

- a) The Board requested an update on the Bonfire Scoping Study.
The CEO explained that this study is not yet complete and is currently with the Belfast City Council/Solace.
It was recently revealed that the draft report had been leaked to the press. All Councils in Northern Ireland have a copy of this report, and therefore it is unclear where this leak has come from.

b) Union Communication

As discussed at a previous meeting, the CEO had received correspondence from Unite the Union regarding the staff morale and stress levels. The Chair and CEO have accepted a meeting, which has been arranged for 20th March.
The Union have declined to provide an agenda, instead they will speak to the issues on the day.
The Chair, CEO, DFAP, and Chair of Audit Committee will be attending this meeting.

c) David Stevens Memorial Lecture

The David Stevens Memorial Lecture and CR Award presentation will take place on the 27th March at 11am in the Duncairn Centre, Duncairn Avenue, Belfast BT14 6BP.

Dr Johnston McMaster has kindly agreed to give this year's lecture.
The Chair and CEO thanked the CR Award panel for meeting, and recommending Eileen Weir to receive the CR Award 2018. The nomination was agreed by the Board by written procedure, and the winner has been notified.

ACTION: H George to send directions to Duncairn Ctr along with invitation.

d) Board and staff event

The CEO updated member that following a Staff Meeting on 7th March there was a discussion and agreement to organise two team development events for staff and board members.

The first event will take place on the 10th April. It will involve a tour of two projects in East Belfast. The second event, on a date yet to be confirmed, will consist of a staff and board members discussion about work at CRC, at a shared space venue outside of Belfast.

The Chair raised an issue regarding the date of the first event. He stated that 10th April is the anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement, and therefore, there may be events running that day for that staff members should attend.

2974/18

Correspondence

- a) **Correspondence from MLA.**

CRC/196/03/18/02

The Board noted this correspondence.

b) **Response to Correspondence from Unite the Union.**

CRC/196/03/18/03

The Board noted this correspondence.

2975/18

Chair's Business.

The chair informed Board Members of a number of meetings he attended in the last month:

- Launch of View Digital Magazine on Education
- Interfaith Forum facilitating conversation between Rabbi David Singer and Sheikh Anwar Mady
- OSS Junior Chamber
- 4 Corners Festival events
- Meeting with Polish Consul
- Imagine Festival Launch
- Visit my Mosque day
- REACT meeting
- Core Funding Committee meeting
- Turas 5th Anniversary
- Pat Finucane Centre report launch
- Interface RED VR film launch
- Integrated Work session

Events coming up:

- Peace Monitoring Report Advisory Group meeting
- Various Imagine Festival events
- Democracy Day
- Community Engagement Forum
- CRIS conference
- David Stevens Memorial Lecture
- Camlo Screening

2976/18

The Executive Office Board Review

CRC/196/03/18/04

Mr G McKeown presented to the Board a paper setting out a proposal to amend CRC Articles to reduce quorate to 5 Board Members.

The Board considered the paper and approved the proposal. A General Meeting will now be convened in April to amend the Articles of Association.

Formal notice of this meeting will be issued 21 days before.

ACTION: Mr G McKeown to review rules re: proxy voting in Board Member's absence.

2977/18

Draft Business Plan

CRC/196/03/18/05

The CEO Presented to the Board an updated version of draft CRC Operational Plan 2018-2019, following discussions with TEO.

TEO had requested the inclusion of:

- Programme for Government outcomes.
- Expanding the Funding Programme information. Including more information on; Core; Small; Media; and Emergency grants.
- The CEO noted that the latter was reverting to how grant aid had previously been recorded by CRC. She said that she had also include more detail on staff's involvement in other funding panels.

The Board was content with the draft presented.

Mr J Warnock stated that TEO will now be taking the revised Business Plan through their Board approval process.

2978/18

Finance and General Purposes

a) Financial Projections

CRC/196/03/18/06

Mr G McKeown presented to the Board the latest Financial Projections. He highlighted that expenditure is in line with the budget and all expenditure has been incurred in line with procurement rules.

Board Members asked why the projected total programme budget had a 25% variance. Mr G McKeown explained that this 25% variance is due to Pathfinder Grants, which funded various activities this year, and also costs incurred on the Centenary of Anniversaries Toolkit, PR support and planning for CR week. The variance was also due to temporary staff acquired to complete GDPR preparations.

b) Financial Reserves

CRC/196/03/18/07

Mr G McKeown presented to the Board a proposal, recommended by NIAO, regarding CRC's reserves.

He explained that in March 2015, TEO asked CRC to reduce the amount of cash held. This process occurred, but was not correctly recorded. The unrestricted reserves should have been reduced, however, instead, the restricted reserves were reduced.

Mr G McKeown asked the Board to approve this matter being corrected.

The Board approved DFAP proceeding to correct this matter.

c) Pay Remit

CRC/196/03/18/08

As requested at January's Board Meeting, Mr G McKeown presented to the Board, an update on the progress of the staff Pay Remit. He explained that the last completed Pay Remit for CRC staff was 2013/2014. The delay is due to DoF guidance FD (DFP) 08/14, 'No Better, no Worse Off'.

Mr G McKeown stated TEO had informed CRC that DoF would issue updated guidance with this years Pay Remit papers which would resolve this issue. However, this guidance was never produced.

In Sept 2017 CRC & TEO agreed a Pay Remit submission and this was forwarded on to DoF. DoF issued a number of questions regarding this, which CRC have since answered, and ownership of progressing this now sits with DoF.

Board Members expressed their concern, stating that CRC staff are materially worse off due to the protracted delay in delivering a decision.

ACTION: Chair asked Mr G McKeown to draft a letter to TEO for the Chair to approve and sign.

d) Staffing

i) Staffing Review

CRC/196/03/18/09

Mr G McKeown stated that at January's Board meeting there was a discussion on the TEO indication of another opportunity for ALB staff to apply, to be considered, under the Voluntary Exit Scheme.

A review of staff members, below DP Grade, would need to take place before VES application process can begin.

Mr G McKeown has drafted a business case setting out proposals for the Staffing Review. This Business Case included costings, staff time, and potential risks, which may occur if the staffing review is carried out by i) Business Consultancy Service, ii) Private Sector Professional Service, iii) In House. He added that there is concern about the time frame of this review. In order for VES to be considered in the 2018/2019 year, the staffing review would have to be completed with sufficient time for VES applications to be processed and approved by TEO.

The Board noted that they are agreeable in principle to proceed subject to resolution of these points.

Mr J Warnock, TEO, stated that TEO would have an issue with Private Sector Professionals carrying out this Staffing Review as they may not have an understanding of ALB grades.

TEO and CRC have not yet agreed whose budget would cover the cost for this Staffing Review.

ii) Community Engagement Director

Mr G McKeown informed Board Members that the closing date for this post has passed and that CRC have received 12 applications.

Shortlisting will take place on 9th March 2018, with interviews expected to occur on 16th March 2018.

Chair thanked Mr J Warnock and The Executive Office for processing the proposal for the new Director post so quickly.

iii) North Belfast Project Officer

Mr G McKeown stated that TEO and CRC have not yet confirmed from whose budget this expense will come. Until this matter is clarified the proposal for this post cannot move forward.

Mr J Warnock stated that the proposed figures are well within planning scenarios, and awaiting clarity on the budget.

The Board indicated that as CRC had taken on the North Belfast Scheme from TEO, the costs of any additional staff taken on to cover the workload should be covered by TEO.

e) Voluntary Exit Scheme

The Chair, on behalf of the Board, expressed his sadness at seeing Ms D MacBride leaving at the end of March, after eight years of service. He stated that she has provided such energy and commitment to every project and it was a real pleasure to have worked with her. The Board thanked her for her work and wished her all the best with whatever she decides to do in the future. The Board presented Ms D MacBride with a gift.

Ms L Keys stated that Ms D MacBride has created great connections and has an enormous amount of respect from individuals and groups in the community. Ms J Irwin stated that she is sorry to see Ms D MacBride go. She has been a great source of energy, and committed networker, who had brought people in to the network that would not have otherwise been involved and will very much be missed.

Ms D MacBride said she appreciated the comments the Board and CEO made and wishes CRC all the best with their journey. She stated that she is positive about what the next generation will bring to community relations work. Ms D MacBride said she hoped to begin working on a PhD at Queens in Sept/Oct 2018.

f) Alignment with NICS Staff Handbook.

CRC/196/03/18/10

Mr G McKeown presented to the Board CRC's plan to align Staff Handbook and HR policies with the policies of NICS. He highlighted that 109 of the policies would be relevant to CRC, 22 would benefit CRC, and 11 potential risks. The plan sets out the approach CRC would take; how CRC would consult with Union and non-union staff; and discrimination and mitigation actions.

In response to questions Mr G McKeown stated that flexi time and special leave to support dependents are set out in the plan as benefits to staff, while the number of hours of work a week would be a risk.

The Board considered and approved this plan, and agreed to take part in the consultation. Ms L Keys was appointed as the Board Member to sit on the consultation panel.

g) Sickness Report

CRC/196/03/18/11

The Board noted the Sickness Report.

Mr G McKeown confirmed that CRC no longer have any members of staff off on long term sick leave, and that this will be reflected in future reports.

A Board member asked if CRC was doing enough for those receiving Occupational Health appointments, to which Mr G McKeown set out the general process and informed the Board that the staff member in question has accepted the Occupational Health report findings which had placed no further support requirements on CRC, and was content with the support received.

h) Health and Safety

There were no health and safety incidents to report during this period.

2979/18 Report from Audit and Risk Assurance Committee CRC/196/03/18/12

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee presented an update following 22nd February meeting.

The Committee agreed that 'Political' and 'Resources' risks should remain as red on the Risks Register, while 'New Policies' should remain amber.

The Chair noted that the Committee was content with an internal audit performed by ASM, reviewing HR and Grants areas of CRC activity. ASM had only minor recommendations, and both areas were viewed as 'satisfactory'.

The minutes of 11th Jan 2018 ARAC meeting were noted.

2980/18 Chief Executive's Report CRC196/03/18/13

Ms J Irwin presented an update to the Board. She noted that many items had already been addressed during the meeting. She made particular reference to the following:

- TEO have stated that it would be interested in updating the 'Community Relations Needs in Rural Areas' report. CRC will be meeting TEO to discuss.
- The CEO, Ms D MacBride, and Paul Mullan Heritage Lottery Fund presented to the Taoiseach Deputy Advisory Group on 20th February.
- The CEO noted an amendment to her report as Ms G Attwood attended City of Sanctuary initiative in Belfast City Hall on 1st March.
- She advised that the TBUC Engagement Forum taking place on Tuesday 13th March and that young people would be leading on this event and would also make up the majority of the audience.
- Peace Monitoring Advisory Group meeting will take place on the 9th March.
- She updated members on a number of interview requests recently from post-grad students.
- The funding panel met on 21st February to discuss the Core Funding Grant applications. She advised that this would be discussed later in the meeting.
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ACTION: Chair suggested moving CEO's Report higher up the Board agenda, to follow Chair's report.

2981/18

Sector Report**a) Communications Report**

CRC196/03/18/14

The Communication Report was noted.

Mr G McKeown stated that Ms P O'Neill is back at CRC on a phased return.

b) Funding Report

CRC/196/03/18/15

Mr P Jordan presented to the Board the Funding Report, making particular reference to the following:

- The Small Grants application period closed on the 5th January.
- Following the Core Funding Board Meeting, the decisions have been sent to the applicants.
- The Funding team met this morning to consider the 11 applications made to the North Belfast Grants Scheme. These 11 bids have all passed the threshold and the process will now move to finalising offers.
- A Board Member asked for the Core funding finances to be explained. Mr P Jordan stated that approx. £400,000 has been designated for 2018/2019 Core funding, in the absence of a formal budget. £393,336 had been allocated in principle for 2018/2019 going to organisations, with the remainder held back in case of successful appeals. The budget would be finalised when further information is available.
- Evaluations of North Belfast groups conducted every 6 months.

Mr P Jordan and Ms D MacBride tabled a paper on a Media Grant organisations request.

The organisation are in the process of creating a short film. They requested and were awarded £10,000. Receiving 50% upfront, and the remainder on completion of the project. They have been able to prove expenditure of £2,800, but due to cash flow issues, they are not in a position to pay any invoice which would push them over the 50% mark. Ms D MacBride explained that the work has been carried out, but the organisation has not been able to pay invoices above their first threshold, so CRC cannot release their next payment. Ms D MacBride stated that she is content with the work that has been completed.

The paper proposes releasing the remaining funds to cover a specific invoice, in order for them to prove payment, and receive their final 50% funding.

A number of Board Members were concerned that this was not compliant with CRC Grants Manual.

Board members discussed this issue and were not content to proceed.

ACTION: The Board asked Ms D MacBride, Mr P Jordan, and Mr G McKeown to consider an alternative method of resolving this issue.

c) Cultural Diversity

CRC/196/03/18/16

Ms D MacBride presented an update on the work of Cultural Diversity at, and made particular reference to:

- Printing of new resources and added this literature to the website.
- Met with the Committee on a 50th anniversary of civil rights.
- Next meeting of Decade Roundtable 21st March 2018.
- Issued contract to NI Screen for referendum shorts, which will be completed in May.

The Chair thanked Ms D MacBride for presenting her last 'Cultural Diversity' update to the Board.

2982/18

AOB

- i) Mr G McKeown informed the Board that a panel would meet on Friday 9th march to evaluate CR Week 2018 tender applications, and recommend an appointment. This recommendation will be forwarded to Board Members for confirmation through written procedure.

The Board stated they were content with this proposed process.

- ii) Ms J Irwin suggested that, where appropriate and when housekeeping matters are light on the agenda, CRC could invite a representative from funded groups to come in and speak on their work.

The Board agreed with this proposal.

2981/18

Date of next meeting

The following date to be circulated to Board Members as potential CRC EGM: Wed 25th April 1pm.

6th June 2018 1pm – This meeting will be in either North Down or Castlereagh, with a presentation for the Council's Good Relations Officer.