

**MINUTES OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND NINETEENTH MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY
RELATIONS COUNCIL BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY 11TH MARCH 2021
VIA VIDEO CALLING SOFTWARE**

3431/21 **Present:** Chair Mr M McDonald, Mr R Campbell, Ms M Braniff Ms C Harris, Mr J McCallister, Mr M McDonnell, Ms A Simpson, Ms N Tandon, Ms S McClelland.

3432/21 **In Attendance:** Ms J Irwin (CEO), Mr P Day (Director of Engagement), Mr P Jordan (Director of Funding and Development), Mr G McKeown (Director of Finance, Admin, and Personnel), Ms J Adamson (HR Manager), Ms H George (PA to CEO and Board), Ms G Attwood (Policy Officer).

3433/21 **Apologies:** Mr M McDonnell (Board Member), Mr D Johnston (Boardroom Apprentice)

3434/21 **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*

Board members had nothing to declare

3435/21 **Closed Session**

Staff were not presented for the Closed Session. The Chair reported back on these issues when staff joined the meeting

i) Compliance with DOF guidance FD (DFP) 08/14, 09/18

The Chair informed the Board that he met with Mr M Browne, TEO, on the 9th February 2021, to discuss this issue. He informed TEO that Unite the Union are not prepared to consult with CRC on the pension issue, until details can be provided on how other ALBs have resolved this issue.

They discussed the procurement of an external consultant to assist with this issue.

The Chair and CEO will continue to raise this issue with Mr M Brown's replacement at TEO.

ii) Dignity at Work Charter & LRA Temperature Check

The Board were encouraged with the progress made by HeadsTogether. The Chair noted that the Covid-19 restrictions have demonstrated the

Management Team's trust in staff, and the staff's ability to deliver under difficult circumstances.

The Chair thanked the Management Team and the staff for their work over the very difficult pandemic period during the last year .

3436/21 Minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes of the meeting which took place on 27th January 2021 and agreed that they are an accurate account of that meeting.

3437/21 Matters Arising

The Chair presented the Board with an update on a number of matters arising and actions following the previous Board meeting.

The Chair proposed asking a staff member at the Charity Commission to attend at Board meeting in the autumn to present on the responsibilities of Board members.

The Chair informed the Board that the Engagement Team will be presenting a list of sporting grants at the next Board meeting.

The Board noted this paper.

3438/21 Correspondence

Ms J Irwin informed the Board of correspondence from Mr D Johnston, Boardroom Apprentice informing CRC that due to his ill health, he will not be able to attend future Board meetings.

The CEO had responded with a holding message passing on her best wishes to Mr D Johnston, and wishing him a speedy recovery. She asked him to keep in touch when his health improves. She had also advised that she would bring his correspondence to the Board. The CEO said that Mr D Johnson had shown great interest in the work of CRC and creating links on the issues of community safety with the PSNI and CRC.

The Chair stated that a letter would be drafted on behalf of the Board to Mr D Johnston.

ACTION: Ms H George to draft a letter to Mr D Johnston, on behalf of the Board.

3439/21 Audit and Risk Committee

- i) Risk Register Summary

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC), Mr R Campbell, presented the Board with the latest Risk Register summary. The Risk Register ratings were reviewed and agreed that at the previous ARAC meeting.

He explained that the Committee agreed that 'compliance with DOF guidance FD (DFP) 08/14, 09/18' should remain red, 'staff morale' should remain amber, and 'Covid-19' should remain amber, as there has been no further progress on these issues.

The Board thanked Mr R Campbell for this update, and noted the paper.

ii) 14th January 2021 Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

Mr R Campbell presented the Board with the minutes of the 71st Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, which took place on the 14th January 2021.

The Board noted the minutes.

3440/21 Chair's Business

i) Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

The Chair informed the Committee that the Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Mr R Campbell, wishes to step down from the position, after holding it for a number of years.

The Chair of the Board had spoken to Mr J McCallister, who confirmed that he would take up the position.

Mr R Campbell confirmed that he would like to continue as a member of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

The Board thanked Mr J McCallister for volunteering for this position, and Mr R Campbell for his work as ARAC Chair.

3441/21 Finance and General Purposes Committee

The Chair updated the Board on the activities of the first Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting, which took place on 10th March 2021. He reminded members that the Committee's purposes is to look at finance, governance, and HR issues in detail, and make recommendations to the Board.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee reviewed the Terms of Reference. Mr G McKeown is reviewing the membership of the Committee, and whether the Chair of the Committee should always be the Chair of the organisation.

CRC has begun planning financial training for Board members.

Mr G McKeown presented the Finance and General Purposes Committee with CRC's 2020/21 Delivery Report, which showed that all outcomes are on target to be completed by 31st March 2021. An OBA scorecard will be presented to the Committee at future meetings.

The Committee was presented with an update on a member of staff's regrading request. It was agreed, in conjunction with TEO, that DFAP will prepare a new policy for staff requesting grading reviews. The current request will go to TEO for review.

The Management Accounts show CRC has an underspend of £25k (0.8%), this is within the 1.5% tolerance.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee were presented with new Vouching and Verification Procedures, which move the responsibility for this function from the Funding Team to the Finance Team.

The Committee reviewed a Business Case, proposing CRC remain in Equality House until at least 2024.

The Chair informed Board members that CRC's Sickness and Absence report, up to December 2020, showed the number of days lost per person due to sickness decreased from 7.3 days (up to December 2019) down to 4 days (up to December 2020). The total cost of sickness has decreased from £32.5K (December 2019) to £14k (December 2020).

The Finance and General Purposes Committee reviewed CRC's Disability Plan and Equality Scheme. The Committee asked for the consideration of digital exclusion to be included in the 2021/22 Plan.

The Board thanked the Chair for this update.

3442/21

Operational Plan

The CEO presented the Board with the second draft of CRC's Operational Plan. The amendments made to the draft include the inclusion of proposed changes from The Executive Office, and updated key performance indicators drafted by the Senior Management Team.

TEO were content with the first draft, but asked for a number of small changes to be made, including the updating of links, and rewording of some text.

The CEO presented the Board with each of the changes.

The Board approved this draft, which will now go to TEO for Ministerial approval. Once CRC have received the 2021/22 budget, this will be added to the Plan.

3443/21 CEO's Update

The CEO presented the Board with an update on a number of issues.

i) Covid-19

CRC's Covid-19 emergency arrangements continue to work well. The Executive Office recently published their plan, which did not contain any dates for returning to normal working. CRC are keeping all procedures under review. The DFAP team are working on a plans for returning to normal working, including provision for blended working.

ii) TEO

The CEO and Paul Jordan have recently been involved in Executive Office funding assessment panels.

The CEO met with Mr R Cushnie, who is Mr M McGinley's temporary replacement in TEO. The Chair and CEO will meet with Mr R Cushnie again, in April 2021.

The Chair and CEO will be meeting with Mr M McGinley, in his new role at International Fund for Ireland, on Monday 15th March.

On the 4th March, the CEO had a very positive and productive discussion with TEO on the new Partnership Agreement.

iii) Other Meetings

The CEO attended the Machnamh 100 Lectures hosted by the President of Ireland. She recommended the recorded lectures to any interested Board members.

The CEO and Mr P Jordan held a meeting with organisations from Derry/Londonderry and Strabane area, informing them of the funding streams available. She asked Board members to inform CRC if they are

aware of any groups that would benefit from attending a similar information session.

iv) Projects

The CEO thanked the Engagement Team for their work on the three day Resource Fair. The material from these sessions was recorded and will be available online.

The tendering process for the author of the next Peace Monitor report will be run again due to the lack of tenders.

v) Governance

The work with Headstogether is continuing, with the Management Team receiving training and coaching, and a Dignity at Work Policy drafted.

Ms S McClelland joined the meeting

3444/21 Briefing Paper – Heritage

Mr G Attwood presented the Board with a briefing paper on 'Heritage'. The paper lays out the statistics on attitudes; the structures of the historical environment; the policy; CRC's own policies and funding streams; the work of the Decade Roundtable and the Principles; details of the Shared History Fund; details of the Advisory Group on Centenary; and the work of CRC's funded groups in the area.

The Board thanked Ms G Attwood for presenting, and commended the comprehensive report. They noted that these papers are valuable for shaping the direction of the organisation.

Mr P Day asked the Board to consider topics for future briefing papers, and to pass ideas onto him.

ACTION: Board members to consider topics of future briefing papers and to pass on suggestions to Mr P Day.

The Board proposed that the next Briefing paper could be an audit of Good Relations landscape across the Departments.

3445/21 Engagement Update

Mr P Day presented a paper updating the Board on items under his Directorate.

The Good Relations Awards Panel met on 5th March to review the 29 nominations. The meeting agreed ten award winners, and one posthumous award winner. The presentation of the awards will take place on the 31st March, with an opportunity for an in-person event during Good Relations Week 2021.

The Chair suggested that in the future there should be a scoring matrix for the decision process, and that a non-CRC member should be involved in the decision panel.

Mr P Day added that the award winners cover a large spread across geographic area and topic area, as well as good gender representation.

The Board thanked Mr P Day for this update, and noted the Engagement paper.

3556/21 Media Grant Refresh

Mr P Jordan presented the Board with a proposal to refresh the Media Grant Scheme.

The proposal suggests the fund make one large grant to a young filmmaker, who will complete their project over the year, alongside a Core Funded Group. A Steering Group would be convened with a number of experts in the field, to review and agree what theme the production should focus on.

The scheme would open for applications in May 2021. The award would be made in June 2021, with the work completed by March 2022. The Steering Group would meet four/five times within the year.

A grant award of £5K-10K would be made to one project.

Ms McClelland asked if the grant from JRCT could be used for this work if no author for the next Peace Monitor was appointed. The CEO confirmed that the JRCT grant was awarded only for the Peace Monitoring report.

The Board agreed this proposal and asked Mr P Jordan to draft a Terms of Reference and set out what the grant is trying to achieve and what the aims are.

ACTION: Mr P Jordan to draft Terms of Reference for the refreshed Media Grant Scheme and the Steering

Group, including details of what it is trying to achieve, and what the aims are.

Mr R Campbell, and Ms C Harris left the meeting.

3557/21 Purchase Orders

- i) Mr G McKeown presented the Board with Purchase Order 0085, for £27,976. This covers PR support for the 2021 Good Relations Week. This follows an open tender process.
The Board approved this purchase order.
- ii) Mr G McKeown presented the Board with Purchase Order 0086, for £24,030. This covers CRC's Internal Audit for 2021-2024. This follows an open tender process.
The Board approved this purchase order.
- iii) Mr G McKeown presented the Board with Purchase Order 0090, for £29,888. This covers CRC's IT Service Costs.
The Board approved this purchase.

3558/21 Funding and Development Sector Update

Mr P Jordan presented the Board a paper updating on items in the Funding and Development Directorate.

The Board noted this report.

3559/21 LRA Implementation Update

The Board were presented with a paper updating them on the LRA Implementation Plan.

The Board noted this report.

3560/21 Any Other Business

None

3561/21 Date of Next Meeting

21st April 2021 10:30am