

West of Scotland Regional Equality Council Ltd
79th Meeting of the Board of Directors
7th September 2020 at 4.00pm

Via ZOOM

MINUTES

PRESENT

Board of Directors

1. Dr Malcolm Green Chair
2. Vince Chudy (VC)
3. Antony Kozlowski (AK)
4. Sheela Mukherjee (SM)
5. Sharon Schlesinger (SS)
6. Harriette Campbell (HC)
7. Syed Jafri (SJ)
8. Haroun Malik (HM)
9. Cllr Rashid Hussain (RH)
10. Cllr Anne McTaggart (AM)
11. Dr. Javed Gill (JG)

Observers

None in attendance

In attendance

Mohammed Razaq (MR)

WELCOME

Malcolm Green in the absence of Hanzala Malik chaired the meeting
 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES

Board of Directors

1. Onkar Singh Jandu (OSJ)
2. Hanzala Malik (HS)

Observers

None

2. Presentation

There was no presentation at this meeting

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Minutes of 78th meeting 24th June 2020 were approved as a true and accurate record

4. MATTERS ARISING

There were no action points or matters arising

5. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were none

6. FOR DISCUSSION

Reports

a) Finance – Variance statement for month of August 2020

Expenditure: actual **£46,712** and budgeted **£31,213** with a variance of **£15,499** overspend

Income: actual **£13,880** and budgeted **£17,122** with a variance of **-£3,243** under budget

The Board was content with explanation provided under/over budget expenditure/income and noted the report.

b) Executive Director

MR spoke to the report page by page as requested by the Chair. SS asked about what the service provision for Covid project was, MR explained that it was advocacy, digital support, health and food programme etc. SS also asked if we provided bilingual support MR responded that Yes through GCVS and with Covid 19 project we were providing support on various languages. AM asked if WSREC were doing anything about the GCC Community Fund and how equality organisations were being recommended for funding or not MR advised that WSREC has indeed been in the background working with number of organisations and groups (Glasgow Equality Forum, CRER etc) to make sure the fund distribution was fair. He also mentioned that WSREC itself was recommended for the fund however it was about 57% of what was requested in its application but reported that many organisations were recommended for No funding likes of the 5 of the 8 CABs, GCVS, Womens Aid, Rape Crisis etc. He also reported that the due to the representations to GCC by various support groups the Council had made £4m of transitional fund available for the CABs, Women's aid and some equality organisation we however at this stage it is not known how the amount will be divided between the various sectors

The Board noted the report and comments made by MR

c) Partner Reports

No reports were received or partners were in attendance.

FOR decision**7. CORRESPONDENCE**

There was none- however, MR reported that a response from the Humza Yousaf to a letter from WSREC was circulated to all Board members which advised that throttling as a method of restraining suspects by USA Police made public by BLM was not a method for which training or use was permitted in Police Scotland.

FOR INFORMATION**10. UPDATE: 'Office Move'**

MR reported that WSREC have now obtain and forwarded the letter from HMRC to confirm its recognition of WSREC's charitable status to City Property who have passed this on to the relevant department to approve. We have been advised a decision on this will be made sometime in October 2020. MR advised that if the response from the department is positive then we will be provided with detailed information on the terms of any lease. At the next Board meeting (23rd November 2020) the terms of the lease will be shared.

The Board noted the report.

11. Covid-19 (return to the office)

MR reported to the Board that any return to offices in Scottish Governments plans is in phase 4 and we are at phase 3 just now and there have been setbacks as the lockdown has had to be re-imposed in Glasgow, Renfrewshire and West Dunbartonshire areas. So moving into phase 4 will be delayed. He further advised that there had been go ahead for face to face meeting for financial advice only just now but there has been no decision on offices opening generally.

12. REPORT SAREC

MG (Chair of SAREC) reported that the Awards for All application had been successful with an Award of £7,500 slightly less than the £10,000 asked for. This will enable the 4 RECs to work on the impact of Covid 19 on hate crime within the Chinese community. MR added that the CEO's had a meeting recently that discussed the A4A application and other areas of work that could be carried out collectively under the umbrella of SAREC and there is a meeting tomorrow of SAREC CEO's to consolidate and finalised to be presented to the next meeting of SAREC Board.

The Board noted the report.

13. AOCB

AM asked about the issue of the hate crime bill that was going through the Scottish Parliament and what WSREC's input and thoughts were on it. MR responded and advised that WSREC had input directly to the consultation bill along with collective response via groups and organisations such as CRER and Glasgow City Council Hate Crime working group. He further advised that the bill is seemingly facing severe opposition from several quarters with a suggestion that the section on 'stirring up hatred' would infringe freedom of speech. WSREC's input in relation to this had been that there needs to be a balance between freedom of speech and obligations that go with that right. AK added that his experience of living in Canada suggested that this type of issue could be dealt with via 'healing circles' in ways that were beyond legislation.

14. DATE AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

All meetings will be held at 6.00pm and (due to Covid 19 restrictions) via Zoom until further notice

Monday 23rd November 2020

Monday 8th February 2021

Monday 26th April 2021