

East Renfrewshire Culture & Leisure Ltd

(A company which is a Scottish Charity (Scottish Charity Number SC0045726) incorporated in Scotland under the Companies Act with company number SC486489)

Minute of a Meeting of the Board of Trustees of East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Ltd

at Barrhead Foundry and Microsoft Teams on Tuesday 4 June 2024 at 3:30pm
(Site Visit to the Grid, Barrhead Foundry prior to meeting)

Present: Councillor Andrew Anderson (Chair) (AA)
Dalvir Johal (DJ) (Virtual)
Susie Malcolm (SM)
Councillor Owen O'Donnell (OO) (Virtual)
Councillor Paul Edlin (PE)
Rob Crusher (RC) (Virtual)
Steven Larkin (SL)

Apologies: Prof. Grant Jarvie

Attending: Anthony McReavy, Chief Executive (AMcR)
Margaret McQueen, Director of Finance (MMcQ)
Mark Ratter, Director of Education ERC (MR)
Moira McFadden, Head of Communities and Arts (MMcF) (Virtual)
Scott Simpson, Head of Libraries and Information Services (SS)
Ian Pye, Head of Sports & Physical Activity (IP)
Robert Hammond, Head of Operations (RH)
Jude Smith, Head of Marketing (JS)
Margaret McCrossan, Head of Accountancy ERC (MMcC)
Angela Burgess (minute taker)

1. Welcome & Introductions

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
No 10 on the agenda will be taken before No.5.

2. Appointments and Resignations

There were no new appointments or resignations.

3. Preliminaries (including apologies and quorum)

Apologies were received from Grant Jarvie and Colm Merrick.

The Chair confirmed there are no Declarations of Interest and the meeting was quorate.

4. Minutes of previous meeting

Minutes from 13 March 2024 were agreed and approved.

10. Report by Chair of HR, H&S and Appeals Committee

RC gave a verbal update on the meeting held on 2nd May 2024.

- A full year HR Matrix was evaluated and recruitment and filling posts still presenting significant operational issues. A job re-evaluation process will begin.
- New Train and Recruit process is being trialed.
- Mental Health Support for staff. Neuro Divergent awareness course being offered to supervisory and management teams.
- Absence rate reduced to 2 days per FTE.
- Staff utilising corporate training remained high.
- Work underway to implement PVG checks on key posts. Union have been involved.
- Library staffing resource changes and shift changes, staff have been given the opportunity to give feedback.
- Significant discussion why people are leaving and difficulty of getting leavers survey's completed and returned.
- Improve the Disciplinary figures to show what ones are new and what ones are closed.
- Rebranding project underway.
- Staff Engagement Survey – responses lower than previous survey. Could be due to move to new offices at same time. 6 areas down marginally by 1% or 2%. Main improvements included; 'I know how to work I do helps ERCL to achieve its aims (91%) and 'I'm proud to say I work for East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure (80%)

Policy Updates

It was observed that some policies hadn't been updated for a long time, this was due to staff issues and workload pressures. The key legislations reports are being addressed.

The Payroll Overpayments Policy has been written and agreed with ERC Audit and Unison. This paper is now ready for approval by the Board.

Health and Safety

- 1 RIDDOR reportable incident that has been dealt with.
- 1 Fire Risk Action – Kingston Pavilion – legacy issue
- 1 Fatality at Eastwood Park Leisure – staff performed emergency assistance but unfortunately person died on way to hospital

Appeals Update No new or outstanding appeals to report.

JCC/Trade Union Update

A JCC meeting was held on 24th April 24. Next meeting will be October 2024.

OO thanked RC for update. Can it be clarified if the staff absence of 2 FTE per employee is annual or quarterly? AMcR confirmed it was quarterly.

AA asked about staff leaving and was it standard practice to have exit interviews. It was confirmed that exit surveys were sent out by HR but very low returns.

OO asked about 4.2 in the Payroll Overpayments Policy – Employees are expected to: employees to check payslips. OO didn't think this would happen and it is not realistic. SL stated that the Union would expect employees to check payslips as it is good practice and the Trade Union position is that the onus is on employees to check and report anything that is wrong.

Board approved the Payroll Overpayments Policy

5. Matters Arising

PE asked about item 6b. from previous minutes - Dams to Darnley and wanted confirmation that the Trust were no longer involved in this project, as he thinks it is a great opportunity with a high commercial opportunity. AMcR said that due to significant difficulties, including changes to proposed plans and increased risks, a decision was made not to carry on with it. PE asked if this could be revisited. AMcR said he would write to Head of Place. **ACTION**

6. Chief Executive's Q4 Scorecard and Business Performance Update.

AMcR presented to the Board the Key Performance Indicators for Q4 2023/24, in the form of a Balanced Scorecard and Business Performance Report. Report was taken as read.

Key points highlighted included:

- Leisure Centre attendances were up by 17.2% - 103.5k attendances over our benchmark of 600.1k set in 2019/20.
- Virtual and in-person library visits increased to 542.3k representing 77.4% of the 2019/20 benchmark (504k attendances).
- Total fitness memberships at end of Q4 were 3,573.
- Net Promotor Score at 47 – very strong
- Total swimming lesson numbers at end of Q4 was 3,339 with an overall 90% uptake.
- Theatre – highest ever numbers/income
- Community Sports is in a good position
- Q4 was particularly strong for the theatre, with most shows selling out.

The number of FTE staff at 194 against a plan of 246.

Staff absence for this Quarter is 2.08 FTE.

RH gave an update on expected building closures for maintenance - The pool at Eastwood Park needs the Filter media replaced and will be a 3 week closure. At the same time tiles will be replaced in the pool. Total closure will be 6 weeks and will have an impact on the holiday period.

Barrhead Foundry changing rooms – floor lifting – this will be a 3-4 week closure.

OO congratulated on NPS score as this is very good. He wanted to ask about School Out of Hours User Number as they are down. MMF said numbers are down but the bookings are up as we maximise areas in schools. More bookings with less people attending each one.

AA asked about wedding bookings in Eastwood House. MMF said while income from weddings is good, we cannot compete with other venues like hotels with inclusive (catered) packages. Arts classes are now using Eastwood House and the income is comparable to weddings.

AMcR said when looking at catering for Eastwood Park Leisure and Barrhead Foundry they might look at this for Eastwood House weddings too but this wouldn't be in the forthcoming year.

7. Pricing Plan

AMcR gave an overview on the Pricing Plan paper. Prices are reviewed on an annual basis with high income services prioritised when planning price reviews. External developments such as new competitors will result in more regular reviews, and prices have been reduced as well as increased. Any changes to policy would come to the Board.

Pricing routinely considers:-

- Market / competition
- Audience
- Quality / reputation
- USPs
- Cost/Margin/Value
- Sales and promotional channels
- Product compatibility with wider ERCL offer
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Budget projections are built using sales and retention strategies (including lead generation; sales conversion, shoppers v purchasers / friction; attrition rates and mitigation), and reflecting cashflows and phasing (i.e. seasonality).

Some price increases will be phased in. The three main pillars of the business are gyms, swims and sports pitches.

A further discussion took place. MR and AMcR to discuss with OO in light of wider budget strategy for Council.

8. Report by Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee (FAR)

a) Audit Planning Memo

Document taken as read. This is a standard document. DJ gave an overview of report. Auditors have concluded the field work and no issues have been raised. The first review of the file has shown no issues.

b) 2023/24 Financials

The paper was taken as read. MMcQ gave an overview of the key points.

For the full year to 31 March 202 in a breakeven position against a budgeted deficit of £1,702k.

Operating Income is £375k ahead of budget with positive performance across Theatre Hire and Sports due to higher participation levels across all service lines.

Arts & Theatre income ended the year £164k ahead of budget. Income from live shows in February and March was £47k and Broadcast income was £13k. There is already a good programme for the financial year 2024/25, with many tickets sold in advance.

Sports participation continues to perform well with gym membership up by 21% on March 23, fitness class participation is up by 10% compared to the same period last year and the number of people taking swimming lessons has increased by 7% since Dec 23.

Included in ERC claims is an amount of £286k to the Covid fund. This amount is to compensate the Trust for slower growth in income due to Covid lockdown.

Recruitment and retention of staff continues to be a challenge, with an under spend of £444k in Staff Costs as a result.

Other operating costs finished the year at around budget level, but we received £196k of bank interest that hadn't been anticipated. This income has been netted off against Supplies & Services/Other.

Approved by Board

9. Policy on Recognition & Budgeting of Interest Income

Paper was taken as read. MMcQ gave an overview of paper. Interest is paid out at year end and is not budgeted. The amount varies every year and therefore difficult to budget. ERC Treasurer has offered to submit amounts ½ yearly instead of yearly if Board decide this would be beneficial. MMcC explained the complex process to work out Interest for both Council and Trust.

A discussion followed. Decision was to report on interest projections on a 6 monthly basis in the meantime through the FAR and Financial reports.

10. Report by Chair of the HR, H&S and Appeals Committee

Item taken before no.5.

11. Service Level Agreement Calendar

An overview of the SLA calendar was presented to the Board. AMcR said it was a reasonable timetable and will pick up as a matter of course.

12. Board Charter

Paper was taken as read. AMcR gave an overview of paper.

Approved by Board

13. AOCB

AMcR gave an update on Mearns Castle Pitches. A new submission to be given to planning committee and we are working with Education on this. No toilets at facility are a barrier and school toilets are being used at present. IP said there is demand from local clubs looking for lettable space. A further update at next meeting.

Agenda Item	Action	By
5	Matters Arising – Dams to Darnley – Letter to Head of Environment to address	AMcR
7	AMcR / MR to meet with Council re budget strategy	AMcR / MR
9	Policy on Recognition & Budgeting of Interest Income	AMcR

Approved by Board

Agenda Item		Approved
4	Minutes from 13 March 2024	Approved by Board

8a	Wylie & Bisset Audit Planning Memorandum	Approved by Board
8b	2023/24 Unaudited Financial and Commentary	Approved by Board
10	Report by Chair of the HR, H&S and Appeals Committee	Approved by Board
11	Service Level Agreement Calendar	Approved by Board
12	Board Charter	Approved by Board

Next meeting Tuesday 27th August 2024