



Private & Confidential

Minutes of the Active Lancashire Board meeting held on Thursday 15th April 2021 from 2:00 p.m., using MS TEAMS.

Board Members Present:

Mrs Lesley Lloyd (Chair). Mrs Ruth Lowry.
Ms Julie Bell. Mr Geoff Bean.
Mrs Amanda Parker. Mr Roger Davies.
Mrs Andrea Smith.

Active Lancashire Officers in Attendance:

Mr Adrian Leather. (Active Lancashire Chief Executive)
Mrs Carol Ross. (Active Lancashire Director of Operations)
Mr Stuart Oliver. (Active Lancashire Finance Manager-Acting Company Secretary)

Also in Partial Attendance:

Ms Justine Blomeley (Sport England).
Mr Paul Blythin (Active Lancashire Operations Manager - Health).

1. Directors Only Session

The Directors met at the beginning of the meeting without any Officers present.

2. Welcome and outline for the session.

All attendees were welcomed to the meeting by the Chair.

3. Introductions, Apologies for Absence, Declaration of Conflict of Interests.

Apologies for absence were noted from Brian Cookson, Simon Burnett, Chris Standish, Robin Richardson.

Andrea Smith from Lancashire County Council Public Health was welcomed to the meeting as a new Director representing Lancashire County Council and replacing Clare Platt who had now stepped down as a Board Member.

Resolution: Andrea Smith formally accepted as a Board Member of Active Lancashire

It was noted that during the agenda item related to Business Health Matters Ruth Lowry will leave the meeting as a result of a conflict of interests with her role as a Director of the University of Central Lancashire.

There were no other conflicts of interests declared.

The Chair reported that Zafar Coupland as a result of her other commitments had struggled to attend meetings and had now stepped down as a Board Member.

Resolution: The Board accepted the resignation of Zafar Coupland as a Board member

The Chair noted that item 6 on the agenda was entitled 'Directors Re-election' and suggested that item should be dealt with at this point. In continuing, the Chair reported that Geoff Bean, Chris Standish and the Chair Mrs Lesley Lloyd had served their initial 4 year term.

The Chair asked Mr Oliver to confirm whether Directors were required to serve their full 4 year's term. Mr Oliver confirmed that a Director can step down at any point during their term in office and the 4 year's was not mandatory. The 4 years was a time for review and re-election for a 2nd 4-year term with a view to serve a maximum of 8 years as a Director of Active Lancashire.

In Mr Standish's absence the Chair reported that Mr Standish wished to stand down as a Director following the next round of meetings as a result of time commitments with his new job.

Mr Bean indicated that he would continue as a Director but would be unlikely to be able to fulfil another 4-year term.

Mrs Lloyd confirmed that due to her work commitments, she would not be able to fulfil another 4-year term.

Mr Leather added that there was scheduled to be a HR & Remuneration Committee meeting in May and that Committee also took responsibility for Board appointments and suggested that this scheduled meeting should deal solely with Board member recruitment. This was agreed.

Resolution: The Board approved the continuation of Mrs Lesley Lloyd, Mr Geoff Bean and Mr Chris Standish as Directors for up to a maximum of another 4 years.

Action: The HR & Remuneration Committee meeting in May to consider the recruitment of new Board members.

4. Minutes and Matters Arising of the Board meeting held on the 24th November 2020.

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 24th November 2020 were reviewed and agreed as an accurate record.

There were no matters arising.

Resolved: The minutes of the Board meeting held on 24th November 2020 were approved as an accurate record.

5. People Report

Mrs Carol Ross presented the people report as issued with the agenda.

The report highlighted the growth of the team in terms of staff numbers and full time equivalents resulting from various new funding streams most notably for the Business Health Matters initiative. The report and appendices also explained the funding of the posts.

Mrs Ross explained that the induction of new staff members was taking place remotely. The induction included a meeting with the Chief Executive Mr Leather.

It was noted that the report referred to a couple of appendices including the organisation chart and a summary of the staff changes. These appendices were not issued with the report and Mrs Ross agreed that these would be forwarded to Board members after the meeting.

The appendices to the People report were sent on the 15th April to Board members

Mrs Ross continued with the report explaining the plans for the post Covid return to the office. It was highlighted that the return to office working would be in line with Government guidelines with staff given the option of returning to the office in small work bubbles for 1 day a week on a designated day.

Mrs Ross explained that a Health & Well-being team had been established to ensure input from staff to look at the best ways to support the wellbeing of the staff team. A survey had been issued to all staff members and the results would help inform the opening of the office and the health and well-being support required as well as consider how we help newly recruited staff settle in and get to know the wider team. It was reported that at the same time, we are participating in the Active Partnership network staff survey, as we have done for several years.

With the growth of the team compared to the size of the office and the Government guidelines for social distancing there would be a continuing need for home working for the majority of the week and staff would also be able to use office space at the Accrington Hub.

Consideration is taking place of the introduction of lateral-flow testing, as part of our arrangements to ensure a safe return for staff to office working. Mrs Andrea Smith offered to support with lateral flow testing equipment and guidance.

Mr Geoff Bean left the meeting at this point

Action *The Board are asked to review and support the revised Organisational Structure and Recruitment Plan as issued with the People Report and the accompanying appendices.*

Resolved *The Board noted the report and supported the actions and recommendations regarding the return-to-work arrangements and office space requirements.*

The Chair continued with the Company Secretary part of the report indicating that as discussed in the Director only part of the meeting and as part of the Board member recruitment process a Company Secretary would be appointed with Finance skills to support the Board and the Finance team.

6. Strategy Launch and Integrated Performance Report (IPR)

Mr Leather presented the details of the results of the strategy consultation.

A strategy launch video was presented which included the strapline ‘a decade of movement’. Mr Leather continued by explaining that the strategy launch would be over a period of time to build awareness, with initially social media postings including clips from the video and then with opportunities for face to face presentation later in the Summer when Covid restrictions were relaxed. Mr Leather highlighted that there was a focus on inequalities and empowerment and engagement of individuals and communities.

The Board considered the video and there were some concerns about the quality and the energy of the presentation. It was agreed that the video needed to be improved before being presented and Mr Roger Davies offered to support Mr Leather.

Mrs Ruth Lowry also asked that the final draft of the Strategy consultation document could be circulated to Board members.

Action: Mr Leather and Mr Roger Davies to review the Strategy launch video

*Action: The final draft of the strategy consultation document to be circulated to Board members
(sent to Board members on the 15th April 2021)*

Mr Leather presented a suggested Integrated Performance report (IPR) that would be linked to the strategy and focus and support the reporting to the Board. Mr Leather explained the 4 quadrants of the IPR.

Action: Mr Leather to send out the IPR report to Board members for their consideration. (sent to Board members on the 15th April 2021)

Mr Geoff Bean returned to the meeting

7. Key Activities

Mr Paul Blythin was welcomed to the meeting and presented the infographic reports as issued with the agenda including an update on the Business Health Matters project.

Mrs Ruth Lowry left the meeting at this point

Under the 'Inspire Communities' section of the report Mr Blythin reported that the MPT project had now achieved 6 of the 13 output targets with a number of months of the project still to go. It was reported that an application had been submitted to extend the project to December 2023 under the 1.1 ESIF strategic theme. Mr Blythin continued under this section highlighting the various CSI team activity including new funding for the Pendle youth hub and the Active Seconds shop and Hub in Accrington which had now reopened after the Covid restrictions were eased.

Under the 'Engage in Sport' section Mr Blythin focussed on the Children & Young People work and the Community Youth Engagement initiative. The Lancashire School Games was highlighted and reported that again this year there would be a 'virtual' games offer and SPAR were continuing their support of the games all be it with lower funding. Mr Blythin explained that the games focus as directed by Sport England was increasingly moving o inclusivity as opposed to just about competition.

Mr Blythin reported on the Lancashire Legacy Programme, a leadership programme funded by Common Purpose for 18-25 year olds. Starting in June with 100 places on offer Active Lancashire have been awarded 20 of those places.

Mr Blythin reported that the ESIF 2.1 funding for Business Health Matters had been finally awarded by the DWP and therefore along with the ISCF funding the programme of activity could start to commence. The 2.1 ESIF Funding was particularly about supporting the workplace health champion level 2 and 3 Ofqual regulated qualifications and to establish Active Lancashire as a training centre to be able to deliver these qualifications.

Ms Julie Bell responded that she was very pleased to see the common purpose programme development and also the wellbeing qualification was something that was very much needed particularly in current times.

Mr Roger Davies asked for confirmation of which awarding organisation was being used. Mr Blythin confirmed that it was NCFE an established organisation. Mr Davies highlighted that he had experience in this area of work and would be happy to have a conversation outside the meeting and offer support but also added that the awarding organisation had an interest in making this work and had much bigger capacity available and so should be pushed to provide more administration support.

Resolved: The Board received and noted the report.

Mrs R Lowry returned to the meeting

7. Minutes of the HR & Remuneration Committee Meeting

Ms Julie Bell presented the minutes of the HR & Remuneration Committee meeting held on the 25th February 2021.

It was reported that the Committee had received comprehensive details of the staff structure and also a benchmarking exercise on staff pay undertaken by Lisa Edwards from HR Partner.

In addition, a number of policy and procedure updates had been received and accepted at the meeting. Ms Bell asked that an acknowledgement should be made of all the hard work and effort of Sarah Walton (Active Lancashire Director of Business) in ensuring that all of these policies and procedures are prepared and brought to each HR & Committee meeting. It was recognised as a considerable piece of work and effort by Mrs Walton that should be acknowledged.

Resolved The Board received and noted the minutes

8. Minutes of the Audit & Finance Committee Meeting(s)

It was noted that there had been 2 Audit & Finance Committee meetings held recently and Mrs Ruth Lowry presented the minutes from both meetings.

Mrs Lowry reported that there had been a number of risk updates in the meetings with a particular attention on cybercrime which was viewed as a growing risk.

At the first of the committee meetings on the 4th March a deep dive into the MPT project had taken place with consideration of the output and financial analysis with regard to the fact that the project is in the last 12 months of the current funding. At the same meeting the financial controls manual had been reviewed and the recommendations accepted.

It was reported that the external audit contract had been reviewed and advertised and the response had been underwhelming but with a result that Moore & Smalley had been re-appointed as auditors. It was noted that the audit plan had been attached with the agenda and reports for this meeting.

The second of the Audit & Finance Committee meetings on the 30th March had involved consideration and an in depth focus on the 2021/22 Budget. For part of this meeting Mrs Lowry highlighted that due to apologies the meeting had not been quorate and so the budget couldn't be approved and therefore was brought to this Board meeting for approval which would be picked up in the Finance report.

The Chair asked about a 5-year plan and Mr Oliver responded that the Budget needed to be approved and the development plan reviewed to then build into the longer term plan. Mr Bean added that a 5-year plan ideally should have a wider input from the Board linked to the strategy. It was agreed that Mr Oliver and Mr Leather would start to work on a 5-year plan for consideration at the next Audit & Finance Committee.

Action: 5 year plan brought to the Audit & Finance Committee and then to the Board in June

9. Finance

Mr Oliver presented the finance report as issued with the agenda. The report was asked to be taken as read and for Mr Oliver to highlight the key points.

Mr Oliver reported with a latest forecast for the 2020/21 financial year with an indicative forecast of income of £3,078k and an unrestricted surplus of £24k. The financial year end was in process and after what was seen as a difficult year for many businesses including Active Lancashire the organisation was still growing and would report a surplus.

The report was continued with Mr Oliver highlighting the key points of the draft budget for the financial year 2021/22 (April 2021 to March 2022) and which had been considered by the members of the Audit & Finance Committee. Significant points were highlighted with recognition that the budget included the Business Health Matters funding from ISCF and ESIF which was the result and culmination of a number of years of significant development work.

The budget Financial income and expenditure statements and detailed project budget analysis were included in the report along with income graphs highlighted by Mr Oliver. It was reported that usually a deficit budget was reported based on the short term nature of the known funding agreements but on this occasion there was a budget presented with a significant increase in income of £5,403k and an unrestricted funds surplus of £132k. Further discussion and agreement would need to take place to confirm the priorities for investing this surplus to support future development plans and support the infrastructure of the organisation. The various budget assumptions for the major funding streams were outlined in the report as well as the assumptions for the staffing budget. In addition, it was noted that restricted funds were budgeted to be reduced as the projects for which the funding was received are delivered over the next 12 months.

Mr Oliver highlighted the renewed Reserves Policy calculation with unrestricted reserves providing sufficient coverage of the calculated reserves policy.

Mrs Amanda Parker asked for confirmation of the employer's pension contribution as correct at 13.8% from the 1st April 2021 and indicated that this was high.

The external audit plan had been reviewed by the Audit & Finance Committee and Mr Oliver explained that the plan was included as an appendix for information for Board members who were not on the Audit & Finance Committee.

Mr Oliver highlighted the amendments to the Financial regulations manual as outlined in the Finance report and approved by the Audit & Finance Committee.

Specific key risks had been highlighted in the report that had been considered and reviewed at the various Committee meetings and Mr Oliver informed that the full risk register would be reviewed at the next Audit & Finance Committee meeting.

Mr Oliver continued that he had been asked to report to the Board on the structure and people involved in the finance function of the organisation. An organisation chart had been included in the report and Mr Oliver comprehensively explained the history of the Active Lancashire finance service and the people who now made up the team and the roles that they undertake and some of the experience that they bring to the organisation. It was highlighted that 2 new members of the team had started this week to support the grant monitoring required for the major ESIF funding. These 2 new appointments were funded by the ESIF funding and added to 2 other recent appointments from June last year. In addition, there is a vacancy for a Finance Assistant funded by the ISCF funding and this would be filled in due course to fill any gaps in the finance team and build resilience in the service.

Board members discussed and thanked Mr Oliver for the comprehensive report. Mrs Amanda Parker commended Mr Oliver for all that had been accomplished over the last 12 months under very difficult circumstances and with considerable change and pressure and asked at what point would he see the benefits of the new appointments to ease the workload and pressure on himself. Mr Oliver responded that the last 12 months was unprecedented and it was now important to settle the team members into their roles and build resilience around the team and this included delegating some of his work.

Resolved: The Board received and noted the report and noted the latest forecast for the 2020/21 financial year.

Resolved: The Board noted and approved the 2021/22 financial year budget as recommended by the Audit & Finance Committee

Resolved: The Board noted the updated Reserves Policy unrestricted reserves calculation.

Resolved: The Board noted the external auditor appointment as approved by the Audit & Finance Committee and noted the audit plan

Resolved: The Board noted the updates to the Financial Controls Manual

Resolved: The Board noted the risk register updates

Resolved: The Board noted the Finance team structure and people update

Justine Blomeley, Amanda Parker left the meeting at this point

10. Development Activity.

Mr Leather presented the development activity report giving the Board a clear and concise picture of the strategic funding streams being delivered and targeted over the coming year. Particular focus was given to the work and lobbying with the Lancashire LEP Health Sector Working group under the Empowering Communities and Health & Wellbeing themes and the positioning within this group was seen as important in terms of future funding.

Resolved: The Board noted and accepted the report

11. Any other business.

Mr Leather asked that it be recognised that the Senior Leadership team within the organisation had worked above and beyond over the last 12 months, working excessive hours and supporting the rest of the team and he felt were quite exhausted.

The Board discussed this point and suggested the following should take place

- * A letter of thanks from the Board to the team
- * An informal Board and team afternoon giving the chance for the Board to meet team members and visa versa.
- * An extra days leave to the team. The Chair suggested the 21st June when Covid restrictions were planned to be lifted and had seen an idea that the day should be given for people to spend time with family or do something for the environment. This was agreed as an excellent idea.

Ms Julie Bell encouraged members to look at the LITFEST website and support where they could.

15. Date and time of next meeting.

The next meeting of the Board has been set for 2:00 p.m. on Thursday 17th June 2021.

Closing comments

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution to the Board meeting.

ACTION LIST for future meetings.

- Mr Adrian Leather to bring a draft headline strategy to Board members before Christmas and thereafter a final, full draft version for discussion and ratification by the Board in April 2021. - **Is this complete?**
- The draft 5-Year plan to be brought to the Audit & Finance Committee and Board in June
- Mr Adrian Leather to report back to the Board in April 2021 on the outcome of consultations with key stakeholders regarding potential changes to the Articles of Association.
- Mr Adrian Leather, via Senior Leadership Team and other appropriate teams to arrange for the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training to be cascaded to staff within Active Lancashire.
- Mr Adrian Leather to arrange for updates of the Business Development Review (Active Lancashire's developmental activity summary) to be included on the next two scheduled meetings of the Board; the Audit & Finance Committee; and the HR & Remuneration Committee.

- The HR & Remuneration Committee meeting in May 2021 to consider the recruitment of new Board members and Company Secretary.
- The Board are asked to review and support the revised Organisational Structure and Recruitment Plan as issued with the People Report and accompanying appendices.
- Mr Leather and Mr Roger Davies to review the Strategy launch video
- The final draft of the strategy consultation document to be circulated to Board members (sent to Board members on the 15th April 2021)
- Mr Leather to send out the IPR report to Board members for their consideration. (sent to Board members on the 15th April 2021)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES.....DATE.....