

ULSTER SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT LTD

(Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a Share Capital)

Minutes of a Board of Directors Meeting
13.30, Wednesday 25 September 2019
Cambrai Street, Belfast

Present

Mr W Leathem	Chairman
Ms C Magill	Director
Mr R Donnelly	Director
Mr D O'Hara	Director
Mr R Havlin	Director
Mr W Atkinson	Chief Executive
Mrs SJ Mowbray	Company Secretary/Head of Corporate Services
Mr S Jackson	Head of Manufacturing & Recycling
Mr D Cowan	Head of Employment Services

Apologies

Ms J Cowan	Director
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1. Conflict of Interest

1.1.A perceived conflict of interest was noted for the SMT in relation to the pension benefit re-design.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 28 August 2019

2.1. Minutes from meeting on 28 August 2019 were approved.

2.2. Update on actions from previous meetings are as follows:

- Various papers were circulated to Board members;
- An update on H&S structure and governance has been provided as part of the CEO's update;
- Risk register has been updated to include the risk around the Employment Support programme.

2.3. All actions are now cleared.

3. Chairman's Business

3.1. The Chairman updated members in relation to:

- The Department has requested that any work on the MSFM should be put on hold until the Chairman and CEO has attended a seminar on Partnership Framework;
- The Chairman and CEO attended a meeting with the CEO of Lisburn Castlereagh Council to discuss potential strategic partnerships and new ways of working;
- It was agreed that the November Board meeting will include a strategic overview on 14 November.

4. Pension Scheme Update

- 4.1. The CEO presented slides outlining the proposed revision to the pension benefit re-design.
- 4.2. Based on the new information presented, the Board approved the revised proposal.
- 4.3. The business case will be revised and submitted to the Department by 18 October. The Department have outlined a 10 working day turnaround for approval.

5. Chief Executive's Report

- 5.1. The Directors reviewed the Chief Executive's Report which had been circulated with Board papers. The following was noted:

Business Development

- 5.2. Usel are currently engaged in several new business development opportunities in relation to circular economy and hospitality.
- 5.3. In addition, Usel is piloting a new retail outlet in Ballymena. Written confirmation from the department has been obtained to proceed on a pilot basis for 9 months with agreement that should the pilot prove successful, a full business case would need to be submitted for approval before any lease could be formally agreed.
- 5.4. The Board were content to proceed with the opportunities discussed.

Health and Safety

- 5.5. A health and safety advisor was recruited in January of this year. However, in May this individual resigned. At that point Usel moved to an outsourced safety officer model to ensure the required level of safety expertise was

available. This decision was taken to ensure continuity of the health and safety function, with the day to day overview of health and safety transferring to Head of Manufacturing and Recycling.

5.6. In the past number of months, several actions have been implemented to improve our health and safety performance, these include:

- A full review of our current Health and Safety Policy
- A full review of our accident reporting procedure
- Formal monthly site inspections in both Belfast and Ballymena

5.7. In addition, the need for a range of operational managers and supervisors to complete a recognised safety qualification was identified. A range of managers/supervisors have commenced an IOSH Managing Safety programme to enhance their awareness of safety legislation and best practice.

Pension Benefits Redesign

5.8. In addition to the slides presented, an update was provided on advice received re: current public sector pensions policy.

5.9. The formal business case will be revised and submitted to the department by mid Oct.

6. Tailored Review

6.1. The Board considered the content of the Tailored Review in detail.

6.2. A formal response will be drafted and submitted to the Department by the end of next week.

7. Head of Corporate Services' Report

Finance

7.1. The Directors reviewed the summary financial position against budget, for **August**, and noted a deficit of £57k. Budget forecast for **August** was £38k deficit, therefore there is a negative variance of £19k.

7.2. YTD we have delivered a deficit of £22k. Budget forecast for YTD position, as at 31 August was a deficit of £48k. This is a positive variance of £26k.

7.3. It was noted that income and expenditure lines for YTD were within 10% variance tolerance.

7.4. Any additional clarification requested by Board members was provided.

HR

7.5. The average absenteeism rates for 2019-20 are as follow:

	Usel August 2019	Usel YTD Average
<i>Absenteeism rates - short term-National Average 3% dependant on demographics</i>	1.06%	2%
<i>Absenteeism rates - long term (+4 weeks)-National Average 2.5% dependant on demographics</i>	4.02%*	2.6%

* This equates to seven staff – two of which have returned to work.

7.6. No other substantive issues to note.

7.7. Usel are continuing to engage with its out-sourced HR business partner as required and monitor the contract spend each month.

ICT & Compliance

7.8. There were no incidences of ICT or data breaches to report.

8. Chair of Audit and Risk Assurance Committee update

8.1. Ms Magill provided a verbal update to the Board on September's ARAC meeting.

9. Adult Safe Guarding Issues

9.1. No new issues to report.

10. Health & Safety

10.1. The CEO provided a full updated on Health & Safety.

11. Risk management

11.1. The risk register was reviewed in full during the ARAC and will be communicated in October's Board.

12. Policies for Approval

12.1. The following policies were approved, subject to minor amendments:

- Working from Home Policy
- Equality Scheme v2
- H&S Committee – Terms of Reference
- Flexible Working Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy v2

12.2. The following policies were submitted for approval in October's Board:

- Disciplinary Policy – updated
- Health and Safety Policy

13. Any Other Business

13.1. The CEO advised the Board of gaps in the current Sickness Absence Policy. A revision will be submitted to the Board in due course.

13.2. It was agreed that Director expenses would be paid on a monthly basis, rather than twice a year.

14. Date of Next Meeting

14.1. 30 October 2019