

CHAIR'S BUSINESS

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Date: 25th February 2020

Agenda no: 11

Purpose of the paper

For Discussion

Background and context

The board is asked to consider any significantly new, major or changed risks, identified in the course of today's meeting.

The board, as time permits, is asked to consider:

- Board development
- Board enhancement
- Board documentation

Also, if time permits, the board may wish to review the action log and decision log, t

The risk register, current action log and decision log are in the board pack, under item 11.

Where are we now?

Board development

We have recently confirmed that the finances of HM are the responsibility of all trustees: responsibility is not, and cannot be, delegated to the Chair of the Finance Sub Committee. We have worked through some significant work recently on reserves policy. We have, as in previous years, received and approved the annual accounts.

Board enhancement

Following almost a full year of working as chair of trustees, my view is that we have a strong board of committed trustees, with a wide range of competencies and skills. We operate from a position of strength.

Board documentation

Following the Governance Development Day in 2017, the board agreed a standard cover paper.

What are the key issues?

Board development

HM has grown in size and complexity. As the Chief Officer has noted in his proposal in principle to work on income diversification, we have around 25 funding streams. Our work

in taking a risk-based approach to reserves requirement highlights the financial complexity of a multi-project charity. Trustees vary as to their degree of financial experience and understanding.

Board enhancement

I have been approached by three people who have expressed an interest in being, or becoming again, a trustee. I have met with one, will be meeting a second on 25th February, and need to respond to the third enquiry.

Board documentation

At a training event for new chairs, provided by the Association of Chairs (January 2020), a slight variant on our standard report, was suggested. This report uses the standard format proposed at this event, as does the Board Forward Plan report earlier on today's agenda.

What is asked of trustees?

Board development

The Charity Commission's guide The Essential Trustee – what you need to know, what you need to do, provides an overarching guide to our responsibilities. Trustees are asked to refresh their understanding of this important document. A copy is enclosed in the board pack, under item 11.

Should we strengthen our individual and collective financial understanding? If so, the Lloyds Foundation would consider funding training for trustees, as part of the Enhance Support offer which is attached to their overall funding of HM. This would be at no or negligible (venue) cost to HM. It would, however, need time commitment from trustees.

Board enhancement

Are there skills or experiences missing from the board, or which need to be further strengthened, such that we would seek to recruit in the near future? Or should we consider recruitment following the work on Diversity and Membership?

Board documentation

Does this format work as well or better than our current standard report format?

Finance

There are no financial implications as a consequence of this paper.

Recommendation

The board is asked to:

- Confirm any significantly new, major or changed risks, identified during the course of this meeting.
- Consider the questions relating to board development, enhancement and documentation.