

CONFIRMED

**MINUTES OF THE ONE HUNDRED & EIGHTY SEVENTH
MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL HELD
ON THURSDAY 2ND FEBRUARY 2017 AT 1.00PM IN THE
BOARDROOM, EQUALITY HOUSE, 7-9 SHAFTESBURY SQUARE,
BELFAST BT2 7DP**

2819/17 PRESENT:

Mr P Osborne (Chair), Mr R Campbell, Ms L Keys, Ms D Close, Ms S McClelland, Mr N McKenna, Mr D Mackay

2820/17 APOLOGIES:

Ms K Garbal, Mr B McAllister, Very Rev Dr N Hamilton, Ms R McGlone

2821/17 IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms J Irwin [CEO], Mr G McKeown [DFAP Director], Mr P Jordan [Funding and Development Director], Ms D MacBride [Cultural Diversity Director], Ms D McGlade [Policy Director], Ms T Gibson [Admin Officer, Department of Finance, Administration and Personnel], Ms G Attwood [Policy Officer]

2822/17 OBSERVER:

None

2823/17 STANDARD CHECKS:

1(a) The Chair reminded Members of the requirement to declare any conflicts of interests in any discussions where decisions were required.

1(b) The Chair advised that Members need to register any offers of gifts or hospitality since the last Council meeting.

Mr D Mackay informed the Board that he had applied to be on the new Community Relations Council Board.

2824/17 OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. He explained that the meeting was not presently sufficiently quorate to discuss changes to CRC articles as 7 board members are required.. He said Ms S McClelland would be arriving late and advised that he would change the agenda accordingly so that decisions could be made when the meeting was quorate.

2825/17 MINUTES:

Minutes dated 12th December 2016 having been circulated were taken as read. [Paper CRC/187/01/17/01 refers]

2826/17 MATTERS ARISING:

The CEO said the Report to Those Charged with Governance was included in the papers for Board members' information.

2827/17 CHAIRS BUSINESS:

The Chair provided members with an update on events he had attended and forthcoming events he planned to attend:

Events attended:

- DFA Reconciliation Event at Skainos
- Meeting with Mr P Robinson, The Executive Office
- Interfaith Forum Annual General Meeting
- Sanctuary Group in Coleraine
- David Stevens Memorial Lecture and presentation of the CRC Award for Exceptional Achievement
- Hounds of Ulster at Stormont
- 4 Corners Festival
- Holocaust Memorial Event

Upcoming events:

- Mosque Open Day – Muslim Family Association and Belfast Islamic Centre
- Israeli / Palestine Group Event
- 4 Corners Festival
- Fermanagh Community Awards – 13th February
- Funding Committee Meeting – 16th February
- All Ireland Dialogue on Brexit - 17th February
- Talk Back Debate

- **Media Grants**

Ms D MacBride, Cultural Diversity Director, updated members on the status of the 2016/17 Media Grants. She said that 7 applications had been recommended for funding, 3 of which needed Board approval as they were over £10,000, 1 reserve application which was over £10,000 and therefore needed approval by the Board as well, and 3 rejection applications.

Ms D MacBride provided a synopsis of each application in the Cultural Diversity Sector Report for members' information.

Mr R Campbell declared a conflict of interest in relation to Uproar Comics.

Ms L Keyes declared a conflict of interest in relation to Understanding Conflict Trust.

The Board approved the recommendation to support the following groups: Northern Visions (£10,000), Towards Understanding and Healing/Nerve Centre/Uproar Comics (£10,610), Biring (£11,072.38) and New Red/BIP (£10,000).

- **NIAO Purchase order approval - £21,205**

Mr G McKeown, Director of Finance, Administration and Personnel, provided members with some background information on this Purchase Order explaining it was for work carried out by NIAO on CRC's Annual Report and Financial Statements and the production of the Report To Those Charged With Governance. He said the amount had changed from the original quotation (£16,500) as extra work was needed in relation to the pension liability.

Members approved the Purchase Order.

- **Chair's Extension**

The Chair asked Mr R Campbell, Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Chair, to oversee this part of the discussion.

The Chair left the room at 1.27pm.

The CEO explained that the Chair's term had finished at the end of December. She said TEO had verbally indicated that it was content for the Chair to stay on until the new chair of the board was appointed but the decision was one with CRCS board under the current arrangements.

TEO could not confirm the date for appointment of new chair and the elections had introduced uncertainty in relation to the timing.

ACTION: CEO

A discussion ensued in relation to remuneration for the Chair, the timescale of appointment of the new Board and the fact that current Board members may

have to stay beyond 31st March 2017. Mr R Campbell pointed out that some members haven't attended recent meetings and this would increasingly be a problem as currently the Board is struggling to get a quorum at meetings.

Following discussion members agreed to ask the Chair to stay on until the new Chair is appointed or until the end of his second term whichever is shorter, subject to written confirmation that TEO are content with as the arrangement.

Proposer: Mr R Campbell

Seconder: Mr N McKenna

The Chair returned to the room at 1.40pm.

Mr R Campbell told the Chair that the Board vote for him to remain Chair was unanimous. The chair confirmed that he was content to remain in this position.

2828/17

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES:

- Operational plan 2017/2018

The CEO said The Executive Office were revising the proposed format of their own and other Arms-Length Bodies' Operational Plans. She added that this was the reason she was not bringing the draft 2017/18 Plan to the Board at this stage. However she had met with TEO on 31st January to discuss expectations in relations to the content of the plan. The CEO confirmed that she had hoped to have a draft for the next meeting. If necessary she would circulate the draft operational plan for agreement by written procedure. This was agreed.

- Operational Plan – 3rd Quarter Review
[CRC/187/01/17/04 refers]

In relation to the 3rd quarter performance review of this year the CEO highlighted the following points from the 2016/17 Operational Plan:

- February Community Engagement Forum has been cancelled due to the election. The June meeting will go ahead.
- The Executive Office is renewing the structure of the thematic sub-groups.
- There are 3 Councils that have not booked dates for the Good Relations District Council Training.
- The implementation of the new Board may be delayed.
- The Executive Office has given CRC approval to administer the North Belfast Funding Scheme for another year. This will be confirmed in writing by The Executive Office.
- IT Business Case is still with The Executive Office.
- The formal review of CRC which was due to take place in March 2017 has been postponed.

- The review process for the T:BUC Community Engagement Forum is somewhat different what The Executive Office had originally specified. The Executive Office are going to carry out a review on this.

The CEO said staff had been updated in terms of the Governance Review and the Operational Plan at the February staff meeting. The Chair said he would come along to the April staff meeting to update staff on progress with the governance review as by then the impact of the outcome of the election on the implementation timetable would be known.

ACTION: Chair

The CEO said as a result of the Community Engagement Forum being cancelled, there would not be an opportunity to engage with the sector for a long period of time and has therefore approached The Executive Office about potentially running an event in March. The Executive Office was content with this and said it would send along a representative to the event to update plans and budget for 2017/2018.

The Chair and CEO will agree a date for the event to take place – possibly towards the end of March 2017.

ACTION: Chair / CEO

- Management Accounts
[CRC/187/01/17/05 refers]

Mr G McKeown, Director of Finance, Administration and Personnel, presented the management accounts up to 31st December 2016.

He highlighted the following points:

- Projected expenditure to 31st March 2017 – there is a small underspend of £13,500 (0.3% - well within the 1.5% tolerance)
- Projected spend for grants is £14,400
- Projected spend for programme budget is £16,200
- Spending remains on target
- All procurement has been in line with CPD/ DFP/ CRC guidelines
- The Accounts have been prepared in line with financial policies

The CEO said that Ms S McClelland, Board member, had asked for an additional column to be included in the management accounts to provide an analysis of variances between budgeted expenditure and projected expenditure. This was agreed.

ACTION: DFAP Director

- Updated Procurement Policy
[Paper CRC/187/01/17/06 refers]

Mr G McKeown said the policy was still in draft form and that he wanted to bring together Central Procurement Directorate, Department of Finance and Personnel and CRC rules and incorporate the recommendations made by the auditors. He said he would also like to reference these back to the source documents. He said he would bring the revised policy to the March Board meeting.

He said he would also like to reference the Finance policy back to the source documents and would therefore bring a revised draft to the March Board meeting.

ACTION: DFAP Director

- HR Update

Mr G McKeown said there were no health and safety incidents to report. He added that the HR Manager is currently in the process of organising Health and Safety training for staff.

- Alignment of the Human Resource policies of the Community Relations Council's with the Human Resource policies of the Northern Ireland Civil Service
[Paper CRC/187/01/17/07 refers]

Mr G McKeown explained that CRC was asked by The Executive Office in October to carry out an analysis of policies to see how well they align with the policies of the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

Mr G McKeown said that following tender a HR company Prestige had carried out the alignment exercise and had provided CRC with a report of their findings. He said he and the HR Manager are currently working their way through this report which was substantial with the intention of providing a summary document to The Executive Office and the Board.

Mr P Jordan left the room at 2.16pm.

Members discussed various aspects of a policy alignment and concluded that a further conversation should take place at the next Board meeting in March when the summary document is available.

ACTION: DFAP Director

Mr P Jordan returned to the room at 2.20pm.

- Sickness statistics
[Paper CRC/187/01/17/08 refers]

Mr G McKeown reported on sickness statistics up to 31st December 2016. He said there had been 2 instances of long term sickness July to October. Mr D Mackay asked was there any specific reason for this. Mr G McKeown said he would provide a detailed analysis on this period of sickness and would email the response to Board members.

ACTION: DFAP Director

The Chair asked if Mr G McKeown would do a comparison exercise on sickness levels in another Arms Length Body of a similar size and bring the results back to the Board. Mr G McKeown said he would carry out this exercise and report back to members.

ACTION: DFAP Director

- Fire Risk Assessment
[Paper CRC/187/01/17/09 refers]

Mr G McKeown said the Fire Risk Assessment had been carried out on 1st December 2016 and that it had went extremely well with only a few minor recommendations.

2829/17

REPORT FROM AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE:

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, Mr R Campbell, provided a verbal update on the Audit and Risk meeting which took place on 23rd January 2017.

- Report to Those Charged with Governance
[Paper CRC/187/01/17/10 refers]

Mr R Campbell said this document was included in the Board papers for members' information.

- Minutes from the 8th December Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting
[Paper CRC/187/01/17/11 refers]

Mr R Campbell said these were included for members' information.

- CRC Risk Register – Red & Amber Risks
[CRC/186/12/16/10 refers]

Mr R Campbell explained, that due to the current political situation and the suspension of the Executive, members of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee decided to escalate the *political risk* to Amber. He explained this would be monitored and if nothing has changed by April this will either remain at Amber or will be escalated to Red. This was due to the political impact on CRC on 3 areas, appointment of a new board, approval of business plan and approval of budget plan for 2017/2018.

Mr R Campbell thanked fellow Audit and Risk Assurance Committee member Mr D Mackay for participating in the last Audit meeting via the telephone.

2830/17 FUNDING:

- Grants Update Report
[Paper CRC/187/01/17/12 refers]

Mr P Jordan, Director of Funding and Development, provided an update on the various grant schemes. A full list of all grants was provided for members' information.

Mr P Jordan highlighted the following:

- 157 grant applications
- 12 awards made to date
- Managing underspends
- Funding magazine has been produced
- 9 Pathfinder applications have been made
- Core – final quarter payments being made to groups
- 1 application to the Publications Grant Scheme
- North Belfast Fund – working with groups to ensure all returns are made

Mr N McKenna suggested the format of the grants list be amended to include a status column for those that are blank in the current format. Mr P Jordan said he would make this change.

ACTION: Funding & Development Director

Ms S McClelland joined the meeting at 2.40pm.

The Chair asked for an update in relation to the issue raised at the previous meeting by a Board member on double funding or potential double funding to groups. Mr Jordan said that he had contacted the board member for further detail but had not yet had a reply. He noted that in relation to one group he had sought and received clarification on their funding.

Mr P Jordan left the room at 2.42pm.

The Chair said now that the meeting was quorate, members would discuss the alterations to the Articles of Association and the formal resolution to amend the CRC Articles.

Mr P Jordan returned to the room at 2.50pm.

2831/17 THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE BOARD REVIEW:

[Papers CRC/187/01/17/02 & 03 refers]

Members discussed the timeframe that The Executive Office had proposed, the current political status, the email the Chair had sent to Dr M Brown, The Executive Office, and his response to the Chair [email and letter were circulated for members' information] and the quorum issue.

Ms G Attwood entered the room at 3.00pm.

The CEO informed members of a meeting which was scheduled to take place with herself and The Executive Office later in the week in relation to succession planning.

An in-depth conversation followed on the possible changes to the Articles and the special resolution to amend the Articles so that the First and the Deputy First Minister can appoint a third of the Board.

The CEO guided members through the paper provided by TEO on "Justification for payment of CRC Board Members" and the "Dear Establishment Officer" letter outlining the reasons for paying members and the daily rates of remuneration of chairmen and members of public bodies.

Mr N McKenna left the room at 3.12pm.

Members also discussed next steps in relation to the Section 96 application to the Charity Commission. The Chair suggested, if the Charity Commission approve the Section 96 application, that a further discussion takes place on 16th March Board meeting rather than pushing forward the special resolution for that date. He thought it appropriate to have a bit of time to pause and reflect before rushing ahead.

Mr N McKenna entered the room at 3.14pm.

- **Section 96 application to the Charity Commission**

Members agreed to the submission of the Section 96 application to the Charity Commission.

Proposer: Mr N McKenna

Seconded: Ms D Close

Ms L Keyes, Mr R Campbell, Ms S McClelland - abstained from the vote.

The remaining board members approved the application.

Mr D Mackay - said yes to the submission of the Section 96 application to the Charity Commission

- **Formal Resolution to amend CRC Articles**

“Members are also hereby given notice that a resolution to amend the Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association having the effect that wherever it appears in the Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association a reference to the Secretary of State shall be substituted with a reference to the First Minister and Deputy First Minister”.

Proposer: Mr R Campbell

Seconded: Mr N McKenna

Members unanimously agreed to this amendment to the Articles.

Mr R Campbell left the meeting at 3.32pm

2832/17

POLICY PAPERS:

- **Reconciliation**

Ms D McGlade provided members with a verbal update on the ongoing work in relation to defining reconciliation. She said that she and the Chair had met with Prof. B Hamber earlier in the week and were going to convene a working group to take this work forward. Ms G Kelly, University of Ulster is going to take part in the discussions also. The CEO suggested they incorporate some of the reconciliation speech delivered by the Very Rev Dr N Hamilton at the David Stevens Memorial Lecture and CRC Award for Exceptional Achievement Presentation.

Ms D McGlade said she was looking internally for some funding to carry out a small scoping exercise to review the impact of the reconciliation paper developed by Hamber and Kelly (previously funded by CRC). She said a report would be produced and on completion of this piece of work, the Chair said a seminar would be hosted in June 2017.

The CEO informed members of a meeting which will be hosted by The Executive Office, on reconciliation in the context of the Programme for Government. This will take place in March.

- NISRC – Proposals for the updated NI Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM 2017)
[Paper CRC/187/01/17/13 refers]

Ms G Attwood, Policy Officer, provided members with some background information on this consultation.

Ms D Close left the room at 3.42pm

Members discussed various aspects of the consultation response and suggested adding some examples into the response and making reference to rural communities.

Ms D Close entered the room at 3.45pm

Subject to these changes members approved the response.

Ms D McGlade suggested organising a meeting with NISRA and said that interested board members (Ms S McClelland and Ms L Keyes) could also attend the meeting.

ACTION: Policy Director

Ms G Attwood said she would recirculate the response when the amendments have been made.

ACTION: Policy Officer

- DE& NI Executive Children and Young People’s Strategy 2017-2027
[Paper CRC/187/01/17/14 refers]

Ms G Attwood, Policy Officer, provided members with some background information on this consultation. She informed members that it was for information purposes only at this stage. She said it would be circulated at a later date for ratification by written procedure.

2833/17

CEO’S REPORT:

[Paper CRC/187/01/17/15 refers]

The CEO highlighted the following items from her report:

- Current political status presents practical difficulties e.g. new Board appointments, Operational Plan and Budget approval.
- Risk Register –Members were asked to note that reference to Equality and Good Relations transition project has been removed from the register following correspondence from TEO.
- Media Report – this report, produced by JComms, outlines the media coverage of the David Stevens Memorial Lecture and the CRC Award for Exceptional Achievement.

The CEO said this had been a very successful event. She noted her sadness at having missed the event due to illness, adding that she had received very kind correspondence from Mrs M Stevens, the wife of the late Mr D Stevens.

The CEO added that the Very Rev Dr N Hamilton and Father Gary Donegan had a very good discussion on reconciliation on Sunday Sequence. This was one of a number of PR opportunities that arose from the lecture and the award as noted in the report from Jcomms.

A short discussed ensued in relation to quality of programmes produced by the BBC, in particular a recent broadcast by Stephen Nolan on Racism. The Chair said he would write to the Controller of the BBC coverage of community relations issues in general.

ACTION: Chair

2834/17

SECTOR REPORTS:

- Policy
[Paper CRC/187/01/17/**16** refers]
- Communications
[Paper CRC/187/01/17/**17** refers]
- Funding and Development
[Paper CRC/187/01/17/**18** refers]
- Cultural Diversity
[Paper CRC/187/01/17/**19** refers]

Ms D MacBride will circulate information to members on the Decade conversations which are due to take place in February and March 2017.

ACTION: Cultural Diversity Director

The Chair suggested using a different CRC logo on flyers etc. Having looked at the flyer for the Decade conversation, the Chair said it would be much better using the CRC logo with the writing to the side rather than the top. The CEO said she would look at this.

ACTION: CEO

2835/17 AOB:

None.

2836/17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Thursday 16th March 2017 @ 11.00am.