

## **MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING: 9<sup>th</sup> June 2015**

**11am, Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2015**

**Northern Ireland Screen, Alfred House, Alfred Street, Belfast**

**Present:** Rotha Johnston (Chairwoman), Jennifer Johnston, James Penny, Laurence McKeown, Adeline Dinsmore, Mike Catto, Fiona MacMillan, Aodán MacPóilin, Tim McKane, George McKinney (Invest NI), Tracey Walsh (Invest NI)

**In attendance:** Richard Williams (CEO), Linda Martin (Head of Finance and Corporate Services), Andrew Reid (Head of Production), Moyra Lock (Head of Marketing), Bernard McCloskey (Head of Education), Ceara Murray (Head of ILBF), Marie Shivers (minutes)

**Apologies:** Michael Kuhn, Ian Parsley, Sinead McCartan, Arthur Scott (DCAL)

### **Conflicts of Interest**

No conflicts were declared.

## **1.0 Minutes of the Board meeting of 10th March 2015**

1.1 The minutes of the March meeting were agreed and signed.

1.2 The action points were reviewed. The Chairwoman noted that Board appointments were still outstanding; the CEO updated on the Staff Survey response noting that the transfer of Northern Ireland Screen's lease to DFP in line with an Executive wide initiative made refurbishment of the office unlikely and that this would be communicated to staff. The Chairwoman sought assurance that all consequences of the transfer would be raised with DCAL at the next Accountability Meeting.

## **2.0 Chairwoman's business**

2.1 The Chairwoman congratulated James Penny on his company's recent sale to ITV Studios. Public funding remains uncertain with potential further in-year cuts of 6%. No action to be taken at this time but CEO will attend a budget meeting with DCAL later this week. The Chairwoman and CEO met with Alastair Hamilton and Brian Dolaghan of Invest NI and will follow-up once the funding issue becomes clearer. The Chairwoman congratulated the team involved in the successful Chairwoman's Lunch at Cannes, which was very well attended, structured and extremely useful. The Chairwoman and CEO met with David Cameron during a brief visit to Belfast during the election campaign. The Chairwoman reiterated to him the importance of tax credits and UK government support for a sustainable screen industry in Northern Ireland.

### **3.0 CEO's Report**

- 3.1 The CEO showed the latest showreel to the Board and noted some positive news with the Investment Committee recently backing Lost City of Z, Puffin Rock and a number of other animation projects in production, and My Mother and Other Strangers formally commissioned by the BBC. The Survivalist had received very positive reviews at Tribeca while High Rise will be premiered in a strong slot at the London Film Festival. Finepoint Films won the pitch prize at Hot Docs in Toronto for their project In Search of Mercury 13 – Andrew will circulate a taster tape to the Board.
- 3.2 The availability of sound stages or appropriate build space remains the biggest barrier to successful delivery of Opening Doors. A business case proposing to take a short term lease to partially address this issue is under consideration by the Strategic Resources Committee, the Investment Committee and Invest NI. The CEO will continue to liaise with all parties to get agreement to the business case as soon as possible. The Board approved this action. The CEO also updated the Board on further developments within the Large-Scale production space that place a considerable burden on Northern Ireland Screen to unlock the delay in expansion of Studios. The CEO will continue to do all he can to facilitate this development.
- 3.3 The CEO reminded the Board that the current ILBF and USBF funding tranche comes to an end in March 2016. The Minister has written to Ed Vaizey regarding future funding and awaits a response. The Board agreed to await a response to the Minister's letter before considering further action.
- 3.4 The launch of 'Britain on Film' will take place in London on 7<sup>th</sup> July. Britain on Film is one of the most significant film archive projects ever undertaken and encompasses the BFI National Archive and the regional and national Screen Archives of the UK. We, in partnership with NMNI, are working with the BFI to ensure that Northern Ireland is represented amongst the material that is selected and digitized as part of the project. Mike Catto will attend this launch on behalf of the Board.
- 3.5 The CEO noted an interesting draft consultancy report currently being drawn up regarding a Greater Belfast Cinema Workshop.
- 3.6 The CEO showed a further corporate showreel which is designed to give an integrated message of the screen industry eco-system.

### **4.0 Finance, Audit and Governance**

- 4.1 The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee reported to the Board noting that the risk register was reviewed in detail at each meeting. It was agreed that the transitional arrangements covering the reconfiguration of our sponsor department would be added to the risk register. The last Audit and Risk meeting focused mainly on the audit and pension issues. The Committee noted the completion of accounts and hoped that C&AG can sign these before summer. The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee is meeting with internal and external auditors this week.



- 4.2 There was nothing to add to the Management Accounts to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2015 or to the review of the Risk Register.
- 4.3 The Chairwoman summarised the Bi-annual Assurance Statement noting that Fraud Awareness training must be completed by all staff. One question was raised regarding our disaster recovery planning. All systems are fully in place and monitored regularly. The Board were happy with this compliance and agreed the Statement which was signed by the Chairwoman.
- 4.4 The Chairwoman noted that all points from the last meeting of the Strategic Resources Committee had been discussed already.

## **5.0 Committee Updates**

- 5.1 EPWG – Adeline Dinsmore notified the Board that European Film Literacy Advisory Group will launch their European framework for film education in Paris this month. The framework, heavily informed by the framework in Northern Ireland, will provide a unified mechanism for delivery of film education, and will create a network of film and media education delivery organisations across Europe based on our CLC model. Bernard McCloskey will attend on behalf of Northern Ireland Screen.
- 5.2 Investment Committee – Nothing further to add.
- 5.3 ILBF - Nothing further to add.
- 5.4 USBF – A significant number of awards were made at the recent Investment Committee meeting. These were all BBC projects but we are currently in discussions with UTV on a range of projects that will hopefully be brought to the Committee in the near future.
- 5.5 Skills Panel/Training - CEO noted that Aim High 3 will be launched at the end of June. We are still waiting for final confirmation of Skillset funding for students in Greg Maguire's animation school. Trainee positions on Game of Thrones 6 have been agreed and will now be recruited. The next London Reading, Connor MacNeill's Laughter of our Children, will take place on 3 July.

## **6.0 Additional Enclosures**

- 6.1 The PI Report accurately represents performance figures to date and also reflects sectoral priorities.

## **7.0 Any Other Business**

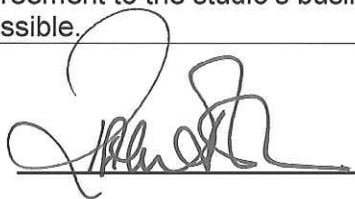
- 7.1 No other business was discussed.

## 8.0 Date of Next Meeting

8.1 The next Board meeting is presently scheduled for Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

<i>Point</i>	<i>Detail</i>	<i>To be actioned by</i>
1.2	Consequences of lease transfer will be brought to the next accountability meeting	CEO/LM
3.1	In Search of Mercury 13 taster tape to the Board	AR
3.2	The CEO will continue to liaise with all parties to get agreement to the studio's business case as soon as possible.	CEO

Signed:

  
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Date:

17 September 2015