

**MINUTES OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING HELD ON
FRIDAY 10th DECEMBER 2010, 9:30am
AT BIG LOTTERY FUND'S OFFICE, CROMAC QUAY, BELFAST**

PRESENT:

Frank Hewitt	<i>Northern Ireland Chair</i>
Paul Cavanagh	<i>Northern Ireland Committee member</i>
Julie Harrison	<i>Northern Ireland Committee member</i>
Claire Keatinge	<i>Northern Ireland Committee member</i>
Peter Osborne	<i>Northern Ireland Committee member</i>
Geraldine Campbell	<i>Northern Ireland Committee member</i>

IN ATTENDANCE:

Joanne McDowell	<i>Director Northern Ireland</i>
Alison Fraser	<i>Deputy Director, Head of Programmes</i>
Amanda Doherty	<i>Head of Communications & Press</i>
Deirdre Barker	<i>Head of Planning & Support Services</i>
Jacqui Maxwell	<i>Committee Manager (Minutes)</i>

BIG DEAL PRESENTATION: (agenda item 4)

Denis Palmer	<i>Youthnet</i>
Desy Clayton	<i>Youthnet</i>
Tim Stewart	<i>Big Deal</i>
Joe McVey	<i>Consultant</i>
Roisin McCreery	<i>Play Quest</i>

1. FEEDBACK FROM UK BOARD

1.1 Feedback from Board Strategy Day 16 November 2010

1.2 As the NI Chair was unable to attend this meeting, Joanne McDowell reported back to members that the main focus of the day was forward planning and BIG's operating costs.

1.3 Feedback from November UK Board

1.4 It was reported that this was Sir Clive Booth's last Board meeting and he thanked Board members, Country Chairs and Committees for their good work during his Chairmanship. Anna Southall has been formally appointed the Board's Interim Chair, as the appointment process for a new UK Chair is still on-going. Anna will be in contact with all Board members and Country Chairs in due course for discussion purposes. It was also confirmed that Anna will be visiting Belfast on 20th and 21st January and attending the Northern Ireland Committee business meeting on 21st. The NI Chair asked that members consider what matters they would like to raise with Anna at that meeting.

1.5 The main topics covered at Board were as follows:

- Non-Lottery opportunities - Transition Fund and Big Society Bank. Northern Ireland was sharing learning in relation to the Building Change Trust and the loans aspect through Charity Bank.
- UK Funding Portfolio, governance arrangements and UK Replication and Innovation effective practice led by Ceri Doyle.

- Operational issues, funding management system and non executive governance arrangements.
- Steve Hilton, (David Cameron’s adviser) had presented to the Board on the Big Society.
- The Chair reported that an HR People Strategy report had been presented to the Resources Committee and it was agreed that this should be circulated to members for information, given that this was particularly relevant in the current economic climate.

ACTION: J. Maxwell

- 1.6 Regarding UK wide non-Lottery funding, in discussion the main points were as follows:
- a) Members commented that this was a change of focus for BIG in relation to the commerciality aspect and bidding and costing for this type of work. This new direction should be linked to BIG’s core business.
 - b) Members were interested in the thought process for non-Lottery funding and how Northern Ireland would benefit. The dormant accounts process was not progressing at any great speed and non-Lottery opportunities would probably be limited in Northern Ireland.
 - c) Joanne McDowell reported that there may be an external window of opportunity as BIG was now on Government funding tender lists but this was likely to be England focused. Internally there could also be opportunities in the countries in relation to forthcoming UK-wide programmes and flexibility on the operations side of the business for sharing assessment and/or grant management.
 - d) There could be scope for structuring some work with other funders through a non-Lottery perspective.
 - e) The Chair reported that he had recently met with Patricia Morrison of the Monument Trust and they had discussed the funding landscape in relation to other funders and possible co-operation on a pilot exercise regarding gaps in funding.
 - f) The evidence base BIG requires is how to add value to what is already there and not replacing Government funding.
 - g) Joanne McDowell reported on the proposed work of the Association of Charitable Foundations in NI and that contact had been made with their new Officer James Magowan. In future meetings, she would share BIG’s priorities.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1 There were none.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 Peter Osborne registered a declarable interest for any discussions under Building Change Trust that were relevant to his position as a Director of the Trust.

3.2 Geraldine Campbell registered a declarable interest for any discussion under the Advice Management Contract agenda item as she is a sub-committee member of an organisation that could benefit from the funding.

4. BIG DEAL AWARD PARTNER PRESENTATION

4.1 The Chair welcomed the attendees from the Big Deal programme to the meeting and they delivered a PowerPoint presentation to members, which included a briefing on the following headings:

- The vision and context
- Strategic programme
- Small grants programme
- Programmes milestones
- Impact study

- Recommendations & lessons for BIG

4.2 In discussion the main points were as follows:

- a) That the learning from the programme in Northern Ireland should be fed back to the UK Board and the Young People's Fund UK programme to help influence how we develop young people's programmes in the future. Officers shared examples of how this had already happened.
- b) Disengagement of youth is not just specific to Northern Ireland; it is a UK-wide issue.
- c) That it would be interesting to see the legacy and the impact of the programme on statutory organisations in the education sector.
- d) The outcome has proved to be very satisfying; BIG had taken a leap of faith in using an Award Partner for the programme.
- e) There has been monitoring of the programme from the very start of the process as this was a substantial investment for BIG.
- f) It is important to acknowledge the necessity of having the adequate set-up time for the programme (e.g. young people to understand engagement and to publicise the availability of funding).
- g) In relation to the strategic direction, learning needs to be taken on board regarding what is appropriate for delivery through an Award Partner programme
- h) It is beneficial to all to have a good critical analysis of the programme to be able to move forward, but it has proved difficult to embed the programme at a higher strategic level in the sector.

4.3 The Chair thanked the attendees for an excellent and informative presentation. Members and staff commented that this had given them a comprehensive insight into the variety of work the Award Partner had carried out and the high number of young people that had benefitted from the funding.

5. APPROVAL FOR ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF NORTHERN IRELAND COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETINGS HELD ON FRIDAY 8th OCTOBER 2010

5.1 Apart from a minor wording change, the minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and were subsequently signed by the Chair.

5.2 Committee noted the actions list in connection to the above meeting and were updated on what actions had now been completed.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM 8th OCTOBER MEETING

6.1 **Building Change Trust Verbal Update**

Joanne McDowell reported that both she and the Chair had met with the Trust's Protector, Michael Wilson on 9th November and later that day, herself, the Chair and Alison Fraser had met with Bill Osborne, the Trust's Chairperson. They agreed that a number of aspects had progressed since the FSG evaluation report. Wider engagement and learning had also been discussed, and it was agreed that Northern Ireland Committee members and BCT Directors should have a focussed discussion in the New Year after the summary report had been published.

ACTION: J. McDowell

The Chair stated that the Protector was doing a very effective job and was clear about his role and the issues involved. He also updated members on the launch event of the Charity Bank Grant which took place in Belfast on 7th December and that Alex Attwood, the Minister for the Department for Social Development had attended the event.

Grants

Members noted the phase one grants that had been awarded to date. It was agreed that if members were interested in getting more information on certain projects, then this should be made available to them.

ACTION: A. Fraser

Committee confirmed that they would be taking an interest in what types of projects were coming forward for grants and commented that funding should be primarily about transformation and change.

6.2 **Decision Meetings**

The Chair reported that he had not yet passed on members' comments to the Board regarding the length of Northern Ireland decision meetings, but that this would be actioned as soon as possible.

ACTION: Chair

6.3 **NI Research Priorities**

It was confirmed that the Research & Learning lead members meeting on 17th December had been cancelled. Although this meeting was not taking place, three NI priorities, which had been discussed and agreed by members through a separate meeting, had been fed back to R&L. A new timeline was now being developed by Ceri Doyle, Director of Strategy, Performance and Learning and members will be kept updated on progress.

7. FORWARD TIMETABLE

7.1 **Future Activity & Meeting Timetable**

Committee noted the forward timetable and the activity coming up in the next few months. They also noted the updated meeting timetable and agreed that the 21st January business meeting should be extended to 3:00pm to allow for the attendance of Dave Hall (Senior Business Analyst) and the BPR workshop. Alison Fraser reported that as she was attending a BPR Programme Board meeting on 21st January in Birmingham, that Michelle Cherry, Deputy Head of Programmes would attend the business meeting in her absence. It was also agreed that the Committee Manager would propose business meeting dates from April 2011 onwards and members confirmed that the third Friday of the month was still their preferred option.

ACTION: J. Maxwell

7.2 **Presentation to Board**

Joanne McDowell stated that the annual report presentations to Board on individual countries funding portfolios had yet to be confirmed and that Anna Southall would now be making the decision on when these should take place. Committee to be kept updated on the timings for Northern Ireland.

ACTION: Chair

7.3 **NI Committee Strategic Away Days**

The Chair suggested that it would be beneficial to hold two half day strategic away days during the first and second half of 2011. The first meeting should be about specific Northern Ireland issues that would be useful for the new incoming UK Chair. A date in February for this meeting would be sought and it was agreed that Geraldine Campbell would chair the first meeting and that future meetings would be chaired on a rotational basis. Members stated that it was important to keep the frequency and timings of the various meetings coming up under review and that for some members, decision meetings would take priority. It was also suggested that the second away day should concentrate on social exclusion using the recent Joseph Rowntree Foundation paper as a base for discussion regarding adding value.

ACTION: Chair/J. McDowell/J. Maxwell

8. PAPERS BY CORRESPONDENCE

8.1 NI Committee had received various papers by correspondence, which had been appended to the agenda. These included:

- QTR 2 Business plan (*paper 27*)
- QTR 2 PI report (*paper 28*)
- Advice Contract Management report
- Strategic Projects Networking Event (*paper 29*)

- Media Coverage Quarterly report (*paper 30*)
- Programme Progress reports for Live & Learn, Change Ur Future, Big Deal, Reaching Out Connecting Older People & Living Landmarks

Comments were as follows:

8.2 **QTR 2 Business Plan**

Members noted the report ratings and generally good overall performance. They commented on the Northern Ireland office absenteeism levels. The narrative explaining the effect a small number of long term staff absences have had on the figures was also noted.

8.3 **QTR 2 PI Report**

Members noted the report and commented on the good performance.

8.4 **Advice Contract Management Report**

Members noted the report and made comments as follows:

- Recognised the difficulties with regards to the progress made on recruitment, but it was acknowledged that there was a small pool of people who had the specific statutory qualifications required.
- That personal debt during the post Christmas period will be an issue and that the recruitment issues needed to be rectified as soon as possible.
- It was important to make contact with the people who need this type of support through a variety of different approaches, e.g. shopping centres and the workplace.

8.5 **Strategic Projects Networking Event**

Committee noted this paper

8.6 **Media Coverage Report**

Committee noted the report and commented on the huge amount of coverage in the last quarter, including the increased activity in programme launches. Amanda Doherty reported that the People's Millions public vote and the Youth Achievers Ball had taken place in the same week in November and that there had been excellent coverage for both. Northern Ireland's public awareness of BIG was now standing at 51%, which was higher than the rest of the UK.

8.7 **Programme Progress Reports**

Committee noted all the reports. Members queried the progress of one of the projects mentioned in the Live & Learn report and asked that further information be brought back to them and that lines to take should be issued.

ACTION: A. Fraser/A. Doherty

9. **NORTHERN IRELAND GRANT BUDGETS (*verbal update*)**

9.1 Alison Fraser reported that Northern Ireland was unlikely to meet its grant budget commitment targets for new programmes as applications received to date had been lower than anticipated. This update would be reported back to Finance, UKSMT and UK Board. Re-forecasting will take place in January 2011 to try and predict the next two years budget and members will be updated at the January business meeting.

ACTION: A. Fraser

9.2 Alison Fraser also reported that the quality of outline proposal forms for the Reaching Out programmes had improved and a number had been invited to submit full applications. Each programme had a budget of £20 million and taking into consideration that grants were for up to £500K, the number of projects to be awarded funding would not be high.

10. BIG'S OUTCOME APPROACH (paper 31)

- 10.1 Committee noted the paper. Alison Fraser reported that the changes in the way outcomes are reported had been taken into consideration for the Reaching Out Connecting Older People assessment report which was being presented to NI Committee later today for decision. The NI Operations Division knew that this change was coming on board and staff have been proactive in ensuring that the programme guidance notes reflected the change.
- 10.2 Members noted the changes and stated that they had some reservations about how well this new method would measure the progress of projects, but would wait and see how things transpired.

11. YOUTH ACHIEVERS EVENT (verbal briefing)

- 11.1 Geraldine Campbell asked that thanks be recorded to all involved for the excellent organisation of this event and that it had all been produced within a very short 6 week turnaround period. Geraldine stated that she had been proud to represent BIG on 27th November at Stormont on a very cold and snowy night, which unfortunately resulted in some of the groups not being able to reach the venue. Amanda Doherty confirmed that this was a Daily Mirror event sponsored by BIG, four awards had been presented to young people from existing funded projects and that responses had been very high. Committee agreed that young people were doing Northern Ireland proud against difficult backgrounds in areas of deprivation.

12. PROGRAMME UPDATES (verbal updates)

12.1 **Reaching Out Empowering Young People**

Geraldine Campbell (Chair of the decision making committee), reported that the four young people members had attended an informal induction session on Friday 26th November. The session had gone well and the committee would be meeting again on 11th and 25th February for two formal induction sessions. Geraldine also stated that there had been a query about the way we reimburse the young people for their travel expenses and this would be taken forward as soon as possible to come to some agreement that suited both the young people and BIG's Finance department. **ACTION: G. Campbell/J. Maxwell/D. Barker**

Procurement for the development and support contracts was ongoing for both the Reaching Out programmes and this process would be finalised by the end of January 2011.

12.2 **Energy Efficient Venues**

The Chair reported that he and the Chair of the decision making committee, Peter Osborne, had received an excellent induction session the day before. He had stated at the induction that he thought the application form was very clear and should be relatively easy to complete, but had noted that there were still basic errors being made by applicants.

Although the programme was specifically about buildings and reducing energy costs, the improvements should produce increased community activity and more sporting venues were submitting applications. The energy audit was a professional report and was particularly useful to venues and showed them how savings could be achieved.

12.3 **Impact of Alcohol**

BIG staff had met with relevant personnel from the Health and Social Care Trusts yesterday to discuss the delivery models for the programme. This had been a very positive meeting and work will be ongoing to communicate the delivery of the programme. Amanda Doherty confirmed that the launch of the programme was taking place in Belfast on 14th December by way of a media briefing.

12.4 **Space & Place**

The programme launch would now take place in January 2011. Work was ongoing for the Award Partner model in relation to guidance notes and application form materials.

12.5 **People's Millions**

The public vote had taken place in conjunction with UTV in late November and members noted that Northern Ireland had received the highest number of votes in the UK. Members also noted that there had already been some interest in relation to the 2011 programme as the number of downloads from the website had been monitored.

12.6 **Healthy Minds & Awards for All**

The Healthy Minds programme was due to close in March 2011 and there had been approximately 100 applications received to date. In relation to Awards for All, it was agreed that members will in future receive the monthly press release tables, which will give a summary of information on each project which had been awarded funding.

ACTION: A. Doherty

12.6.1 **Budgets**

Committee noted the budget and success rate of the Healthy Minds and Awards for All programmes. After discussion Committee agreed:

To viro in additional funds in the 10/11 financial year to ensure that the success rate does not fall below 60%.

ACTION: A. Fraser

13. **UPDATE ON NI OPERATING COSTS & BUSINESS PLANNING**

13.1 The update was tabled to members. Members noted the content and the timings for budget and business planning up to March 2011 in relation to efficiency savings.

14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

14.1 Joanne McDowell reported that she had met with Alex Atwood, Minister for the Department for Social Development on 18th November and had a positive discussion on potential linkages across funding streams. He has now instructed a senior member of his team to progress further meetings on a quarterly basis and the first meeting was planned for January 2011. Members agreed that this was a very positive step and welcomed the Minister's interest.

14.2 The next NIC business meeting was confirmed for Friday 21st January 2011 starting at 9:30am and ending at approximately 3:00pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 1:10pm.

Signed: _____
Northern Ireland Chair

Date: _____