

NRCPD Board meeting 11am-1.30pm at NCVO, Tuesday 27th February 2018

Present: Liz Duncan (Chair), Sarah Haynes, Frank Harrington (remotely), Hilary Maxwell-Hyslop, David Wolfenden (remotely)

Apologies: Lesley Weatherson, Heather Fisken

In attendance: Lindsay Foster, Kate Price (remotely)

Communications support: Darren Townsend (RSLI) and Mo Bergson (RSLI)

1. Chair's welcome

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and explained the logistics using dial in for some attendees.

2. Apologies for absence

Lesley Weatherson and Heather Fisken

3. Declarations of interest

None were received.

4. Staffing update - verbal

A confidential item was discussed.

5. Minutes and actions of 5th December 2017

The minutes of the meeting of 5 December 2017 were agreed.

6. Matters arising from the minutes

The Chair updated the Board on the role of Honorary Treasurer. The specification had been updated and the role had been advertised on several sites, however no applications have been received.

HMH added this was a particularly important role during separation and asked if we should consider 'buying in' assistance with the financial responsibilities. LF outlined two options to fill the role. The first option is for the auditors to attend Board meetings to provide financial guidance. The second option is an existing trustee volunteers to become treasurer and undertakes training to fulfil that role.

FH added agreed that paying an auditor would make sense in the absence of an Honorary Treasurer. SH agreed, particularly considering potential training costs for an existing trustee.

LF will look into costs and options around financial assistance from the auditors.

7. Operational update

KP introduced the paper and asked the board for any comments or queries

SH has discussed with KP, prior to the Board meeting that the standards for Trainee Sign Language Interpreters Should be reviewed against the new revised NOS. SH also has concerns about a lack of standardisation of assessment for trainees against the trainee standards, and the need for NRCPD to formulate a process for assessors assessing trainees to ensure consistency. KP agreed this was a logical follow on to further develop the standards work.

SH asked when the first audit for the new requirement for TSLI would take place. KP advised it would most likely take place alongside the 2019 CPD audit, as there will not be sufficient data to carry this out in 2018.

SH asked how the decision that had been made about CPD at the December 2017 Board meeting had been received by the Practitioners' Forum. KP responded that they were disappointed with the progress made, as they had given extensive feedback during the consultation, and had hoped for more changes based on their comments.

HMH added that we may need to offer more training and advice to registrants including reflective practice. FH commented advice about reflective practice should be given to the trainers of the professions, for example during the UCLAN Interpreting course, students are advised to include reflective practice during their course work and it therefore becomes a central element on their work.

The Chair added we are unable to offer CPD as the regulator, other bodies and professional associations must provide this, however we should be more proactive in sign posting options and outlining what we are expecting in terms of CPD.

KP advised that she has asked for volunteers from the professional associations for the working group and hopes to convene this within the next few weeks. Frank suggested looking to the training providers also, for example UCLAN and Wolverhampton University. Hilary also offered to become involved in the working group. It was agreed that FH and HMH would be part of the CPD working group.

SH commented the report was useful and clear.

HMH asked about the financial information. LF clarified that this is the standard information giving monthly management accounts to date. Financial papers provided later on the agenda are forward looking.

8. Finance

a) Headline Budget 2018-2021

LF introduced the headline budget for 2018-2021. This starts from a position of what the next three years look like so we can start to make some reasonable assumptions. This report takes what we know and projects it forward. This projects assumptions for the following - registrant growth based on historic growth, adding fee increases as discussed, taking direct costs in relation to the income, and development costs for separation. This shows a significant surplus, which may allow reconsideration of a fee increase for registrants. To achieve separation, some money would need to be spent and looking at the headline budget this is achievable.

HMH suggested we increase fees annually, no more than the rate of inflation, so registrants grow used to rising fees.

SH sought clarity on the assumption that separation from the parent company will be achieved by 2020. LF advised the figures were based on assumptions in the absence of actuals.

SH Suggested fees are discussed and decided upon at a later meeting when the Director of Development is in post.

DW advised he was content with the papers, and continuing with an annual fee increase would assist with the reserves, however he would be happy to agree with the decision of the majority in relation to fees.

FH echoed DW's comments about the reports and the fees.

The Chair felt that a freeze of fees for one year would be preferable.

LF advised that it was acceptable to delay a decision about fees until the July board when a Director should be in place meeting, however the decision should not be delayed any further as this would delay the planning process for separation.

HMH agreed to wait to July to discuss fees further.

KP provided some feedback from the Practitioners' Forum. The members understood independence comes at a cost, though they would like to see transparency including on value for money and how the money is spent.

DW suggested a graph or chart showing how the money is spent working towards separation, which might be helpful for registrants.

SH asked if this could be added to the communications strategy – ie how registrant fees are spent.

The Board noted the draft headline budgets and will use the information to assist in decision making for the organisation.

b) Registrant Fees 2019

LF introduced the paper recommending a reporting cycle for fees based on the headline budget for the next 3 years and included a proposal for discussion.

The Board agreed to postpone the decision on NRCPD fees for 2019 to the July meeting. KP will look at how we can be more transparent to registrants about how fees are spent in the interim.

c) Salaries 2018 - confidential

The Chair presented the report on staff salaries for 2018.

The Board approved the proposed salary plan for next year.

9. Strategic decisions

The Chair introduced the following papers to assist in defining strategic ways of working for the organisation.

a) Financial Strategy

The financial strategy will provide the basis on which the organisation's finances are controlled and used. Structures and processes must be able to cope with additional or changing demands and can support any additional investment.

HMH asked about the signing authority. This relates to the new Director of Development, or any acting Director.

SH asked for clarity on the investment for the first five years of independence LF to amend wording in 2.8 to reflect this means while we are working towards full independence and so is effective now.

DW queried reserves (2.5b) that the minimum reserves level of £150k is not additional to that £150k outlined in 2.6. LF confirmed that is the case.

The Board discussed and agreed the financial strategy outlined in the paper taking into account amendments to 2.8 Investment.

b) Risk Management

The risk management strategy provides the basis by which the organisation identifies significant risks to the achievement of the organisation's strategic and operational objectives, evaluating the potential consequences and implementing the most effective way of controlling them. We need to ensure that as we grow, expand, develop and respond to market changes, we consider, understand and manage the related risks.

SH queried the timetable around point 2 Principles. The Chair advised this was in line with best practice, as a 'check in' rather than a full review.

SH Suggested the Board should look at risk at each meeting. HMH agreed.

SH suggested 'customer' should be redefined. Perhaps consider 'customer' and 'registrant'.

LF advised a full risk register review would be impractical for every board meeting. The new Director of Development would be expected to report to board at each meeting under the Operational update.

The Chair suggested a risk update might be included under the operational update titled 'current risks' which the Board would consider at each meeting, being mindful of what is manageable with the current level of staffing.

DW suggested the need to look over a risk variance rather than a full review, something that would highlight any variances to trustees, and agreed this would sit comfortably in the Operational report.

The Board agreed the risk management process outlined in the report, taking into account the above comments, and agreed a risk update would be provided under the Operational update at each board meeting.

10. Separation plan

LF advised a separation plan is required to ensure the NRCPD Board is progressing toward separation and ensuring all conditions are being addressed to ensure the Signature Board will be able to sign off full separation. Key decisions that need to be taken are outlined; policies and strategies need to be developed. A strong communication plan will be required.

The Chair added that the new role of Director of Development is a reflection of the level of detail required in putting in place this process.

HMH said it was a helpful document; and that a possible increase in staff time might be required to ensure this success.

The Chair commented the Director of Development role had been advertised at 30 hours per week but that is negotiable. We may choose to bring in a consultant if required and are in a healthy financial position to allow us to do this.

LF added she would be happy for Signature to continue to provide expertise and time to assist.

SH commented on the separation date being 2021 and would prefer to aim for 2020.

The Chair responded that the aim for separation was still 2020 date and would be happy for the plan to reflect the date of 2020.

The Board agreed that the detailed work that should be carried out to ensure separation can be achieved within the agreed preferred timescales, i.e. full independence by 2020.

11. Governance

The Chair introduced the paper reviewing the governance of NRCPD, to ensure the required level of Board governance is on target for achieving full independence.

SH queried the term dates for trustees as she had assumed impression the dates re-set when NRCPD started the separation process.

FH commented that his understanding was that he was on a term of 4 years at the point he was originally appointed, and that carried across to separation. It was important to ensure a staggering of retirement dates. He would check his original letter of appointment.

The Chair said the retirement dates are based on original appointments under the sub committee. The proposal is that as each trustee approaches their retirement date, there will be a process of open recruitment.

The recruitment process for trustees was noted by the Board. Trustees who intended to apply for a second term were asked to inform the Chair.

12. Communications strategy

KP introduced the paper proposing options to implement a communications strategy.

SH & DW felt the messaging in the plan, around the role of NRCPD needed further thought and work.

HMH suggested adding under 'A' something about the regulator to underpin our position.

KP would take on board the comments, and look again at the messaging in the plan.

FH advised we should put the message out there that there is one register and it is NRCPD, it is important that we get this wording right.

LF added that as the document has been provided by a consultant, it will be used a guidance for Kate as she progresses with the strategy.

The Chair advised the strategy was written by a consultant and it is a draft work in progress.

The Board agreed option 1 as outlined in the report. KP will review the draft with the new Director when in post.

13. Review of meeting - verbal

FH commented that with substantial business ad been dealt with. He hoped that the recruitment of the new Director is swift to allow us to move forward.

HMH sought further information on the recruitment timetable. The Chair confirmed 13th March for interviews.

The Chair thanked attendees and support for their assistance today.

14. Additional Items – previously notified

GDPR. KP confirmed work was in hand to ensure compliance.

15. Dates of next meetings 2018

- 10th July
- 25th September
- 4th December

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Chair, NRCPD

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Date