

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING: 12th September 2017

11am, Tuesday 12th September 2017

Boardroom, Northern Ireland Screen, 21 Alfred Street, Belfast

Present: Rotha Johnston (Chairwoman), Laurence McKeown, Mike Catto, Fiona MacMillan, Elaine Sperber, Michael Kuhn, Jennifer Johnston, Adeline Dinsmore, Tim McKane

In attendance: Richard Williams (CEO), Linda Martin (Director of Finance and Corporate Services), Andrew Reid (Head of Production), Bernard McCloskey (Head of Education), Aine Walsh (Head of ILBF), Marie Shivers (PA to CEO), Brian Dolaghan and Tracey Walsh (Invest NI – Observers)

Apologies: James Penny, Greg Maguire, Ian Parsley, Moyra Lock (Head of Marketing)

1.0 Minutes of the Board meeting and Board Strategy meeting of 6th June 2017

1.1 The minutes of the June meetings were agreed, signed and the action points reviewed.

2.0 Chairwoman's business

2.1 The Chairwoman noted the Chief Executive's presentation to the Permanent Secretaries at the new studios in June. This was a good opportunity to present on attracting screen production to Northern Ireland.

2.2 The DfE Permanent Secretary confirmed that he understood the requirement for a commitment for 4 years funding. This underpinned the process that is currently underway.

2.2 The Chairwoman and Chief Executive will meet the DfC Permanent Secretary in September to discuss the culture and education strategy for Northern Ireland Screen and, in particular, Digiskills funding. A meeting with the DfE Permanent Secretary is scheduled at the appropriate stage of the new Strategy process.

2.3 The Chairwoman noted that Ofcom's Board will meet in Belfast next week and the issue of representation on either the Ofcom or BBC Boards from Northern Ireland will be raised.

2.4 The Chairwoman is grateful to the members of the Board who have agreed to extend their terms until December 2017.

3.0 CEO's Report, Summary PI Report and Investment Report

3.1 The CEO noted teething problems with Krypton on moving into the studios, but that the production team is generally happy, especially with the construction of sets and the crew they've assembled in Northern Ireland. We continue to assist with any other problems that arise. The CEO and Head of Production are meeting with the Belfast Harbour Commission this week to work through outstanding issues.

- 3.2 *Rocky Ros Muc* was successful at the Galway Film Fleadh winning Best Documentary. A link will be forwarded to Board members for their viewing. No Stone Unturned is due for limited release in early November with the possibility of media attention.
- 3.3 Further to the Chairwoman's comments above on Digiskills, the CEO noted that a meeting with the Department of Education should be arranged alongside the meetings already confirmed with DfC and DfE Permanent Secretaries.
- 3.4 The Board was updated on a local bid for the travelling Game of Thrones Exhibit
- 3.5 We continue to work hard with the new BBC Drama Commissioner to develop a relationship under the BBC Partnership Agreement. Pablo, a pre-school children's animation and live action series in which the main character is on the autism spectrum, is the stand-out project under the Partnership Agreement. It will be launched at MIP Junior in Cannes in October. ILBF and USBF programmes will appear on iPlayer in October which should impact considerably on the profile of both.
- 3.6 Ulster University has asked Northern Ireland Screen to support the Creative Industries Institute and its bid in conjunction with QUB for creative cluster funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Mike Catto noted that grass roots support for this initiative is very strong and several of the Deans at UU have been pushing for it.
- 3.7 The CEO informed the Board that Susan Picken will step down as Head of QFT at the end of October. Susan has made a huge contribution to the QFT, has broadened the audience and shown great leadership in the development of the NI Film Hub project. The Board will write to Susan to acknowledge this contribution.
- 3.8 Nerve Belfast continue to look for new premises as they have to vacate their current offices by February 2018. The Chairwoman suggested we contact the Strategic Investment Board in relation to availability within the government estate.
- 3.9 HBO will continue in Titanic Studios until January 2019 due to filming commencing later than normal this year and a longer production period. The CEO will meet with HBO representatives in October 2017.
- 3.10 The performance indicators are all on track although the figures will increase significantly in the latter part of the year. Crew statistics are very good. The challenge will be closing off one strategy and opening the next one.

4.0 Update and development of the new Strategy

- 4.1 The CEO updated the Board on the development of the Strategy noting that it had issued to DfE, Invest NI and the consultants to enable them to complete the Economic Appraisal. The Chairwoman thanked the Executive for the work on the strategy to date and confirmed that the document reflected the aspirations of the Board.
- 4.2 Archive, Education, and CLCs are not included within the Strategy as yet as these are funded by DfC. The CEO hopes that meeting with the Permanent Secretary of DfC can offer a platform to develop a 4 year strategy for culture and education linked to the DfE's economic strategy. This was agreed in principle with the previous DfC Minister.
- 4.3 CEO confirmed that further presentations of the strategy will be made to various audiences but will be in a different format to the printed report. There will be significant focus on the non- direct financial benefits of the industry to NI.

- 4.4 Tim McKane emphasised the need to increase the number and presence of good news stories on the impact of the industry, that they need to be well publicised in particular through a steady stream of social media content.

5.0 Finance, Audit and Governance

- 5.1 The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee updated the Board on their recent meeting, noting that organisation policies had been reviewed and updated as necessary, and that the Pension note wording in the Accounts had been agreed by Deloitte. The Chairwoman asked that any comments on the policies be forwarded to the Director of Finance and the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee within 2 weeks of the date of this meeting. They will then be reviewed and agreed at the November meeting.
- 5.2 The items contained in the Risk Register have been discussed above. It was noted that the Creative Industries Federation is doing a significant piece of work on the impact of Brexit on the Industry in the UK and that Northern Ireland Screen is feeding into this work. The risks associated with Brexit will be added to the next quarter's Risk Register. There was nothing further discussed and the Board was content with the Risk Register.
- 5.3 The draft MSFM replaces the existing MSFM issued by DCAL in 2009 and should form the basis of the MSFM to be in place for April 2018 when funding moves from Invest NI to DfE. DfC have since highlighted some issues which may delay the approval of the document. The Board approved the MSFM draft and requested that both departments finalise this document as a matter of urgency.
- 5.4 Linda Martin presented the Accounts to the Board noting the following significant variances: Screen Fund has cash-flowed £674k more than the budget due to the carry forward and payment of a large-scale project from 16-17; the planned overhead deficit of £127k will now be covered through a reduction in Invest NI funding transferred to DfE; and a reduction in Lottery funding to £250k has been confirmed. The Board approved the accounts.
- 5.5 The Chairwoman updated the Board on the Strategic Resources Committee meeting held this morning noting the result of the staff survey which was broadly very positive. She noted areas raised during the recent individual Board member meetings. These included:
- Training on Audit and Risk procedures/good governance;
 - Making sure Board members were invited to screenings and events;
 - Succession planning;
 - Marketing message to young people;
 - Continued presence amongst target producers in London and US and follow-up procedures.
- 5.6 The Board were asked to submit their outstanding Board Effectiveness responses as a matter of urgency.

6.0 Committee Updates

Education Policy Working Group

- 6.1 Adeline Dinsmore noted that the Committee was looking at extending/refreshing membership over the next few months. She noted that it was welcomed that Paul Moore of DfC had attended the last 2 meetings.
- 6.2 The Committee will focus on careers in the new Education Strategy as there is a lack of awareness in schools and with parents and teachers as to the opportunities in the screen industries and how to access them. The BFI Film Academies, successfully running by the CLCs and Cinemagic, offer a model for further careers programmes. We need to give young people a deeper, more realistic insight into what a career in the industry might be like.
- 6.3 Jennifer Johnston informed the Board that Into Film was in early stage talks with BFI about available funding for skills development and that Into Film intended to play a role in better careers information. She will take away the discussion points from today to feed into the talks.
- 6.4 The Chairwoman asked that a proposed approach be drawn up and brought back to the Board.

Investment Committee

- 6.5 The Board watched clips of Pablo, The Frankenstein Chronicles and Wildwoods, which is screening at QFT this weekend, and indicated that this was valuable and should be repeated at each meeting.
- 6.6 The Committee welcomed the production of Coming Home, a new network drama which will shoot in NI in October.

Irish Language Broadcast Fund

- 6.7 The ILBF Evaluation exercise is now complete with the outcome very positive. The Board noted the review and its recommendations. The ILBF and USBF will continue to be reviewed on a 5 year cycle. The next reviews will take place in 2021 and 2022.
- 6.8 The ILBF Committee will meet in late September for the next funding round. A large number of applications has been received. As the ILBF Committee Chair position cannot be recruited at this time, the Chairwoman will attend the ILBF Committee to retain a link with the Board. A commemoration for Aodan MacPoilin is hoped to be launched at the Belfast Media Festival in November.
- 6.9 Aine Walsh noted that Paper Owl, the production company behind Pablo, started through a commission for TG4 funded by ILBF.
- 6.10 Several programmes and presenters have been nominated for awards at the Oireachtas festival.

Ulster-Scots Broadcast Fund

- 6.11 Fiona Keane's appointment to manage Ulster-Scots content at the BBC has made a very positive impact. Radio investment projects will be discussed at a forthcoming meeting.

The recently completed Evaluation Reports for both USBF and ILBF will be submitted to BFI for DCMS.

Skills/Training

- 6.12 Aim High is going well with trainees in the fourth week of their placements. Resource in the Strategy for skills is important.
- 6.13 The Stepping Up Scheme is successfully underway on Krypton.

Exhibition

- 6.14 The Exhibition sector has come together a number of times to consider the exhibition elements of a further 4 year strategy. The Belfast Film Centre is regarded as a key element of the exhibition strategy.
- 6.15 The Board noted the Marketing calendar.

7.0 Any Other Business

- 7.1 Brian Dolaghan asked if the issues surrounding Brexit should be added to the Risk Register. The Board agreed these should be included.
- 7.2 Marie Shivers to circulate the Board meeting dates for 2018.

8.0 Date of Next Meeting

- 8.1 The next meeting of the Board will take place at 11am on Tuesday 5th December.

| <i>Point</i> | <i>Detail</i> | <i>To be actioned by</i> |
|--------------|---|----------------------------------|
| 3.2 | Send link to <i>Rocky Ros Muc</i> | Marie Shivers/ Aine Walsh |
| 3.3 | Arrange meeting with Dept for Education Permanent Secretary | Marie Shivers |
| 3.7 | Write to Susan Picken acknowledging her contribution to the QFT | Chairwoman |
| 3.8 | Engage with Strategic Investment Board to help with locating new premises | CEO |
| 5.1 | Await further comments on organisation policies for review and approval at the next meeting. | Linda Martin/ Fiona MacMillan |
| 5.6 | Chase outstanding Board Effectiveness questionnaires | Marie Shivers |
| 6.3 | Proposal to develop a new careers approach for young people, parents & teachers to be drawn up & brought back to the Board. | BMcC |
| 6.5 | Submit ILBF Evaluation Report to BFI for DCMS | Linda Martin |
| 7.1 | Issues surrounding Brexit to be added to the Risk Register | CEO/Linda Martin |
| 7.2 | Circulate meeting dates for 2018 to the Board | Marie Shivers |

Signed: _____

Date: _____

5 December 2017