

## NATIONAL CITIZEN SERVICE TRUST

### Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Directors held via teleconference on 22 March 2023 between 15.00 and 17.00

Present:	Brett Wigdortz (Chair)	Mark Gifford (CEO)
	Lamin Tarawally (Youth Rep)	Ndidi Okezie
	Jessica Evans (Youth Rep)	Tristram Mayhew
	Jacque Nnochiri	Ian Livingstone
	Deborah Tavana	Ashley Summerfield
	Darren Xiberras	Nick Hurd
		Laura Jackson

In attendance: Hannah Stoddart  
Kelly Holder  
Ali Rose  
Lisa Mullen

Apologies: Sarah Knight

#### **Item 1. Chair's welcome and declaration of conflicts of interest**

- Mr Wigdortz welcomed all to the meeting and asked for any conflicts of interest; none were raised at this point from those present.
- Ms Okezie joined the call at a later point and declared a potential conflict of interest. The Board was reassured that no discussions would take place that would make this conflict arise and if it did Ms Okezie would recuse herself from discussions. The Board agreed.
- Ms Tavana and Mr Tarawally joined the call shortly after the start time of 15:00 hours, and did not raise any conflicts of interest.

#### **Item 2. Regular Governance**

##### **(1) Board minutes (26 January) for approval and signature**

- Mr Wigdortz asked for any comments regarding January's Board minutes.
- Ms Jackson raised that she had not been noted as in attendance for January Board, and it was confirmed that this will be rectified.
- The Board minutes were approved, with Mr Wigdortz's signature to be added following the meeting.

##### **(2) Approved and signed Committee minutes for noting (Impact 16 November 2022)**

- Ms Nnochiri summarised from feedback that the length of the residential programme was the correct one, and that there are a number of builds for the summer ahead.
- There is a need to collate further data from a number of the schools that are involved in the SkillsBooster.
- Some Changemaker experiences were struggling to attract and retain Young People, although the overall view has been a positive one.
- On the whole the statistics were strong and Young People are seen to be taking their roles within the community very seriously.
- A positive conclusion overall for the experience the Young People are gaining from the NCS programmes.

##### **(3) Board action log - for noting**

- Ms Huthcinson's action to be closed.
- The Framework agreement will be covered in the CEO update but Mr Gifford advised to keep this action open at the moment.
- Creation of "Friends": it was noted there is still work to progress with the Young People and the creation of the Alumni. The Youth Advisory Board will be working through this, and thus this action is to be kept open.
- New ARC committee members: Mr Gifford updated that he will be liaising with Mr

McLauchlan following Ms Hanna's departure. Mr Gifford and Mr Wigdortz will meet to discuss their respective networks, and Mr Gifford suggested it would be beneficial to recruit a commercial individual. One new member has been recruited, with one still to be sought.

#### **4) Updates from committee chairs (verbal), to include Youth Representatives.**

##### **ARC**

- Mr Xiberras updated on March's ARC committee meeting and the updated management accounts from Ms Hanna, that we are on track for where we expect to be.
- A discussion took place on the external audit (NAO), to include the increase of fees which have been factored in.
- The internal audit plan for 2023-2024 has been signed off.
- The Trust is concerned by inflation and what it might mean for revenue lines including pay and travel / food for experiences.
- Risk management and cyber security updates were provided.
- The new DOAs were signed off.
- The procurement policy was signed off.

##### **Safeguarding**

- Mr Mayhew updated that the safeguarding refresher training took place earlier this year.
- The 18 May is the next planned meeting, and Ms Holder is now the internal contact.
- There were no reports of any incidents.
- Ms Holder updated that critical incident training is taking place currently.

##### **Youth Advisory Board**

- Ms Evans updated that the Youth Advisory Board is coming together, with the recruitment process for twelve young people taking place and onboarding commencing at the end of April.
- Following Board feedback at the last meeting, the pay range was increased to ensure we are attracting and retaining a strong and diverse range of talent and are role models for engaging young people.

#### **(5) Impact Committee Terms of Reference for final approval**

- As a relatively new committee Ms Stoddart noted there was a requirement to propose a number of changes, which have been approved.

#### **Item 3. CEO updates**

The report was taken as read, with the following highlights and updates noted:

**CIC / UK Year**

- The CIC ("Community Interest Company") was historically linked to NCS before the Royal Charter was established.
- The CIC has changed its name to UK Year of Service CIC and has been a supportive partner in the development of this initiative.
- The CIC will be determining its long term future and the Trust has an opportunity to influence its thinking. The Board will use its Strategy Day to reflect on this and whether the Trust wishes to develop a commercial arm to advance its purpose and give it flexibility.

**Framework**

- The Framework Agreement was approved by the Board at the January meeting, with the People and Remuneration caveat.
- The DCMS sponsor team has recommended to Treasury the draft framework .
- If accepted the Trust would have the benefit of greater flexibility and freedoms with procurement and People. On People we will be governed by what is in our People and Remuneration Policy for which the Government representative on the Board has a veto.
- If Approval is not given , options will be reconsidered, but it is not anticipated that approval will be denied.

**Coronation involvement**

- A good news story for the Trust as one of just three organisations to be asked to support the Volunteering
- The sign up process is proving to be positive and popular.
- The Trust's involvement will predominantly be coordinating/signposting at the stations and parks.
- The Board is encouraged to volunteer.

**Grants, Digital, Residential****Residential**

- The winter residentials are proving to be positive, with an over delivery looking likely, funded by Inspiring Learning.
- Mr Mayhew asked the reasons for the oversubscription and any key learnings from this. Ms Holder advised that a shorter programme has led to an increased interest. It is project based learning rather than a workshop style, and it was noted a report will be available once the programmes have completed, with further statistics and feedback.
- New residentials: the contracts with Ingenus and the YHA have been signed.
- Decision making processes and data protection are being looked into and the teams are working at pace on these.
- Recruitment is taking place currently and is being worked through, again at pace.

**Grants**

- The window has now closed and a total of 384 applications have been received.
- 324 received for targeted grants.
- 60 received for open grants. Following a first look circa. 22 applications for open grants should have been submitted as targeted, and a team is working on this to reassign these to the correct category.
- There has been a diverse range of organisations which is very positive.
- Assessors have completed their training and due diligence is taking place.
- Asked for an independent and sector perspective Ms Okezie updated that the overall consensus of the grant process is that it has been positive, with a noticeable step change in NCS being perceived as a collaborative leader.

**Digital Experiences**

- Ms Holder updated that there have been 7 individual bids covering a range of offers and experiences within the self serve/self navigate space, and a good mixture of off-the-shelf products.
- It is still early days; the sift closes today (22 March) with moderation happening Monday.
- The new Digital Experience Lead begins next week and will be heavily involved in the sift process.

**Digital Strategy**

- Young People have shaped the themes and it is now a case of going into further detail, which Ms Hutchinson will help to shape.
- The Youth Voice Forum has engaged with Ms Hutchinson on this prior to her start date with the Trust.
- Ms Stoddart added that Strategy and Insight have this week signed off research for Young People's appetite on digital products

### 3.2

#### Strategy update

- Ms Stoddart updated that the impact survey results are promising, adding that a shorter residential programme does not lead to lower impact scores.
- An independent evaluator is now in place, commissioned by DCMS and is a collaborative partnership with NCS.
- Targeted community experiences are proving more popular compared to open for all, which has not been a surprise, due to the flexibility.

#### Influencing

- The Secretary of State visit took place in February, and two Ministerial meetings are due to take place.
- Ms Stoddart updated that DCMS are encouraging a bid for the government's shared outcomes, which is a positive step.
- "Does NCS make for a better employee?" was a question from the last meeting that still has to be fully reviewed and a strategy developed. This will occur late summer. It is noted that Skills Builder and Youth Employment UK are wraparounds, to sharpen the offer, and more detail will come from the June meeting.

#### **ACTION: Ms Stoddart to share the shared outcomes information with the Board.**

- Ms Tavana asked if we are "shouting about" the figures, and Ms Stoddart advised we absolutely will be, via an Impact report, and a workshop with DCMS (and cross government) to share the findings.

### **Item 4. Chair and Board recruitment update**

#### Chair recruitment

- Ms Rose provided an update that she has been working closely with Mr Cox of DCMS on the campaign for the new Chair and ensuring that traction is being kept on this.
- The paper sift commences on the 27 March, and number 10 are content with the candidate pool.
- Mr Tarawally asked for an update on the Youth Shadow Panel, which is a separate process and on Mr Cox's radar; it will come once the sift process has commenced. This was noted as a key part of the process.

#### NED recruitment:

- The campaign will go live at the end of the month (March).
- A plea was made to promote via the Boards individual networks.
- The criteria will be shared along with required skills, for all to liaise with their networks

#### **ACTION (all): All Board members agreed to share the NED role criteria across their own networks.**

- The Board recognised there was a risk given the significant change at Board level. Mr Gifford shared with the Board that at a time of change he is fully committed to the Trust and would provide some continuity.
- Mr Wigdortz summarised that the Trust feels to be in a good place with Mr Gifford at the helm.

#### AOB

- The Trust away day on the 26 April is in London and the Board members have been invited.
- Mr Xiberras asked for an update on the replacement of Ms Hanna.
- Mr Gifford advised that the applications received are positive. This is an important appointment and with much to consider making the right appointment is better than rushing to appoint. The Board was supportive of this approach.
- March's ARC Committee minutes will be brought to June's meeting.

The Board thanked the CEO for the work he is leading and he left the meeting.

As is normal practice the Board remained for a few minutes to share reflections.

**MEETING CLOSED. The next meeting will take place on 21 and 22 June 2023**



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Chairman  
Date signed: 27 April 2023