

## **EAST AYRSHIRE LEISURE TRUST BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 1805 HOURS IN THE ASSEMBLY HALL, GRANGE LEISURE CENTRE, BEECH AVENUE, KILMARNOCK**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Elena Whitham, Ian Grant, Clare Maitland and Jim Roberts; Independent Trustees Jean Brown, Robin Hume, Jackie Livingston and June Minnery; and Chris McAleavey, Depute Chief Executive: Safer Communities and Joe McLachlan, Corporate Accounting Manager, both East Ayrshire Council, ex officio Trustees.

**ATTENDING:** John Griffiths, Chief Executive; Jackie Biggart, People and Finance Manager; Anneke Freel, Countryside Services Manager; Lorraine Russell, Senior Accountant, and Jessica Chung, Accountancy Assistant, all East Ayrshire Leisure Trust; and Gillian Hamilton, Democratic Services Officer, East Ayrshire Council.

**ALSO ATTENDING:** David Carey, East Ayrshire Council.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Neil McGhee and Independent Trustees Elizabeth Young and Robert Mann.

**CHAIR:** John Griffiths, Chief Executive for Item 1 below and Councillor Elena Whitham thereafter.

#### **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

1. Under Clause 43, Councillor Elena Whitham was nominated for election as Chair, subject to Clause 44. The appointment was confirmed at the meeting.

#### **RETIRAL/RE-APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT TRUSTEES**

2. In terms of Clause 30 and 31 of the Constitution, Independent Trustees Jean Brown, Jackie Livingston and Robin Hume retired from office. All three were then re-appointed in terms of Clause 30 of the Constitution, all having expressed their wish to be reselected.

#### **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

3. Independent Trustee Robin Hume was then nominated for election as Vice-Chair and the appointment was confirmed at the meeting.

#### **PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE**

4. The Board was asked, in line with established practice, to appoint 3 Independent Trustees and 2 Councillor Trustees to the Performance and Audit Sub-Committee, and a further 2 Trustees as substitutes.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to appoint Independent Trustees June Minnery, Robin Hume and Jackie Livingston and Councillors Clare Maitland and Neil McGhee to the Performance and Audit Sub-Committee; and
- (ii) to appoint Independent Trustees Jean Brown and Robert Mann as substitutes.

## **TRUSTEE VACANCY**

5. It was agreed that the recruitment process would begin immediately to fill the Independent Trustee position following the resignation of Elizabeth Young. It was noted that the Chief Executive had written to Elizabeth, to formally thank her for her valuable contribution to the Trust during her term as an Independent Trustee.

## **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

6. No declarations of interest were intimated.

## **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

### **7.1 MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING HELD ON 27 JUNE 2017**

There were submitted and approved as a correct record, the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 27 June 2017 (circulated).

#### **7.1.1 Matter Arising**

It was noted in relation to the remedial work required to bring the South Ayrshire side of the River Ayr Walk up to standard that Councillor Jim Roberts had provided the Chief Executive with details of an email from Lesley Bloomer, Head of Housing and Facilities at South Ayrshire Council, promising an update on progress in due course.

### **7.2 MINUTES OF SPECIAL PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE HELD ON 6 JULY 2017**

There were submitted and approved as a correct record, the Minutes of the Special Performance and Audit Sub-Committee held on 6 July 2017 (circulated).

#### **7.2.1 Matter Arising**

Anneke Freel gave a verbal update on the forthcoming “Illuminight” event and it was noted:-

- (i) ticket sales were going well, local allocations had sold out;
- (ii) an event management plan had been drafted;
- (iii) installation would start on 9 October; preview scheduled for 25 October; VIP night 26 October;
- (iv) major marketing push starting Friday 22 September – new, fresh artwork ready to go;
- (v) ticket sales would continue to be monitored and any further opportunities for local buy-in looked at;
- (vi) family (2 adults and 2 children) and group discounts remained available for the duration of the event;
- (vii) Press Release this week regarding no fireworks at Kay Park – reaction anticipated - all Trustees to be copied into Press Release and associated information;
- (viii) all Trustees would be provided with an update on ticket sales 2 weeks after the marketing push and weekly thereafter;
- (ix) Trust is utilising the advertising expertise of the partnership company, Unique Events; and
- (x) all Trustees were ambassadors for the event.

### **7.3 MINUTES OF PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE HELD ON 21 AUGUST 2017**

There were submitted and approved as a correct record the Minutes of the Performance and Audit Sub-Committee held on 21 August 2017 (circulated).

#### **PERFORMANCE REPORT APRIL-JUNE 2017**

8. There was submitted a report dated 23 August 2017 (circulated) by the Chief Executive which provided details of the Trust's performance for the period April to June 2017, the first quarter of the 2017/18 financial year. The report showed sound performance across all areas of the Trust's remit.

During consideration of the Progress Against 2016-19 Action Plan, discussion took place around:-

- maximising tourism opportunities following the filming of “Outlander” at the Dean Castle. Was any further filming planned at this location? Noted that there had been more visitors to the Castle because of “Outlander”, but the site was currently diminished due to the scaffolding in situ. For the same reason, the offer was currently limited in terms of availability for future filming. So far no further enquiries had been received about a return to this location – it depended largely on the storyline. Included in Visit Scotland’s website as an “Outlander” film location. Merchandise being sourced. Opportunity to widen tourism offer linked to (i) exceptional local history (Boyd and DeWalden), heritage assets and fine art collections and (ii) whisky heritage (possible visitor centre opportunity);
- comments made about the need for action planning to progress ideas coming forward from the Board -consider establishing a Sub-Committee;
- possible missed opportunity to promote the recent production of “A Streetcar Named Desire” at the Palace Theatre, this being part of in the school curriculum;
- accepting the more strategic role of the Board, separate sessions could be arranged for Trustees to look in detail, with relevant employees, at particular operations or areas of interest. This had worked well previously;
- the forthcoming “Illuminight” event demonstrated a more commercial, entrepreneurial spirit. Continue with small, steady commercial activities, involving measured risks, going forward;
- promote East Ayrshire as a whole (culture, sport and outdoors offer) in partnership with others in a joined up way. Look at how to sell what we (and partners) have. Find out what customers want and match demand = marketing;
- groups working in isolation (East Ayrshire Leisure Trust, Vibrant Communities, Galleon Leisure Centre Trust – duplication of effort/offer) – notion of one centre for all information and more co-ordination of services (eg in relation to pricing);
- disconnect due to the large number of facilities in East Ayrshire Leisure Trust’s portfolio – need to work together more;
- comments about kids clubs run during the summer, classes cut at Loudoun Leisure Centre, reception staff not having information to hand (swimming party cited as an example) and reliability of box office booking system;

- challenges with recruitment and staff retention, the range of reasons for this and steps being taken to address;
- raising staff awareness in relation to energy performance in buildings. Opportunity to look at LED lighting, combined heat and power plant, biomass when capital projects are being planned;
- comments made about the Customer Satisfaction Survey and how it was conducted by the commissioned company; and
- the explanation given in relation to the EAGER Review target.

During consideration of the Financial Performance Report discussion took place around:-

- £10k deficit this year only for Youth Theatre shortfall;
- revised budget column added to overall net position table in financial performance report;
- looking at utilities to tidy up profiling during the year; and
- E-books appear in general library service under cultural services. Background to timing of release of funds explained.

During consideration of the Reserves Table discussion took place around:-

- £25k re-designated from Marketing Co-ordinator to Website Development in the Allocated Reserves Analysis.

During consideration of the Risk Register discussion took place around:-

- the new format risk register that had been introduced following engagement with Trustees; and
- repairs reporting system established.

It was then agreed:-

- (i) to approve the Performance Report for April to June 2017;
- (ii) to approve the designation of funds proposed in the report;
- (iii) to have a focused look at the Dick Institute at the Trustees' Development Session scheduled for 10 October 2017 (links to above discussion);
- (iv) to consider establishing a Sub-Committee to look at action planning to progress ideas coming forward from the Board (accepting that there were already existing quorum challenges with the Performance and Audit Sub-Committee);
- (v) that the Chief Executive send an expression of interest to the "Outlander" production company in relation to hosting future filming at the Dean Castle – open for business as usual;
- (vi) to note that Operators were offering "Outlander Tours" - consider as a future business opportunity when the scaffolding has been removed from the Dean Castle;
- (vii) that the Chief Executive check and report back on any reliability issues around the existing box office booking system and look into the best system going forward under integration with the Galleon Leisure Centre Trust;

- (viii) that Jackie Biggart provide Trustees with more information on the work taking place with the Energy Advice Team to look at all core facilities for potential energy improvements;
- (ix) that Adam Geary provide more information on the declined external funding application for SLIC – Make it Now! (library input)
- (x) that Jackie Biggart provide a breakdown of average days lost per employee (as previously included in performance reports) on the information portal;
- (xi) that the Chief Executive look again at the risk register in relation to risk level for commercial operations and events; and
- (xii) otherwise, to note the report.

### **ANNANHILL PARK DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS**

- 9.** There was submitted a report dated 21 August 2017 (circulated) by the Countryside Services Manager which updated the Board on proposals being developed for Annanhill Park and Golf Course and sought approval to progress these proposals.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve in principle the vision for Annanhill Park and Gold Course, subject to external funding being secured, and remit to the Countryside Manager to progress community engagement;
- (ii) to note that the proposed community engagement activity would assist in identifying any preferred areas for development eg space for skateboarding etc and any related health and safety risks/insurance issues; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the report.

### **2016-19 BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE**

- 10.** There was submitted a report dated 3 August 2017 (circulated) by the Chief Executive which presented an update to the 2016-19 Business Plan for Trustees' consideration. The update was required due to the impact of savings requirements and the recent Best Value Review of Culture, Sport and Leisure Services. Where necessary targets had been adjusted to ensure that they remained realistic and achievable.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the updated 2016-19 Business Plan; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

### **CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT**

- 11.** There was submitted and noted a report dated 31 August 2017 (circulated) by the Chief Executive which provided the Board with updates on the Best Value Review of Leisure Services, 2017/18 Internal Audit programme, revised format for Youth Theatre, DCCP Project, BBC Question Time at the Grand Hall, staff attendance at Culture Development sessions and the Barclay Review of Non-Domestic Rates.

Further verbal updates were noted in relation to:

- (i) confirmed events included Lloyd Cole at Cumnock Town Hall, Ed Byrne, Jason Manford, The Stranglers, Happy Mondays and Heaven 17;

- (ii) Anneke Freel had supervised the River Ayr Challenge;
- (iii) strong programmes for 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Imprint;
- (iv) positive impact of heightened visibility of visitor centre at Dean Castle;
- (v) Barclay report back out for consultation. Sporta is umbrella body for representations. Include local context in Sporta letter to MSPs etc;
- (vi) Muirkirk Library CAT – invitation extended to John Griffiths and/or Adam Geary to attend Community Council meeting on 2 October 2017 to discuss handover issues; and
- (vii) timescale for feedback on Palace Pantomime Charity Collection – Chief Executive to confirm to Jackie Livingston.

### **DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

- 12.** Development Session - 10 October 2017;  
Performance and Audit Sub-Committee - 13 November 2017; and  
Trust Board Meeting/AGM - 28 November 2017.

The meeting terminated at 2030 hours.