WEB Minutes of Board meeting - 11 June 2024

Trustees Present
Carolin Göhler (CG) - Chair/President-Elect Noel Farrer (NF) - Vice President
Jane Clarke (JC) - Independent Trustee Mat Haslam (MH) - Hon Treasurer
Chris House (CH) - Chair of Education & Membership Committee
Marc Norden (MN) - Independent Trustee
Ian Phillips (IP) - Chair of Policy & Communication Committee

Staff in attendance
Rob Hughes (RH) - CEO
Rowena Lovell (RL) - Board Secretary
Emma Wood (EW) - Governance & Regulation Manager
Joe Thomas (JT) - Head of Finance
Neelam Sheemar (NS) - Head of Marketing, Communications & Events

Apologies
Mark Smeeden (MS) - Hon Secretary
Adam Barker (AB) - Non-Chartered Trustee

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Preliminary Matters

President-Elect Carolin Göhler confirmed she was not well and whilst she would attend the meeting Vice President Noel Farrer would act as Chair in her place.

1. Welcome and apologies

The meeting being quorate, the Chair opened the meeting and welcomed those detailed above, noting that apologies had been received from Mark Smeeden and Adam Barker.

2. Declarations of Interest

The meeting noted no potential conflicts of interest declared in relation to the items on the agenda for discussion.

3. Minutes of meetings held 12 March and 19 April 2024

Decisions: The Board unanimously agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2024 as an accurate record of discussions of the Board and of the meeting. The Board unanimously agreed the minutes of the meeting held on19 April 2024 subject to the follow amendment being made to item 3.2:

"In view of the New Ways of Working framework, the report from the Standing Committee Review Group will be considered by the Governance Committee and discussed with the Review Group with the aim of bringing back recommendations for a single Committee framework to the Board at its September Meeting".

4. Matters Arising

The Board noted no matters arising.

5. Items for discussion and decision

5.1 CEO and Business Plan update

The Board noted an update from Rob Hughes (RH), CEO including key updates from 2023/24 and on achievements against KPIs of the business plan 2024/25, highlights include:

- There were significant achievements during 2023/24 including being able to progress many priority 2 workstreams. The majority of those projects not started/completed during the year were mainly due to resource gaps and with additional staff now on board we are now able to address that.
- Although 2024/25 will be primarily focused on implementation and core business delivery with a phased approach over the next two or three years with a view to long term planning looking at 2026 onwards. There are six critical business objectives for 2024-25:
  - Skills for greener places research undertaken
  - Member satisfaction survey shows increase to 52%
  - Examine apprenticeships and solution for level 7
  - Develop and launch corporate strategy
  - Talent recruitment and retention
  - Learning and development.

- Delivery will require adopting a project led approach with an allocated project team/taskforce and set timelines/KPIs.
- The business objectives will focus on policy, communities, membership, education and transforming the LI.
- All with key areas of focus and reporting success, measurable outputs, challenges and identified risks.

Communications and events

The meeting noted an update from Neelam Sheemar (NS), Head of Marketing, Communications & Events on the communications plan and activities which will aim to move the LI forward and be more inclusive, as well as embedding New Ways of Working with members at the heart of all we do as well as showcasing the value of members to the LI, the sector and society.

Digital Transformation (Project Kestrel)

The meeting noted an update from RH on progress of the Digital transformation project (Project Kestrel) including that:

- Member pledges are weaved in this digital transformation programme.
- New timeline allows for additional time for testing of complex user journeys and risk mitigation against having two CRM systems simultaneously.
- The position of LI as regards Artificial Intelligence (AI) is currently under discussion.

5.2 Proposal for future of Awards and national conference

The meeting noted a presentation from Neelam Sheemar (NS), Head of Marketing, Communications & Events on the proposed way forward to deliver the Awards and a national conference in 2025.

5.3 Finance Matters

5.3.1 Report from Finance & Risk Committee (FRC)

The Board received the draft minutes from the FRC meeting held on 15 March 2024. The meeting noted an update from Mat Haslam (MH), Hon Treasurer.

5.3.2 Budget update – MMR

The Board noted the current MMR and an update from Joe Thomas, Interim Head of Finance on the current financial position.

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5.3.3 Risk management policy and approach

The Board noted an update from Rowena Lovell (RL) Board Secretary on the proposed three step approach to risk management:

- Step 1: Establish and approve the organisation's risk management policy
- Step 2: Establish and adopt both strategic and operational risk registers that identify and assess risks and evaluates the action taken to mitigate those risks as well as the Board's risk appetite and tolerance for each.
- Step 3: The Board to monitor and maintain an oversight of risk – strategic and operational.

Decision: The Board unanimously approved the adoption of the risk management policy and approach as recommended by FRC.

5.4 Corporate Strategy development planning and preparation for the Joint Board/AdCo session

The meeting noted an update from NS on plans for reviewing and refreshing the current vision and mission at the joint meeting with the Council as part of the development of the LI's next strategy and that:

The workshop format will incorporate:

1. A review of the current vision, mission and goals and the current values data
2. Discussion of the framework – noting that the aim is an evolution of the existing vision and mission. With breakout groups facilitated by members of SLT on the day.

5.5 Governance Matters

The meeting received the draft minutes from the Governance Committee held on 13 May 2024 and an update on discussions at that meeting.

5.5.1 Election plan and timetable

The meeting noted an update on timetable and plans for the Elections in 2025 and that:

- The Governance Committee will be reviewing CfGS recommendations in relation to elections and agree if any changes should be implemented in respect of the 2025 elections.

Decision: The Board unanimously approved the 2025 Election plans and timetable.

5.7 Trustee Vacancies

The Board noted an update on the two current Independent Trustee vacancies on the Board and that:

- The Board has previously agreed to recruit a financially qualified Independent Trustee.
- There is now an additional vacancy as Deborah Nagan stepped down in May 2024. The recommendation following a previous skills gap analysis is that expertise around marketing and communications is needed on the Board.

Decision: Board supported direction of travel regarding skills and expertise to fill current Independent Trustee vacancies

5.8 People, Culture and Change Matters

The Board received the draft minutes from the People, Culture & Change Committee meeting held 15 May 2024 and noted an update from discussions at that meeting on the office move.

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5.9 Summary Report from Branch AGMs

The Board noted an update on the 2024 Branch AGM meetings and that a huge amount of work is required behind the scenes to ensure these events happen.

Action: RH is to circulate a list of current Branch vacancies to the Board.

5.10 President's Update

The Board noted a short update from CG on recent activity that included:

- Attending all but one BrAGM meeting
- Attendance at this year's UKREiF conference in Leeds attended by over 12,000 delegates.
- The upcoming President's Reception on 25 June.

6 Items for Information

Action: The Board noted the current activity log and requested that RH review and update this especially those actions that have been outstanding for some time.

7 AOB

The Board noted an update from CG that the Restore Nature Now protest walk to be held in London 22 June 2024 which is supported by a range of supporting organisations (including National Trust, WWF, RSPB etc) and the request that this should be promoted to members.

Action: the Board agreed this can be promoted to members but with the caveat that the LI is not a campaigning organisation and therefore has a neutral stance on this issue.

8 Close of meeting

No further items of business were raised and therefore the Chair closed the meeting.

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