

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING: 11th September 2012

11:30am Tuesday 11th September 2012
Northern Ireland Screen, Alfred House, Belfast

- Present:** Rick Hill (Chair), Brian McMahon (Vice Chair), Maurice Hayes, Tim McKane, James Penny, Michael Catto, Adeline Dinsmore, Jennifer Johnston, Michael Kuhn, Fiona MacMillan, Aódán MacPóilín, Ian Parsley
- In attendance:** Richard Williams (CEO), Linda Martin (Head of Finance), Roisin Kelleher (Acting Head of ILBF), Bernard McCloskey (Head of Education), Marie Shivers (minutes), Arthur Scott (DCAL - Observer)
- Apologies:** Laurence McKeown, Andrew Reid (Head of Production), Moyra Lock (Head of Marketing), Elsie Brown (Operations Manager)

There were no conflicts of interest raised by members of the Board.

CEO only was in attendance during Chair's opening remarks and discussion of staff review.

1.0 Chair's Opening Remarks on Staff Review and Terms and Conditions

- 1.1 CEO reported that he had received a letter from DCAL indicating a willingness to fully review the consultation on staff grades and to accept a business case on realigning Northern Ireland Screen's staff terms and conditions.

Executive joined the meeting

- 1.2 The Chair has been asked by departmental officials whether he is willing to extend his term of office, and has indicated that he would consider an agreed short extension. The Board expressed concern that the succession arrangements were not clear.
- 1.3 The Chair attended the ILBF graduation ceremony in Titanic Quarter at the end of August and was impressed by the energy and enthusiasm of the trainees. The chair met with Minister Foster at a photocall for the Hindi film *David* which started pre-production in Belfast last week and is filming this week.

2.0 Minutes of the board meeting of 26th June 2012

- 2.1 The minutes of the board meeting on 26 June were agreed and signed. Action points will be discussed during the course of the meeting.

3.0 Finance & Audit Committee update

- 3.1 The committee recommended the Management Accounts for approval to the board. There were no significant variances on overheads and Invest NI and ILBF funding is on track for the year.
- 3.2 OFMDFM funding for After School Film Clubs has still not been released. The committee advised that DCAL and CEO reiterate the urgency of this funding to OFMDFM. The board asked that the chair also contact OFMDFM next week if this has not been resolved.
- 3.3 The changes to the Risk Register included the addition of the Cultural Cinema and Exhibition funding, the elevation of the Staff Review to a 'red' risk, the addition of the VAT review by HMRC, and the concluding of the Paint hall issue. The board asked that the appointment of the chair be added to the register.
- 3.4 The board approved the Risk Register.

4.0 CEO's Report

- 4.1 CEO noted two digital content developments that he regarded as significant: the launch of Inlifesize's app Fairy Magic, and the financing and creation of a scheme 'Games on Film' which is a scheme to make games to assist the DVD launch of feature films *Grabbers* and *Keith Lemon* in conjunction with Sony and Lionsgate.
- 4.2 He noted that *Covenant Trail*, an Ulster Scots Broadcast Fund documentary would be broadcast in and around the Ulster Covenant centenary and that he thought it would make a positive contribution to understanding of the centenary.
- 4.3 He also noted that the Irish Language television drama *Scup* had been filmed over the summer and that he expected it to be well received by audiences.
- 4.4 He emphasized that Northern Ireland Screen currently employs more than 40 trainees across its various schemes and that this is a significant number.
- 4.5 He reported that DCMS and the Treasury appeared to be moving steadily towards the High End Television Drama Tax Credit coming in to being in April 2013. CEO has fed into these consultations extensively.
- 4.6 Mike Catto picked up on the BBC's reluctance to allow marketing and PR around its commissioned programming in Northern Ireland and noted that good stories from Northern Ireland were less likely to feature on national coverage. It was agreed that this represented a lost opportunity for not only Northern Ireland Screen but BBC Northern Ireland too. The board recommended that CEO contact BBC to discuss this. The chair will also make contact with BBC trustees.

Cogent Report

- 4.7 CEO provided background to the board on the draft Cogent Evaluation Report and noted the positive picture it portrays of Northern Ireland Screen's activities. In particular, he noted the very high levels of customer satisfaction. The report was critical about the reporting and evaluation framework that was imposed on Northern Ireland Screen at the last evaluation.
- 4.8 The Chair asked the CEO to pass on to staff the board's thanks for the high level of customer satisfaction noted in the report.

5. Performance Indicators

- 5.1 The report shows all areas to be on target, however it was noted the FilmClub indicator should now be changed from green with the CEO reporting that the target for FilmClub was no-longer attainable given the considerable delay in the funding coming through.
- 5.2 The CEO advised that the box office figures were very low because the information was yet to be received and festivals fall later in the year.

6. Committee Updates

Investment Committee

- 6.1 Michael Kuhn updated the board on recent Investment Committee activity.
- 6.2 Michael will discuss with Head of Production new ways of developing projects and talent.

Irish Language Broadcast Fund (ILBF)

- 6.3 Maurice Hayes updated the board on the very successful ILBF Graduation event noting the energy of the trainees coming. He thanked the Chair for stepping in to speak at the event in the Minister's absence.

Ulster-Scots Broadcast Fund (USBF)

- 6.4 Several projects will be broadcast in the next few months. This will help to shape the future editorial direction of the fund.
- 6.5 Maurice Hayes looks forward to jointly working with the ILBF.

Education Policy Working Group (EPWG)

- 6.6 The key issue is the delay in OFMDFM funding from the Childcare Strategy for After School Film Clubs. There was considerable discussion around how to unlock the expected funding from OFMDFM with the CEO reporting that he had pressed the urgency of the position with OFMDFM Special Advisers. It was agreed that the urgency had to be reiterated and that if necessary the Chair should write to the First and deputy First Ministers.

Skills Panel/training

- 6.7 Plans for the Belfast Media Conference are continuing.
- 6.8 DEL have introduced a new apprenticeship model which may be useful within the screen industries.

Exhibition Sub-Committee

- 6.9 The Committee met in August and will meet again in October. The sub-committee will be added to the agenda.

7. Any Other Business

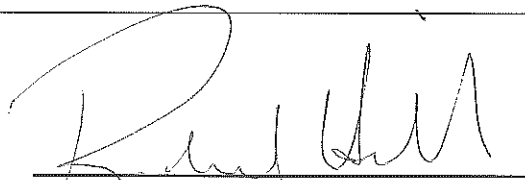
- 7.1 Finance and Audit Committee recommended that the board accept the Internal Audit Strategy. The board approved the strategy.
- 7.2 A copy of the 'whistleblowing policy' was made available for the board. The Chair of the Committee stated that these guidelines extend to Board members too.
- 7.3 Fiona MacMillan asked if, due to the appointment of a new Secretary of State, they should be made aware of the tax credit consultation process. CEO confirmed this was in hand.

8. Date of Next Meeting

- 8.1 The next board meeting which was due to be held at 11:00am on Tuesday 20th November 2012, will now take place at 11:00am on Tuesday 27th November.

<i>Point</i>	<i>Detail</i>	<i>To be action by</i>
3.2, 6.6	CEO to contact OFMDFM re FilmClub funding	CEO, Chair
3.3	Appointment of Chair to be added to Risk Register	LM
4.6	CEO to contact BBC – marketing of product made in NI	CEO
6.2	Discuss ways of developing quality projects	MK & AR
7.3	Arrangements to engage S of S with TV tax credit	CEO

Signed:



Date:

27/11/12