

## **MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING: 20<sup>TH</sup> September 2011**

**11:00am Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2011**  
**Northern Ireland Screen, Alfred House, Belfast**

**Present:** Richard Hill (Chair), Brian McMahon (Vice Chair), James Penny, Maurice Hayes, Tim McKane, Kate Smith, Roger Austin, Mairead Regan, Anne Cormican

**In attendance:** Richard Williams (CEO), Andrew Reid (Head of Production), Linda Martin (Head of Finance), Moyra Lock (Head of Marketing), Áine Walsh (Head of ILBF), Elsie Brown (Operations Manager), Marie Shivers (minutes)

**Apologies:** Ruth McCance, Peter Quinn, Philip Morrow, Terry Loane, Bernard McCloskey (Head of Education)

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

### **1.0 Chairman's Opening Remarks**

- 1.1 The Chair reported on a number of meetings with the DCAL Minister and noted that she had accepted his advice on the need for a range of skills amongst the new Board members, including expertise in film, television, broadcasting, an Irish language speaker, a qualified accountant, and someone with an Ulster-Scots background.
- 1.2 The Chair noted his involvement in two UTV news stories relating to Pajanimals and Game of Thrones extras.
- 1.3 CEO and Head of Production recently undertook a successful visit to Los Angeles, accompanying OFM/dFM for discussions with film and TV executives on tax breaks, as well as meetings with HBO, Disney and Warner Brothers.

### **2.0 Minutes of the Board meeting of 28<sup>th</sup> June**

- 2.1 The minutes of the Board meeting on 28 June were agreed and signed.
- 2.2 CEO noted that the action points were completed.

### **3.0 Management Accounts to end May 2011**

- 3.1 James Penny updated the Board on the recent Finance and Audit Committee meeting, confirming that the Committee was content with the accounts, albeit that the cashflow was behind. The CEO indicated that the executive will need to be diligent and active over the next few months to ensure this is rectified.
- 3.2 A substantial assurance from Internal Audit on financial control at Northern Ireland Screen was noted.
- 3.3 The Board approved the accounts.

#### **4.0 CEO's Report**

- 4.1 CEO reported that the last ILBF investment round had been particularly strong as indicated by a number of projects also attracting BAI funding. He informed the Board that Áine Walsh will be taking maternity leave from mid-December, and Brendan Hehir, the ILBF Officer, will be retiring in October. Brendan's successor has been appointed, and Áine's post will be advertised soon.
- 4.2 The Primetime 2 one hour dramas are in production. The CEO outlined the significance of this scheme but also noted that the partnership with the BBC had been challenging.
- 4.3 He noted that Moyra Lock's excellent work with regard to securing the premiere of Titanic 3D. Whether the premiere is secured will depend on availability of the Waterfront.
- 4.4 He also reported on positive discussions with Fox regarding the production of a Fox film in Northern Ireland. Availability of the new sound stages is the key factor in these discussions.
- 4.5 The Belfast Media Festival will take place at Blackstaff Studios on 14 October. Last year's festival was a tremendous success and this year's looks to be equally as good, with Mark Thompson (Director General, BBC) and David Abraham (Chief Executive, Channel 4) both attending. CEO will use this opportunity to take them to the Paint Hall to see the scale of HBO's production of Game of Thrones.
- 4.6 Brian McMahon noted the increased awareness of Northern Ireland in Los Angeles as a result of Game of Thrones, and that Ireland generally was seen as being at the forefront of digital technology.
- 4.7 There was a discussion around the value and potential of Game of Thrones as an opportunity to promote tourism.

#### **5.0 Risk Register**

- 5.1 CEO tabled the Risk Register which had no notable additions.
- 5.2 The Board expressed concern that the Staff Review was not as yet completed.
- 5.3 The Risk Register was approved.

#### **6.0 PI Report**

- 6.1 The PI Report was received by the Board. The CEO noted that the increased award to Game of Thrones impacted on the Performance Indicators and that adjustment to the PIs would have to be agreed with Invest NI.

## 7.0 Committee Updates

### Investment Committee

- 7.1 Andrew Reid summarised the latest productions underway, and noted that Northern Ireland Screen will be hosting a master class with the Format People's Format Doctor, Justin Scroggie, in October. This will be followed up with a format focused trade mission to MIPCOM in April.

### ILBF

- 7.2 Maurice Hayes updated the Board on recent ILBF business and paid tribute to Brendan Hehir, who will be retiring from Northern Ireland Screen in October, as well as to Áine Walsh who will be taking maternity leave at the end of the year.
- 7.3 Áine reported that the Celtic Media Festival had been confirmed to take place in Derry-Londonderry in March/April 2012.

### Ulster-Scots Broadcast Fund

- 7.4 The next round of funding will happen later in the autumn. A public launch of the fund will take place in the new year.

### Education Policy Working Group

- 7.5 Roger Austin was delighted to inform the Board that the Filmclub scheme looked set to attract funding from OFM/dFM's childcare strategy. Filmclub currently work in 68 schools across Northern Ireland and, if new funding is secured, this will be expanded to 338 schools starting in April 2012.
- 7.6 Studio On is currently planning to move from Crossnacreevy to the Ulidia Building on the Ravenhill Road. This is a complex, but very positive, move and Studio On is working with BELB to facilitate it as quickly as possible.

### Finance and Audit Committee

- 7.7 Issues already covered. No further points to add.

### Skills Panel/training

- 7.8 The Skills Panel met last week. Mairead reported that there were significant changes to Skillset's accreditation of courses and that this in turn may impact on the Northern Ireland Screen Academy. She further reported that Peter Johnston, chair of the Skills Panel, was hosting a discussion on how Northern Ireland should respond to these changes.
- 7.9 Mairead informed the Board that the Director of the Media Academy, Sarah Edge, had resigned. The Board should write to acknowledge the hard work she has carried out over the years at the University of Ulster.

**8.0 Any Other Business**

8.1 The Chair will be carrying out Board appraisals for all members.

*CEO and Executive left the meeting*

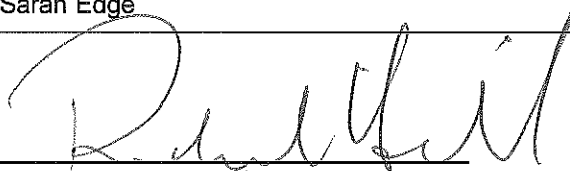
8.2 The Chair updated the Board on the CEO's remuneration.

**9.0 Date of Next Meeting**

9.1 The next Board meeting will be held at 11am on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2011.

<i>Point</i>	<i>Detail</i>	<i>To be action by</i>
3.1	Accelerate cashflow	CEO
5.2	Staff Review	CEO
6.1	Seek agreement to adjust PI targets	CEO
7.9	Letter to Sarah Edge	CEO/Chair

Signed:

  
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Date:

13/12/11  
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