

BOARD MINUTES

Date and Time	Thursday 16 September 2021, 7.30pm
Location	Due to the ongoing pandemic, the meeting was held using Zoom
Purpose	Quarterly Meeting
Present	Fiona Dalgetty (Chief Executive), Malina MacDonald-Dawson (Chair), Fiona Callum (Treasurer/Company Secretary), Ruairidh Gollan, Chloë Bryce, Alex Urquhart-Taylor, Shona Henderson, Norman MacArthur, Duncan Chisholm, Lorraine Aburrow (Minutes) Observing: Siobhan Anderson (Creative Scotland)
Apologies	Jennifer Marshall

Actions:

- Item 1** Fiona will explore the cost of external help in updating the Fèis Rois policies
- Item 2** Lorraine will contact the office landlord about the new lease
- Item 3** Fiona will speak to staff individually about any concerns on returning to the office
- Item 4** Lorraine/ Fiona will speak to the accountants about any implications of changing to a 4-day working week.
- Item 5** Fiona and Malina will have a discussion on how the Staff and Board Away Day will look

Agenda Item

2022.02.01 Preliminaries

Malina welcomed everyone to the meeting and congratulated Fiona Callum on her recent engagement. Malina also welcomed Lauren Hendry and the new artists in residence to the Fèis Rois team and congratulated us on our Living Wage accreditation.

Alex Urquhart-Taylor approved the minutes of the previous meeting as being a correct and accurate record and these were seconded by Ruairidh Gollan.

From matters arising from previous minutes, Fiona Dalgetty asked for approval to seek external help in updating the company policies and it was agreed that this was a good idea and she should explore these costs.

Declarations of Interest

Malina MacDonald-Dawson, Fiona Callum and Norman MacArthur are employees of funder, The Highland Council.

2022.01.02 Reports | Updates | Artistic and Creative Plan

The Chair thanked the Chief Executive and staff for preparing detailed reports on all activity for the Board.

Fiona Dalgetty asked if there were any comments on the Management Accounts for quarter 1. Fiona Callum said that Fiona's notes on these were detailed and helpful. There was a small discussion on the Culture Collective grant which was received in the 2020/2021 financial year but would be spent in the financial years, 2021/2022 and 2022/2023.

Fiona gave an outline of recently submitted funding applications, one to the Youth Music Initiative to continue our successful Lullaby project and the other for the continuation of our Highland Youth Music Forum.

Fiona talked through her report giving an update on the new plans for Fèis Rois nan Deugairean and Fèis Rois nan Inbheach. She also gave an update on Under Canvas and the Dandelion project. Malina thanked Fiona for sharing the Dandelion information.

There was an extensive and lengthy discussion on the office space, a new office lease, when staff would return to office working and the possible introduction of a 4-day working week.

It was agreed that the current office space should be kept as it best suits the needs of the organisation and gives us a prominent presence in the Dingwall and local community. A new 3-year lease would be sought but if the landlord pushed us to take a 5-year lease, it was agreed that this would be acceptable.

Fiona suggested that after the October holiday break we look at starting a phased return to the office but this of course would be dependent on covid case numbers and government guidelines. Fiona suggested that we could start by having our team meetings in the office and it was agreed that this was a good idea. Fiona will have individual chats with all staff members about any concerns they may have about returning to the office.

There followed a positive discussion about initial thoughts on the introduction of a 4-day working week for Fèis Rois staff. It was generally thought of as an exciting and morale boosting opportunity and amazing that Fèis Rois could lead on this in the Highlands. There were concerns that staff may cram more into working days and this was considered not good practice. Fiona said that a reduction to 32 hours wouldn't affect Fèis Rois but would be hugely beneficial for the staff. It was agreed that we should speak to the accountants about any implications of a 4-day working week and to find out about the Government Fund for this purpose.

There was a discussion on the business strategy for the organisation and the direction we want to take. It was thought that we should concentrate on our core programme and streamline what we do and what is important to Fèis Rois. This will be discussed further at a Staff and Board Away Day.

2022.02.03 Press & Publicity Update

We are continuing to have an extensive digital reach across all platforms and a high profile with local and national press.

2022.02.04 AOB

The AGM will be the 9 December.