GasWorks.

He added that it would be a conflict if COPNI and NICCY were in the same building as health and education bodies, therefore they will likely have a separate building in James House, which CRC will also be in.

Ms L Keys stated that it is important CRC doesn't become an inaccessible faceless organisation, which loses its connection with community groups.

The CEO stated that, as CRC will move in the first phase, there may be opportunity to influence the space, in terms of meeting rooms and other business needs.

The Chair added that the new site has a good transport link and is close to town.

### **3153/19 Alignment of CRC policies with NICS**

Mr G McKeown informed Board Members that the Union have withdrawn from this consultation until the Pay Remit is settled.

### **3154/19 Funding and Development**

Mr P Jordan presented Board Members with a report on the work of the Funding and Development Directorate, making particular reference to the following:

- Online grant management system is progressing.
- Funding team have additional support in at the moment, ahead of the audit in July
- Core Funding was able to be offered to reserve group WRDA
- 25<sup>th</sup> June – Core Funding Group event
- Mr I Thompson is currently conducting core funding verification visits.
- Mr A Cole gave positive feedback about CRC's Shared Learning Events.
- North Belfast contracts have been agreed and issued.
- 27<sup>th</sup> June North Belfast end of year event. Groups have been asked to bring individuals who participated in their projects.

- Ms L Johnston has moved on from CRC and is now working at the Community Foundation.

Mr P Jordan stated that Mr J Hamilton and Ms E Tomasso have done outstanding work getting the grant management system up and running.

The Board noted the Funding and Development report.

### **3155/19      Engagement**

Mr P Day presented Board Members with a report on the work of the Engagement Directorate, making particular reference to the following:

- Mr P Day thanked Ms L Keys, The Chair, and Mr N McKenna for attend the recent Engagement Forum in Derry/Londonderry. He added that the Engagement Forum has received positive feedback. The event saw a number of new faces and groups. He thanked and credited Ms G Attwood for her work with Business in the Community and the Health Trusts.
- 17<sup>th</sup> September is the next TBUC Engagement Forum. This event will be part of GR Week, encompassing all four TBUC themes on a hub/zonal basis.
- CRC are holding an engagement event every month, and hope to continue this throughout the year.
- Shared Learning Forum will be taking place on 25<sup>th</sup> June in Corrymeela.
- Social Media and website views, follows, and clicks have been increasing.
- New website has gone live.
- EBulletin and ENews are being sent out regularly.
- Good Relations Week 16<sup>th</sup> September – registration has begun. Closing date for registration is 19<sup>th</sup> July.
- Decade Conference 21<sup>st</sup> November.
- Policy – Ms G Attwood is reaching out to new constituents.

A Board member asked what engagement CRC is having with education organisations.

Mr P Day responded stating that CRC was recently involved in Shared Education Week, showcasing the work of a number of Core Funded groups. CRIS and Corrymeela have jointly been working on a resource for teacher training. Rev N Hamilton expressed the importance but limits of education in combatting sectarianism. The CEO added that schools are one part of the pathway in a child's life, it is also about parents and teachers, and coordinating with other interventions beyond school walls.

The Board noted the Engagement Directorate report

The CEO stated that to allow outgoing Board Members to continue to engage in CRC events, their consent would be sought, to remain on CRC mailing lists.

**ACTION:** An email to be sent to Board Members asking if they would like to remain on CRC's engagement mailing list.

**3156/19      Audit and Risk Assurance Committee**

The minutes of the 67<sup>th</sup> Audit and Risk Assurance Committee which took place on 11<sup>th</sup> April were noted by the Board.

**3157/19      AOB**

As this was the final meeting of the current CRC Board, the Chair stating that he knew there would be challenges ahead, but CRC have overcome challenges in the past. He added that CRC is in a good position, with their close relationship with TEO, taking on of new funding streams, and strong group of funded organisations. He concluded that there is a bright future for the organisation to grasp. He thanked the Board and staff for their work over the years.

The outgoing Board passed on their best wishes to the incoming Board.