

BOARD MINUTES

Date and Time	20 th January 2015
Location	Fèis Rois Office, Strathpeffer Road, Dingwall
Purpose	Quarterly Meeting
Present	Fiona Dalgetty (Chief Executive), Harriet Dempster (Chair), Colin McLean, Duncan MacQuarrie, Colin Sandilands, Caroline Hewat, Maggie MacDonald and, via Skype, Mark Sheridan
Apologies	Carol Miller and Jennifer McGlone

SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

Action Ref. Number	Action	Responsibility	Time line
Item 1	Find an appropriate way to involve youth representatives in decision making	Fiona / Harriet	March 2015
Item 2	Speak to David Taylor at Creative Scotland re: delay with cultural tourism project	Fiona Dalgetty	ASAP
Item 3	Speak with Highland Council re: shared Child protection training	Rachael Duff	ASAP
Item 4	Update on payment of weekly classes fees	Allison Watson	ASAP
Item 5	Explore our obligations re: automatic enrolment pensions and prepare a paper of recommendations	Marion MacKay	before end March 2015
Item 6	Draft a staffing plan for 2015 – 2020	Fiona Dalgetty	before end March 2015
Item 7	Draft a tender document for new accountant	Colin Sandilands	ASAP

Agenda Item

2015.04.01 Preliminaries and Matters Arising

Harriet Dempster welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the staff for their work over the past quarter, particularly the success of Fèis Rois nan Deugairean.

The minute of the previous meeting on 8th October was agreed as a correct record. The minute was moved by Colin McLean and seconded by Mark Sheridan.

In the matters arising from the previous minutes, a discussion was had about the best way to involve our youth representatives in the quarterly Board meetings. One of the two youth representatives studies at the National Centre of Excellence in Traditional Music at Plockton High School and, as such, would be unable to attend Board meetings on a Tuesday evening.

ACTION: Fiona to speak to Katie and Alasdair to ask for their ideas on how they would like to contribute to the Board and strategic decision making

2015.04.02 Reports and Updates

(a) Financial Report

Fiona Dalgetty gave a detailed update on the current financial position of the company. She explained that the £27,000 awarded to Fèis Rois by Creative Scotland to lead on a new cultural tourism project for the Highlands remains untouched. This is because there has been a delay in starting the project. The delay has been due to staff capacity in 2014. Shortly after being awarded this funding, the opportunity arose to apply for Youth Arts Hub funds for the Highlands. Fiona's attention turned to securing this much larger sum of £400,000. In addition to this, much of Fiona's time was taken up with writing the new Business Plan and applying for Regular Funding from Creative Scotland for the period 2015 – 2018. Now that Regular Funding has been secured, and the Youth Arts Hub is up and running, Fiona can turn her attention to the cultural tourism project in 2015.

ACTION: Fiona to contact David Taylor at Creative Scotland to agree a new time scale for this project

(b) Staff Reports

Harriet Dempster commented that the Board were very pleased to hear about recent positive meetings with Highland Council.

Mark Sheridan commented that attending the Excellence in Trusteeship event in Dundee was reassuring in that it was clear that Fèis Rois is meeting, and in some instances exceeding, good governance guidelines.

The Board approved the small increase in fees for Fèis Rois Oigridh commenting that it is important that we still make it very clear to parents that there is financial support available for those on low incomes.

Harriet Dempster noted the positive development in the Lifelong Learning programme with the addition of a new residential weekend for adult learners to be held at Badaguish in March 2015.

A discussion was had around increased requests from outside agencies for consultancy support from the Fèis Rois Chief Executive. It was agreed that, where there is clearly a benefit through new partnership work for Fèis Rois, it would be positive for the Chief Executive to undertake this kind of service. The Board agreed that a daily rate of £500 would be a suitable fee.

The Board welcomed and approved the proposal for international working in 2015/16. This includes: developing an inclusive practice project with partners in Romania, building on the success of our partnership with the National Celtic Festival in Australia and a study visit to Canada.

Colin Sandilands suggested that, in order to have the capacity to work with more international partners, we could make some of our international projects biennial. Fiona Dalgetty welcomed the suggestion and explained that an invitation to work with partners in Ireland had recently been received. This could be an excellent project for 2016.

The Board agreed to fund the recording of a CD to celebrate the 25th anniversary of The Kiltearn Fiddlers. The funds will be recouped entirely through CD sales.

The Board noted the impressive training and CPD programme for 2015. Harriet Dempster asked that child protection training be more visible in the programme. Fiona Dalgetty explained that we already offer regular child protection training for our teaching musicians, but that we could always do more in this area. Colin McLean suggested that we collaborate with Highland Council who offer annual child protection training to their instrumental instructors.

ACTION: Fiona to ask Rachael Duff to speak with Norman Bolton at Highland Council to ask if we can access Highland Council's child protection training days.

Harriet Dempster noted that in her report to the Board Allison Watson raised the issue of some families consistently neglecting to pay fees for classes. Fiona reassured the Board that this is a very small number of families. However, the Board requested more detail from Allison to clarify the process for invoicing parents.

ACTION: Fiona to ask Allison to define the scale of this problem and to look at ways of reducing this issue, as well as supporting those who cannot pay.

The Board congratulated Stacey Toner on her work to date in managing the development of a number of Highland Youth Arts Hub (HYAH) projects. Duncan MacQuarrie spoke highly of a presentation that Stacey Toner gave to the Fèisean nan Gàidheal Board on the work of the HYAH in December.

2015.04.03 Strategic Planning Overview

A discussion was had about both the draft 2015/16 budget and the new automatic enrolment pension scheme. The Board approved the 2015/16 budget and thanked Fiona for her work on this.

The Board requested that Marion MacKay prepare a paper for their consideration on the automatic enrolment scheme before the next Board meeting.

ACTION: Marion Mackay to research automatic enrolment pensions and put forward a paper with proposals by the end of March 2015.

In discussing the artistic plan for 2015/16, Mark Sheridan noted that the Board should be mindful of the increased demands on some members of the current staff team, particularly the Chief Executive and the Education Manager. The Board requested that Fiona prepare a staffing plan for the period of the 2015-2020 Business Plan and present this for discussion / approval.

ACTION: Fiona to draft a staffing plan for 2015-2020.

2015.04.04 Notified AOCB

It was agreed at the recent AGM that the Board should put out a tender for a new accountant for the period from 1st April 2015 onwards.

ACTION: Colin Sandilands to draft a tender document.

It was agreed that Fiona Dalgetty should not have to take minutes at Board meetings as it is difficult to report verbally to the Board whilst having to note everything down. It was agreed that members of the Board would take turns to note the minutes. Caroline Hewat and Mark Sheridan agreed to take the minutes at the next two quarterly meetings.

The Board and Chief Executive congratulated the Chair on her recent OBE in the New Year's Honours list. They also offered their congratulations to Arthur Cormack, Chief Executive of Fèisean nan Gàidheal who has also been awarded an OBE.

2015.04.05 Date and Time of 2015/16 Board Meetings

A Doodle poll will be circulated to confirm dates for the four quarterly meetings in 2015/16.