

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING: 14th March 2017

11am, Tuesday 14th March 2017

Northern Ireland Screen, Alfred House, Alfred Street, Belfast

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

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

Apologies: James Penny, Greg Maguire

Conflicts of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

1.0 Minutes of the Board meeting of 13th December 2016

1.1 The minutes of the December meeting were agreed, signed and the action points reviewed.

2.0 Chairwoman's business

2.1 On the recent tragic passing of Aodán MacPóilin the Chairwoman has written to Aodán's wife on behalf of the Board to express our heartfelt condolences. The Board would like to mark the importance of the contribution he has made and will seek guidance from the ILBF committee on the appropriate action. Roise Ni Bhaoill will act as interim Chair for the ILBF Committee until a permanent Chair is appointed, and the Chairwoman will attend ILBF Committee meetings as a link to the Board.

2.2 The CEO and Linda Martin will meet with the Department next week to discuss Board appointments. The executive will update the Board prior to public

recruitment. A follow-up meeting will be sought with the Permanent Secretary regarding the new strategy and funding structures. Invest NI will continue to attend Board meetings until the current Letter of Offer comes to an end.

2.3 The Chairwoman thanked the Board for the engagement undertaken on strategy consultations and suggested a presentation of the draft strategy by the CEO on the 5th June prior to the Board meeting on 6th June.

2.4 Belfast Harbour Studios is on track for completion by end March and noted the significant work which is still underway to confirm a first production to occupy the space.

2.5 The Board Evaluation document will be forwarded for completion shortly. The next appraisal process will also begin shortly.

3.0 CEO's Report including PI Report and Investment Report

3.1 The CEO reported on the challenges faced with the lack of agreed budgets for 17/18 and the general uncertainty across the public sector. We are relatively protected from these challenges having a 4-year Letter of Offer in place with Invest NI. However, the impact will be on DfC funding and in particular the ability to recruit the Digiskills team and initiate that work stream.

3.2 The Arts Council have indicated that Lottery funding will reduce significantly due to lower Lottery receipts. IntoFilm is currently pushing the sale of Lottery tickets and suggest this as an idea for others funded by the Lottery. This will be raised with the Arts Council.

3.3 CEO reported on Fine Point Films' recent success in pursuing their ambition to be a significant international feature documentary company with 2 films premiering at Tribeca in April. Derry Girls is also a very significant landmark project for Northern Ireland being the first UK network drama to be set in Northern Ireland and written and directed by local talent.

3.4 The renewal of the Northern Ireland Screen/BBC Partnership Agreement is expected to be announced by the Director General on a visit to Belfast on 5th April. Key elements that we will be pursuing are: a guarantee that BBC drama

production in NI will continue to grow; confirmation of a date for ILBF and USBF content to be permanently available on iPlayer; continuation of AIM HIGH skills development; a collective push in interactive content; and an indication that the BBC intends to facilitate wider support of screen industry and culture through its development of a new BBC NI headquarters.

- 3.5 Michael Kuhn suggested a commitment on behalf of BBC World Wide. The Chairwoman agreed to set up a further meeting with BBCWW.
- 3.6 The chair noted the PI Report and that a further large scale production was the key outstanding result still to be achieved this year. The chair noted the Investment Report.

4.0 Update on Development of New Strategy

- 4.1 The CEO noted that a substantial amount of work had been undertaken in preparation for the new strategy. Generally, the feedback across all areas of activity is extremely encouraging. Skills development, as expected in a growing industry, is a key theme. Production companies have expressed an interest in engaging with the skills challenges. Equally in some sectors they have indicated concerns around being able to achieve any further increase in ratios. There is still some work to do on the consultations particularly in education, exhibition and culture sectors.
- 4.2 Adeline Dinsmore updated the Board on strategy activity within the education sector, noting recent meetings of the Creative Learning Centres and the Education Policy Working Group to discuss education sector activities and ways to maximise the potential to enhance the learning of young people. There has been much work on the development of the archive and changes within UTV have created further opportunity to highlight to government the need for a strategic development plan.
- 4.3 Next steps in strategy development will be to evolve the skills thinking and test the key priorities. The CEO will continue to provide monthly updates to the Board on key themes emerging and key strategic challenges.
- 4.4 We continue to work with Tourism NI, SIB and Belfast City Council on options for a possible Game of Thrones Legacy project. Tourism NI is the lead body

responsible for developing a legacy project however we will continue to play a key role in the relationship with HBO.

5.0 Finance, Audit and Governance

- 5.1 Chair of Audit and Risk Committee summarised the key changes table in the Corporate Risk Register noting that there is a new funding risk that arrangements are not in place in time to appraise future funding for the strategy starting 1 April 2018. The department has indicated that they are working on changes to the funding structures so that funding in the future will come directly from DfE, rather than through Invest NI.
- 5.2 The infrastructure risk of attracting projects to work in the new Belfast Harbour Studios once complete, remains unchanged and is significant. We continue to work with Bombardier to keep Britvic available to incoming productions.
- 5.3 IT cyber security risk has been taken off the risk register but will remain a significant issue for review. Mike Catto queried what arrangements have been put in place to ensure against attacks to our IT system. Linda Martin confirmed that we follow Government policies and suggested Richard Bruce present to the Board on IT security at the next meeting. The Board agreed.
- 5.4 The risk that a Game of Thrones Legacy Project is not developed in Northern Ireland has been added to the Risk Register.
- 5.5 Fiona MacMillan updated the Board on the recent Audit and Risk Committee and Linda Martin noted the key variances in the Management Accounts.
- 5.6 Linda Martin summarised the amendments to the approved budget, including additional funding to cover the increase in staffing costs. This is an inescapable cost agreed in December based on NICS and union negotiations and is applicable from August 2016.
- 5.7 There is uncertainty around funding to recruit the Digiskills team. The decision to fund the Digiskills programme may not be made until the new Ministers have been confirmed in government following the election.

- 5.8 Lottery funding will reduce substantially next year due to the reduction in Lottery receipts in general and a reduction in ACNI available funding. Funding is likely to reduce from £546k to £250k. This will have a further impact on the organisation's ability to support the planned level of overheads.
- 5.9 Director of Finance and Corporate services will meet with the department to review the deficit on overheads and possible funding options.
- 5.10 The Chairwoman updated the Board on the recent Strategic Resources Committee noting that all issues discussed at the meeting had been covered already.
- 5.11 The draft Memorandum of Understanding from the Department was agreed subject to clarification added at point 4.3 that difficulties may be escalated to Permanent Secretary level.

6.0 Committee Updates

- 6.1 USBF – The new committee has been recruited, trained and undertook their first meeting in February. The chair asked for board approval of the Terms of Reference. Mike Catto questioned the term 'primary but not exclusively through broadcast television' noting that this is no longer the norm and that we should utilise other channels. The chair confirmed that the USBF guidelines and commissioning strategy were strong on this point also, and that the Committee regularly discuss interactive online media and have commissioned significant pieces in this area. A date for BBC agreement is critical for Irish Language and Ulster-Scots to be cleared for iPlayer. Ian Parsley noted the concerns above but proposed the revised Terms of Reference as they are. These were agreed by the board.
- 6.2 EPWG –Adeline Dinsmore noted the forthcoming relocation of Nerve Belfast. There is also a need to recruit new members to the EPWG encompassing a wider spread of interested stakeholders. IntoFilm awards ceremony takes place today with good engagement from Northern Ireland.
- 6.3 Investment Committee – Andrew Reid noted that the level of activity on indigenous film production is very good for this time of the year. Michael Kuhn suggested greater transparency by showing how much funding went to

individual entities. It was agreed that this would be included in the year end papers in June.

6.4 ILBF – Aine Walsh highlighted the ILBF Evaluation is currently taking place and will be shared with the BFI once completed, along with the USBF Evaluation that was completed last year.

6.5 Skills Panel and Training – The CEO confirmed that skills will be a big part of the new Strategy with connections back into Education. The new AIM HIGH scheme will be announced in April and Creative Skillset are supporting a Stepping Up Scheme.

6.6 Exhibition – it was noted to members that Belfast Film Festival starts on 28th March.

7.0 Any Other Business

7.1 Two Minute Masterpiece has seen a substantial uptake with 78 viable applications received and 5 to be chosen.

7.2 The use of MinutePad to reduce the need to circulate hard copy Board papers is being explored along with other, cheaper options. The Board were generally happy to look at this further.

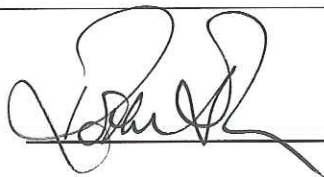
8 Date of Next Meeting

8.1 The next Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 6th June at 11am and AGM at 10:30am.

<i>Point</i>	<i>Detail</i>	<i>To be actioned by</i>
2.1	Develop legacy proposal through ILBF	AW
2.2	Update Board prior to public recruitment of the new Board appointments	CEO

2.2	Follow-up meeting to be sought with the Permanent Secretary regarding the new strategy and funding structures	CEO
2.3	Set up 5 th June presentation of draft strategy to Board	MS
2.5	Board to complete evaluation document	MS
3.5	Set up meeting with BBCWW.	CEO/RJ
5.3	Richard Bruce to present to the Board on IT security at the next meeting.	RB
5.11	Amend Memorandum of Understanding at point 4.3 that difficulties may be escalated to Permanent Secretary level	LM
6.3	Add an appendix to investment report showing how much funding went to individual entities.	LM
7.2	Explore further options for access to online Board papers	MS

Signed:



Date:

6 May 2007