

**CONFIRMED**

**MINUTES OF THE ONE HUNDRED & NINETY NINTH MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY**

**RELATIONS COUNCIL BOARD HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018 13:00**

**BOARDROOM, EQUALITY HOUSE, BELFAST**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**3020/18**      **Present:** Mr Rory Campbell (Board Member), Ms Delia Close (Board Member), Ms Kasia Garbal (Board Member), Very Reverend N Hamilton (Board Member), Mr Don MacKay (Board Member), Mr P Osborne (Chair).

**3021/18**      **In Attendance:** Ms G Attwood (Policy Officer), Mr P Day (Director of Engagement), Ms F Dennison (Funding and Development Officer), Ms J Irwin (CEO), Mr P Jordan (Director of Funding and Development), Mr G McKeown (Director of Finance and Personnel), Mr D McNally (Funding Evaluation Officer).

**3022/18**      **Apologies:** Ms S McClelland, Ms L Keys, Mr Noel McKenna.

**3023/18**      **Welcome and Introduction**

The Chair thanked Board Members for attending the Extraordinary General Meeting

**3024/18**      **Standards 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.*

a) Declarations of interest

- Mr D MacKay declared an interest, as a member of Ulster Human Rights Watch, in the discussion on NIO's legacy consultation, to come later in the agenda.
- Rev N Hamilton declared that he has authored a press piece on the NIO legacy consultation on behalf of the Presbyterian Church.

b) Chair stated that he has received a small gift from a group of students from Switzerland, as a token of thanks for meeting with them.

**3025/18 Minutes of 6<sup>th</sup> June 2018 Board Meeting**

An error on page 14 of the 198<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting Minutes was brought to the Member's attention. Affect should be changed to effect.  
On the provision that this changes is made, the minutes were approved.

**3026/18 Matters Arising**

On reviewing the minutes of the previous meeting, Chair conveyed his apologies for not organising a core funding discussion just before this meeting, as suggested at the last meeting.  
The CEO explained that this would not have been possible as the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee met just prior to the full Board Meeting today. The Committee meeting had been moved from its original date to allow for the NIAO Report to those Charged with Governance to be reviewed. The discussion on the core fund has now been added as an item to this Board Meeting agenda.

**3027/18 Correspondence**

i) Mr Salvator Alvadres

The CEO via the Chair had received correspondence from an international post-graduate student. He asked CRC to supply information about the organisation, and asked if CRC would be open to accepting him on a placement in 2019.  
Mr Alvadres is to make an application to the University, and CRC awaits a response form Mr Alvadres on the next steps.

ii) Belfast City of Sanctuary

Community Relations Council received correspondence regarding the Belfast City of Sanctuary Scheme, asking whether CRC would like to take up corporate membership.  
The Board were interested in this proposal, however they requested further information to be asked of the organisation, particularly whether there is a membership fee, and what becoming a member would entail and the proposed work plan areas of the group.  
The Chair suggested that while the Board await this clarification, Board Members can become individual members/supporters of Belfast City of Sanctuary.

**ACTION:** CRC enquire as to what the organisations work plan is, are other charities/ arm's length bodies members, what would becoming a member entail.

iii) Letter from solicitor re: changes to NICRC Articles of Association

The solicitors conducted a review of CRC's Memorandum and Articles of Association. The attached correspondence sets out CRC's solicitor's proposals.

The Chair stated that it is important that the next steps in terms of changes to the Articles of Association be taken in tandem with the appointment of a new Board.

The CEO confirmed that, at this stage, the work is only to review and prepare draft Articles of Association but not to enact all the changes. There followed a conversation around the interview and application process for new Board Members, which TEO began in 2016/17, to fill positions on the Board. A number of Board members are due to come to the end of their second term in spring 2019.

The Board discussed the uncertainty of the situation, and the lack of clarity around the Secretary of States statement, which announced that powers might be given to Civil Servants and Permanent Secretaries to make decisions.

**ACTION:** The Board to consider whether changes should be made prior to or following the recruitment of a new Board. CEO to bring report to future board meeting, following meetings with TEO on this.

iv) Business Plan

CRC received correspondence from The Executive Office stating that they are content with CRC's Business Plan.

The CEO confirmed that the Business Plan would now be placed on the CRC website.

## **3028/18 Chair's Business**

Chair spoke on a number of events he attended since the last Board Meeting:

- International Education meeting
- Presidential Reception
- Housing Conference
- CRIS launch of GRACE project
- Memorial Lecture
- Two meetings with Core Funded groups
- Srebrenica event
- John Hewitt panel – chaired event
- Belfast Mela 2018 Launch
- Queens Medal presentation
- Peace Monitor Report meetings

Meetings coming up:

- Victims event
- Cultural convention
- World Health Organisation – Peace Monitor Project event 1<sup>st</sup> October
- Launch of Peace Monitor report
- Commemoration Press Assembly
- Good Relations week events
  - o 19<sup>th</sup> Sept 8pm-12 midnight – All Souls Church – a commemoration event, where the names of every victim of the Troubles will be read aloud.

## **3029/18 Annual Report and Account**

Mr G McKeown presented the updated CRC Annual Report and Accounts to the Board. Mr G McKeown explained that this report was presented at a previous meeting, since then the NI Audit Office had conducted their audit, changes and updates were added, and this is the final version.

Mr G McKeown made particular reference to the following:

- Page 14 – Overview of objectives CRC committed to achieving in 2017/18. Out of 19 proposed 17 were achieved. Two objectives were not achieved as they were dependent on a sitting Executive.
- Page 18 – Overview of Expenditure over the last 3 years.
  - o Total spent on grants in 2017/18 was 67%, compared with 16/17's 58%.
  - o DFAP are hoping that CRC's spend on grants for 18/19 will be 67%
- Page 21/22 – Key performance target – budget spent 98.8% - 1.2% variance.

- Page 46 – Remuneration Report
- Page 54 – blank – the NIAO report/certificate is to be placed in this space once approved.
- Page 57-58 – Fixed Assets
  - o Expenditure for the year
  - o Balance sheet
  - o Mr G McKeown highlighted that under Fixed Assets the expenditure value is declining. He explained that this is because CRC have no capital budget from TEO. CRC have made a bid in the October Monitoring Round.
- Page 89-102 – Breakdown of what CRC has spent on each grant fund.
  - o This section has been subject to audit this year for the first time.

A Board Member asked Mr G McKeown to explain page 22 – “this liability is expected to arise over the long-term rather than in the immediate future”.

Mr G McKeown explained that this line refers to page 58 – Pension Reserve. This pension reserve is in a deficit of £1.1million as this liability is raised and paid when the member of staff retires and becomes payable throughout the lifetime of the retired staff member. The Board Member asked what would happen if CRC ceases to exist. Mr G McKeown replied that TEO would resolve this through normal processes. Mr G McKeown explained that NILGOSC have reviewed the deficit and CRC are paying additional contributions every year to resolve the deficit in the long term. For other organisations, the contribution rate is 18%, for CRC it is 23%. This deficit sits on TEO’s balance sheets too.

The Board asked if CRC have received a guarantee that this deficit is TEO’s liability, which Mr G McKeown stated they have not. However, he advised members that TEO had been covering the cost of the payment due in the absence of a guarantee.

The CEO stated that this discussion was timely, as NILGOSC is in a process of reassessment, and CRC will have reason to raise this with TEO again

**ACTION:** Mr G McKeown will begin drafting the return to NILGOSC.

**ACTION:** G McKeown to share original correspondence 2014/2015 on 6% pension issue

**ACTION:** Mr G McKeown to request letter of guarantee from TEO

A Board Member asked, and Mr G McKeown explained that CRC have requested capital funding under the October monitoring round for high priority items: PCs, and desirable items: premises improvements.

The Board agreed the 2017/2018 Annual Report and Accounts.

Chair thanked Mr G McKeown for his work on the Annual Report.

The CEO also extended her thanks to Mr G McKeown and his team.

### **3030/18 Chief Executive Officer's Report**

The CEO presented her report to the Board, making particular reference to the following:

- The Operational Plan has been approved – work will now begin on the next Strategic Plan.
  - o In the past, the Board have held a two-day meeting to discuss this, and could do so again, and perhaps invite a speaker.

**ACTION:** Liaise with the Board on potential dates for this meeting.

- Staffing Review – BCS have been brought in by TEO to conduct a review of staffing positions below Director level.
  - o The fieldwork has been completed.
  - o The report is currently with TEO who will engage with CRC on the findings.

Chair expressed concern at the delay in receiving report from BCS during past staffing reviews. It is important that the reports are shared in a timely manner with regards the wellbeing of staff.

- TBUC engagement Forum – an annual review meeting was held with TEO in July which went well, and no changes were recommended.
  - o Thanks were recorded to Mr P Day and his team for their work on the recent Engagement Forum, which took place on 18<sup>th</sup> September during Good Relations Week. 180 attendees, focused on children and young people.
  - o Dirk Schubotz presented findings from the Life and Times Survey, and the Young Person's Life and Times Survey.
    - The presentation showed some modest improvements in the last 16 years, however there still appears to be plenty to be concerned about and the presentation focused on some of the negative aspects
    -

A Board member asked the CEO for her view on the Communities in Transition Project Board which the CEO was recently asked to sit on. She explained that this is a programme delivered directly by the TEO, Department

of Justice and others, delivery is done through a contract with Co-Operation Ireland on the community in transition element. There are quarterly reports to the Board on the rolling out of the project which includes over thirty distinct elements. The CEO noted the need to link into existing programmes as the project is broadly based.

- Page 3 – Scoping Study on Bonfires – still ongoing. The Chair has written to the Belfast City Council on this.
- GR Week
  - o The CEO recorded thanks to Mr P Day and JComms for their work putting together the programmes for GR Week.
- Peace Monitor V – The CEO noted that the draft has not been complete yet. However, CRC is still committed to holding an event on the 1<sup>st</sup> October as part of World Health Organisation Conference. All Board members are welcome to attend.

The CEO drew Board members attention to the section of her report reflecting events attended and she asked the board to note that she was unable to attend the RCN event as held on 14<sup>th</sup> September and Mr P Day had attended in her absence.

- The CEO advised the Board that work is being undertaken to refresh the CRC logo.
- The CEO noted on 24<sup>th</sup> Sept Staff Development Day would be taking place, which would include some early work in preparation for the upcoming strategy and operational strategic planning processes.

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A Board Member asked for further details on the ‘Doing Public Theology’ Project. The CEO explained that this project is led by Drumalis, and Johnston McMaster from the Irish School of Ecumenics. She gave a brief overview of the project and suggested that Mr P Jordan could circulate details of Johnston McMaster’s book derived on the Project to Board members who are interested in the project.

**ACTION:** P Jordan to circulate details of the publication to Board Members.

### **3031/18 Funding and Development**

Ms F Dennison and Mr D McNally,  
CRC Funding and Development, joined the meeting.

#### **i) CRC Funding Paper**

Mr P Jordan presented to the Board a paper on CRCs funding.

He explained that in June 2018 the Board held a discussion around Core funding. This meeting discussed what gaps have been identified, and how CRC could link up with other funders. Key data was reviewed and key numbers were presented.

The key findings from this review showed:

- £1,285,000 funding went to core funded groups.
- 33,000 participants attended core funded events.
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A Board Member asked how much work went into putting this report together, and whether it was worth the work.

Mr D McNally responded that the report was compiled using Excel and Google Maps. Extracting the information in the first place is time consuming, but it is important to evaluate the impact and work delivered.

Ms P Jordan stated that the report then goes on to identify the geographical gaps:

- M Antrim & Newtownabbey
- Ards & North Down
- East Belfast (Assembly Constituency Area)
- Lisburn & Castlereagh
- Mid & East Antrim
- Mid Ulster

The paper sets out how CRC's funded groups work links in with the TBUC themes of; Children and Young People; Shared Community; Safe Community; and Cultural Expression.

The report presents examples of work CRC funds in each of these areas, and the gaps in each theme.

A Board Member asked why it appears, on page 1 that Mid and East Antrim area are not involved in 'Safe Communities' work. A discussion followed on the uptake on this theme in Unionist areas. Mr P Jordan stated that in order to tackle this, as there are not many applications, CRC engages with GROs in the area.

Following a question from a Board Member, the CEO explained that this document is internal at the moment, however it has already been useful in CRC's discussions with TEO. She paid tribute to the Funding Team for their work on this report, and stated that the Engagement Team will be utilising this report in their own work.

A Board Member asked if there is an opportunity for new groups to discuss funding with CRC before putting in an application. Ms F Dennison replied, informing the meeting that new groups can get in



contact with the funding team to discuss their application. CRC also host information sessions during the Core application process. The Board then had a conversation around the Core groups fear about funding, groups getting complacent, and groups' energy depletion. Ms F Dennison stated that some groups will go on a journey with CRC, where others will not. The CEO stated that development of the work and impact on good relations is at the core of CRC funding, rather than the development of specific organisations, otherwise co-dependence can arise out of this.

The Board agreed that they are happy with the direction of travel of the Funding Directorate reports.

The Chair thanked Mr P Jordan and his team for this work.

Ms F Dennison and Mr D McNally,  
CRC Funding and Development, left the meeting.

## ii) **Holocaust Education Trust proposal**

Mr P Jordan stated that CRC have received a Pathfinder proposal via TEO to fund a 'Lessons from Auschwitz' project for 76 schools in Northern Ireland. This would include a one day visit to Auschwitz. This project was previously supported by the Education Authority, however, they no longer have the budget to fund it. TEO has the resources and suggested the project could be funded through CRC Pathfinder with the Department's financial support.

Mr P Jordan explained that the group have asked for £160,000. However, after conducting his own costings, Mr P Jordan sees the sum more realistically will be between £80,000 and £100,000.

The project will take 220 pupils for a one day trip to Auschwitz, flying on a chartered plane in the morning and returning the same evening. The Board discussed this project and the following issues were raised:

- Value for money
- What are the outcomes for the students
- Reputational risks – bringing hundreds of 16-17 year olds to a historical place of profound and sensitive importance.
- Where the project would fit into TBUC themes
- Conditions – members asked if there will be a commitments for students to do some work after this trip

**ACTION:** Mr P Jordan to take these issues to the group and feedback the

response to the Board at a future meeting.

### iii) **Funding and Development Sector Report**

The Board noted this report.

Mr P Jordan informed the Board that Ms R Montague has stepped down from her position at CRC, for which she has been on a career break, to take up a new position closer to home.

## **3032/18 Engagement**

Ms G Attwood, Policy Officer, joined the meeting.

### i) **Policy Consultation Paper**

Ms G Attwood presented to the Board a draft response to the Northern Ireland Office's consultation on Dealing with the Past. She outlined the discussions that had informed the draft made particular reference to the following:

#### Implementation and Reconciliation Group

- The proposals set out clearly the role of the IRG in relation to the work of other proposed legacy structures.
- It is unclear how the IRG structure will engage with reconciliation work external to the current proposals.
- There is no definition of reconciliation within the proposals.
- CRC remains unconvinced that a structure comprised almost entirely of nominees from political party is the best approach to take because of the difficulty of the issues from a political perspective.
- CRC want a structure that is inclusive of voices across our society – including women and victims.

#### Oral History Archive

- The OHA is a positive proposal. Its processes and accountability mechanisms must be robust to generate a culture of civic engagement – both for the depositing of testimonies but also for accessing and learning from the archive.
- The experiences of victims and survivors are central to any oral history archive.

- Need to engage the whole of wider society if the full picture about our past is to be acknowledged.

Ms G Attwood's consultation response includes the following recommendations:

- Definition of 'reconciliation'
- Implementation and Reconciliation Group should be reflective of society
- Role of women on bodies
- Query the appointment of individual to IRG by political appointment
- Clarity on timeline
- Project should ensure it does not re-traumatise.

The Board discussed the paper and made the following initial proposals:

- Stronger language open recruitment and wider societies involvement in the structures for appointing individuals to IRG
- Explanation of why CRC are not commenting on all aspects of the consultation

**ACTION:** Ms G Attwood to circulate updates to Board who will forward any further thoughts to Ms G Attwood by 27<sup>th</sup> October.

Ms G Attwood, Policy Officer, left the meeting.

### **3033/18      Finances and General Purposes**

#### **i)      Allocation of Additional Finance Resource**

Mr G McKeown spoke to the paper 'Allocation of Additional Finance Resources'.

He explained that CRC have an additional £150,000 due to funding being made available to cover pensions.

Mr G McKeown proposes that this funding is allocated as follows:

- £50,000 to Pathfinder
- £18,000 to CRCD
- £5,000 to offset Core overspend
- £5,000 to print and display resources
- £9,000 to recruitment campaigns ( dependent on BCS review)
- £13,000 to move grant software host to CRC server.
- £5,000 towards premises costs/maintenance

The Board agreed to approve the proposal to allocate funding as suggested.

**ii) Equality Update**

The CEO informed Members that CRC's Equality Update Section 75 has been submitted subject to ratification by the Board to meet the 31<sup>st</sup> August deadline.

The Board agreed to ratify CRC's Equality update.

The CEO further commented that CRC's draft Equality Scheme is still with Equality Commission.

**iii) Measures to Address Staff Morale**

Mr G McKeown presented a paper on CRC's proposals to address staff morale. He made particular reference to the section stating that Unite the Union have agreed that CRC should consult the Labour Relations Agency to address staff morale.

The Board agreed to the proposals set out in this paper.

**iv) Purchase Order**

**v)**

The Board were presented with a Purchase Order setting out plans for CRC to pay a designer to refresh the logo. This work could cost up to £10,000.

The Board approved this purchase order.

**3034/18**

**Engagement Directors Report**

Mr P Day presented a paper on the work of the Engagement Team, making particular reference to the following:

- GR Week
  - 196 events
  - Good PR coverage
  - Thanks noted to JComms
  - Rory McIlroy and Paula Radcliff made public comments on GR Week
  - Photocall with Ulster Rugby players
- TBUC Engagement Forum took place on 18<sup>th</sup> September on the theme of children and young people – with particular reference to encouraging their engagement with good relations work.

A Board Member asked why political engagement with Good Relations work is so low, and suggested that at a future Board Meeting can Board Members be asked to meet with their local MLA to stress the importance of Good Relations.

Mr R Campbell, Ms D Close,  
Mr D MacKay, Ms K Garbal left meeting.

**vi) Financial Projections to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019**

Mr McKeown presented the Financial Projections up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019. He stated that the projections are in line with the budget.

**vii) Pay Remit**

Mr G McKeown stated that there has been no update to report on the outstanding Pay Remits, but he hopes to present a paper at the next Board Meeting.

**viii) Health and Safety**

Mr G McKeown stated that there had been no health and safety incidents to report. A number of members of staff have received HR top up training.

**ix) Sickness and Absence Report**

The Board noted this report.

**x) Alignment of CRC to NICS HR Policies**

Mr G McKeown stated that the consultation plan to align CRC HR policies with NICS was approved by the Unite the Union staff members. A meeting is to be held with non-union members in the coming weeks to approve the consultation plan.

**3035/18 Audit and Risk Assurance Committee**

**i) Verbal update**

The CEO informed Members that the 'Report to those Charged with Governance' was received and agreed at the Audit Committee meeting earlier today. She suggested that due to time constraints and the number of board members fallen below quorate at this meeting, this paper be brought to the next Board Meeting.

**ACTION:** 'Report to Those Charged with Governance' to be presented at November's Board Meeting.

**ii) Minutes**

The Board noted the Minutes from the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting on 29th May 2018.

**iii) Risk Strategy & Full Risk Register**

The CEO informed Members that the Risk Strategy and Full Risk Register had been taken before the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee this morning. Committee members approved the Strategy and Register, and recommendation that the Board approve the paper.

**ACTION:** Risk Strategy to be presented at Novembers Board Meeting due to time constraints and board member numbers falling below quorate.

**3036/18 AOB**

None

**3037/18 Date of Next Meeting**

7<sup>th</sup> November 13:00 The Braid, Ballymena  
19<sup>th</sup> December 13:00 Equality House