

STÒRLANN BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2021

MINUTE OF MEETING OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

11.15am, Thursday 25th February 2021

Online Meeting - Google Hangout

Present

Gillian Campbell-Thow (GCT) – Glasgow City Council (Chair)
Simon Easton (SE) – Argyll and Bute Council
Jackie Cathill (JC) – North Lanarkshire Council
Lena Walker (LW) – Highland Council

Donald W Morrison (DWM) – Stòrlann
DJ MacRitchie (DJM) – Stòrlann
Neil Smith (NS) – Stòrlann (Note of Minute)

In Attendance

Douglas Ansdell (DA) – Scottish Government
Sarah Buchanan (SB) – Scottish Government
John Moffat (JM) – Mann Judd Gordon and Co

Apologies


Angus MacIannan (AM) – Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
Joanne McHale (JMH) – Bòrd na Gàidhlig

ITEM		ACTION
1	OPENING ITEMS	
1a	Welcome The Chairperson welcomed all present.	
1b	Present and Apologies As above.	
1c	Declarations of Interest No notes of interest were presented.	
2	MINUTES	
2a	Minutes of Board Meeting 26th November 2020 Minutes of the online meeting held on 26 th November 2020 had been circulated and were approved as a true record of the meeting. Proposed by SE and seconded by JC.	

2b	<p>Matters arising from minute: There were no matters arising.</p>	
3	<p>FINANCE BUSINESS</p>	
3a	<p>Stòrlann Management Accounts: 1st October – 31st December 2020 John Moffat (JM), Mann Judd Gordon, joined the meeting by tele-conference at 11.40. Relevant documents prepared by Mann Judd Gordon had been circulated to the Board. JM provided members with a verbal update on the accounts, with some additional information from the CE regarding the potential replenishment of reserves. The CE also requested a meeting with JM and GCT to discuss any new procedures required following an individual staff member’s salary review. JM was thanked for his input and left the meeting at 11.50.</p>	CE
3b	<p>The Scottish Government Funding 2020 – 2021 SB informed the board that there would be monitoring of the targets and forward work plan as per normal. The CE reported that an updated workplan would be submitted.</p>	CE
3c	<p>The Scottish Government Funding 2021 – 2022 SB informed that board she and Stuart Pescodd had attended an update meeting with the Chair and CE on Monday 22 February and that funds would be maintained at the current levels. The board wished it put on record that Stòrlann is very grateful to the Scottish Government for the continued support and are delighted with the funding offer.</p>	
3d	<p>Bòrd na Gàidhlig Funding 2020 – 2021 The CE reported that the quarterly report was submitted slightly late due to a delay with the preparation of quarterly accounts. Measures are being discussed to prevent a reoccurrence of this.</p>	
3e	<p>Bòrd na Gàidhlig Funding 2021-2022 The CE informed the board that a draft letter has been received from BnaG and this will be circulated to the board. Funding is at the same level as the previous year. Two key stipulations for the year are: the adoption of an environmental policy and a Fair Work First policy. As other Gaelic organisations are subject to the same conditions, there may be the option of a collaborative approach to these with common policies formulated for each one. The CE reported that there is a Scottish Government website with information on the Fair Work First policy implementation. It was requested that an informative summary on the policy be circulated for the next board meeting.</p>	CE
3f	<p>Stòrlann Budget-setting outline, April 2021 – March 2022 The CE referred to the paper circulated in advance and mentioned that following the discussions with the funders, the intention is to continue with a zero based budget rather than potential cuts of 5% or 10%. The budget will take cognisance of the Covid-19 and environmental pressures, teacher expectations, changes to planning schedules and increased adoption of digital resources. Covid-19 costs, such as homeworking and office sanitisation, will continue. It is expected that savings made in travel and meeting costs will more than cover any increase in Covid-19 related costs. On looking at the budget, there should be scope for a minimum of salary uplift of a minimum of 1% with a potential maximum of 3%. Any cost savings that are made will be taken back into the reserves following a planned depletion in 2020, or released into the next financial year for use on additional resources. The latter was the preferred option of the board.</p>	

<p>3g</p>	<p>Accommodation and Travel Expenditure The CE updated members on the paper that had been circulated. There had been no actual travel or accommodation costs in the period as all staff are working from home and all meetings are online.</p>	
<p>3h</p>	<p>Staff travel and expenses policy The CE referred to the policy circulated and informed the board that there had been no material changes to the content since it was last approved. This policy was one which had merely been due for review. The board approved the policy.</p>	
4 CORPORATE AFFAIRS AND STAFFING		
<p>4a</p>	<p>Covid-19: Staffing / Tosgan arrangements The CE notified the board that one member of staff was on maternity leave. Office tasks have been redistributed and one member has received a temporary salary uplift for additional duties during the colleagues absence. The board requested that an up-to-date staffing list together with contract details be circulated to the directors.</p> <p>With regard to C19, the CE reported that the online shop had been closed temporarily but was back in operation. An Tosgan is delineated internally for safety and access restricted to five members of staff. As far as possible, business has been maintained as normal, albeit with slight delays in distribution and supply chains.</p> <p>After discussion with the Chair, SMT and advice from Macleod and McCallum, some staff have been given the option of COVID-19 dependants leave until March 15th when the scheme will be reviewed or come to an end depending on circumstances prevailing.</p> <p>The Chair also requested that there be a discussion regarding future ways of working at the next staff meeting as a lot of organisations are not returning to pre-covid arrangements.</p>	CE
<p>4b</p>	<p>Health and Safety The board received a verbal update on H and S matters from the CE. An evacuation drill was carried out at An Tosgan despite only two members of staff being present. The report was approved.</p>	
<p>4c</p>	<p>Risk Register The current Risk Register had been circulated to members. Risks remain similar to previous but there is considerable relief that the organisation's funding is not being reduced.</p> <p>With regard to item 01 in the document (Lack of awareness of Stòrlann's role as a delivery agent for aspects of the National Plan for Gaelic) the chair requested that this be put as a topic of discussion at the next board meeting due to the number of resource providers potentially competing for work which should ordinarily go to Stòrlann. Discussion should include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relationship and engagement between Stòrlann and the local authorities • Collaboration and engagement with other organisations such as e-Sgoil, Education Scotland, MG Alba, and CPD and early years providers • Relationships between Gaelic organisations 	CE

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information gathering for Bòrd na Gàidhlig • Ensuring national objectives are being met <p>With regard to section 09 (Challenge of matching Gaelic digital educational resources to that available for English) the board requested that a meeting be arranged with GLAN to enable closer engagement and so that information on advancements in resource production could be provided. Such a meeting should assist with teacher expectations being managed in addition to having other benefits. It was agreed that SE and the CE will arrange an initial meeting at a suitable time.</p> <p>The CE also explained that Stòrlann was taking cognisance of the significant increase in the use of digital learning software by teachers and increased availability of superfast broadband over recent times. This trend being primarily driven by the needs of home schooling over lockdown.</p>	SE/CE
4d	<p>Minute of staff meeting</p> <p>The Minutes of the Staff meeting had been circulated. Reference was made to the twelve grammar scripts which have been completed with more planned. These are part of An t-Alltan online and will be published once all are completed. There were no other issues discussed.</p>	
4e	<p>Mental Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>The CE reported that the SMT meet three times per week and staff have various channels to keep in touch and monitor health and wellbeing. This includes a dedicated intranet which is populated with relevant information.</p>	
4f	<p>Brexit: Impact assessment</p> <p>The CE informed the board that the organisation has had to be registered as an economic operator for the purposes of HMRC and importation of printed supplies. Registration took some time and as a result there was a slight hold up in importation of maths books from the printers in Poland. Staff were thanked for their patience with this matter.</p>	
4g	<p>An Tosgan: COVID-19 arrangements</p> <p>The next review will be in April and staff have been informed about this.</p>	
5	PROJECTS AND CONTRACTS	
5a	<p>Resources Schedule 2020 - 21</p> <p>The resources schedule had been circulated and was approved by the Board. DJM provided a brief update on a number of projects across all levels such as the Scottish Book Trust audio recordings, new apps, woodwork resource translation, prelims, RHSP translation, Covid funding projects for BnaG such as 'Eachdraidh mo Bhaile' and Barrington Stoke book translation. The 'Faclan Failichte' app and the 'Gaelic in Scotland' projects were also highlighted and additional detail provided.</p>	
5b	<p>Alltan Online</p> <p>DJM informed the board that there are 17 different webinars available online including live tutorials and 'Gàidhlig nan Òg' workshops which were delivered across some local authorities. As mentioned previously, some grammar workshops are also in production.</p>	

5c	<p>The CE mentioned that the target of 250 delegates suggested by BnaG was well on the way to being met with 217 user sessions already having been concluded. This had been a challenging undertaking for a variety of reasons and both the CE and board wished to convey thanks to the staff and others for their work on this and other projects.</p> <p>Online Stats</p> <p>Miscellaneous stats for online resources had been circulated and a verbal summary was provided by NS.</p> 	GCT/CE
5d	<p>Media and News Releases</p> <p>During the period there had been a number of press releases with widespread coverage in the printed press, online journals and Gaelic radio and television. There had also been very positive feedback from CLAS regarding the prelims.</p>	
6	AOCB	
	There was no AOCB.	
7	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
	<p>Next meeting scheduled for Thurs 27th May 2021 – online. It was requested that reminders of meetings should be sent about two weeks before the date of the meeting.</p> <p>The Chairperson thanked all in attendance.</p>	CE