

Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee

Monday, 16th September, 2024

MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BELFAST WATERFRONT AND ULSTER HALL LTD. SHAREHOLDERS' COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Ferguson (Chairperson); and
Councillors Bower, Brennan, Bell, S. Douglas,
Flynn, Maghie, McCann, McDowell, McKay and Ó Néill.

In attendance: Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;
Mrs. L. Toland, Senior Manager, Economy;
Mr. I. Bell, Acting Chief Executive and Director of
Finance, Risk and Corporate Services (ICC Belfast);
Mr. C. McCloskey, Director of Events and Customer
Experience (ICC Belfast);
Ms. C. Davidson, Head of Governance and Stakeholder
Engagement (ICC Belfast); and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Committee Services Officer.

Also attended: Councillor Cobain; and
Mr. S. Daniels, Chair of the BWUH Ltd. Board.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Alderman Copeland and Councillors R. Brooks, Canavan, Doherty, McCabe, Nic Bhranair and Verner.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 17th June, 2024, were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st July.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports associated with the following three items are restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the Press and public from the meeting during discussion of the items as, due to the nature of the items, there would be a disclosure of exempt

information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

The Members were also reminded that the content of 'restricted' reports and any discussion which took place during closed session must be treated as 'confidential information' and that no such information should be disclosed to the public as per Paragraph 4.15 of the Code of Conduct.

Performance Report Q1 2024/2025

The Acting Chief Executive and Director of Finance, Risk and Corporate Services provided the Committee with an update on the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd's business performance and an analysis of actual performance against the budget for the first quarter covering the period 1st April to 30th June, 2024.

He outlined that the quarter had been busy, as expected, with a large number of events spanning conferences, meetings and entertainments.

The Director of Events and Customer Experience outlined the company's Corporate Social Responsibility programme, including with the charity Inspire and other volunteering opportunities and fundraising activities. He also provided the Committee with an update on the apprenticeships and placements within the company.

The Committee was advised that BWUH Ltd. was working towards the Earthcheck Company Standard.

In response to a Member's question regarding the impact that the Covid-19 pandemic had had on sales, the Director of Finance, Risk and Corporate Services pointed out that there was a long lead-in time for booking large conferences, usually with planning taking place 3-5 years out for the biggest ones.

After discussion the Committee noted the update which had been provided.

Head of Events Role

The Director of Economic Development outlined that BWUH Ltd. had set out an ambitious five-year business plan which followed a period of business growth and development since reopening in September 2021.

He explained that the Head of Events position had been occupied in BWUH in some capacity since 2018 but that it had not been filled for the past number of years due to the Covid-19 pandemic and cost control measures. During that time, the responsibility of ensuring the successful delivery of events had fallen to the Director of Events and Customer Experience, supported by two Senior Event Managers. However, with the growth of the event operations team and to ensure continuous development, strategic continuity planning and improving the resilience of the team, it was recommended that BWUH re-introduced the position of Head of Events.

The Committee was advised that local market research had indicated that the new evaluation would place the Head of Events role at a salary of around £55,000, with the associated costs set aside within existing BWUH budgets.

The Committee approved the job revaluation of the Head of Events role.

**BWUH Senior Positions Recruitment –
Non-Executive Director and Chief Executive Positions**

The Director of Economic Development advised the Committee that Ms. L. Jackson had been a Board Member for two terms and that she was stepping down. He advised the Members that her experience had been a great asset to the company and that the recruitment of a new Non-Executive Director would be advertised in the coming weeks.

He also outlined that Ms. J. Corkey, the former Chief Executive of BWUH Ltd, had resigned in August to pursue other opportunities and that the process of recruiting the company's new Chief Executive would commence shortly.

Noted.

Mr. John Greer

The Chairperson reminded the Committee that this would be the last Shareholders' Committee meeting at which the Director of Economic Development would be in attendance as he would be leaving to take up the role of Permanent Secretary of the Department for Communities.

The Members and the Chairman of the BWUH Ltd. Board paid tribute to Mr. Greer for his hard work and dedication, particularly for his support in guiding the business through the Covid-19 pandemic, and wished him well in his future role.

Mr. Greer thanked the Members and advised them that Mrs. L. Toland, Senior Manager (Economy) would be taking over as the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for BWUH Ltd.

Noted.

Chairperson