

**Minutes of the Board of Directors' Meeting  
Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2010 at 5.00 p.m.  
Conference Room 1 Southland's Centre**

<b>Present</b>	J Shepherd	Chair
	C Butterfield	Vice Chair
	S Twist	Company Secretary
	G Dobson	Treasurer
	H Wallace	Director
	C Field	Director
	M Kuby	Director
	A Davies	Director
<b>Apologies</b>	D Whiting	Director
	L Laidler	Director
	P Frankland	Director
<b>In Attendance</b>	H Lowrie	CEO

- BO72/09 Safeguarding exercise**  
Directors were provided with the exercise as a way of reminding of the Board's responsibilities to ensure children and vulnerable adults are safe. The exercise to be concluded at the next Board meeting.
- BO73/09 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest**  
There were no declarations of interest. P Frankland, D Whiting and L Laidler gave their apologies.
- BO74/09 Approval of the minutes of the BOD Meeting 27<sup>th</sup> January 2010**  
The minutes were approved by G Dobson and C Field.
- BO75/09 Matter arising from the BOD Meeting 25<sup>th</sup> November 2009**
- ❖ Reserves review is on- going and will continue to be considered on a regular basis.
  - ❖ S Twist contact with probate solicitors is ongoing.
  - ❖ It was agreed to postpone the Directors get together until better weather.
  - ❖ Exploration of apprenticeship funding is on going
  - ❖ Response from Professional Services group received – not eligible for funding because UNITE xxxxxx
  - ❖ Mentoring project update given by CEO. The Board was very concerned that there were disparities between information given at the presentation and the current information from xxx. The CEO will continue to investigate the potential but not as a priority – and will relay the Board's disquiet about the way things have developed.
  - ❖ All Directors have now completed a declaration of interest form.

All other actions on the agenda.

**BO76/09**

**Financial Matters**

**Income and Expenditure Account, Balance sheet and Cashflow forecast**

The Treasurer reported on the Income and Expenditure Account and confirmed that it was in line with expectations and there were no surprises. There were no concerns about the balance sheet and the cashflow information was also in line with expectations.

**Income Generation Table**

The CEO reported on progress so far. The Gateshead contract will be subject to re-tendering. Negotiations are continuing with Coast and Country who wish to fund xxxx. Your Home Newcastle has also suggested xxxxx. Stockton has xxxx. Structural changes in North Yorks will mean that Hambleton and Richmondshire are combining funding. Hambleton have confirmed that they are funding UNITE in 2010/11 and SMT are continuing to work to secure a mediation contract in xxxx

All negotiations have been very tough and the economic climate is very difficult

The CEO reported that case by case funding for Anger Management training has been secured and she is hopeful for a bid to BBC Children in Need which has xxx. The outcome of the Teesside University bid is awaited.

**Safer Gateshead funding – Audit update**

The CEO reported on an audit of UNITE completed by Supporting People which funds the Gateshead project. The CEO reported that there were difficulties in the project because of project management issues and also because of the changes in the model of provision during the year (to paid rather than volunteer mediators). However, UNITE is providing a service which is unlike others funded by Supporting People and staff felt that some of the audit was not applicable. UNITE staff were also unhappy about how and when the audit was carried out.

The Board agreed

- ❖ CEO to respond to supporting people explaining her concerns about the process of the audit
- ❖ C Butterfield to look at the audit and the response and give her views
- ❖ Supporting People to be invited to a Board meeting so that Directors can understand the issues and ensure that UNITE is fully compliant with any future audits
- ❖ The Board recognised that this contract is subject to a tendering exercise for next year

**Draft Budget 2010/2011**

The Board looked at a draft zero based budget and a best case budget. The CEO emphasised that these were very early drafts as negotiations with funders were continuing.

The zero based budget assumed permanent staff were retained with no increments but temp staff only employed until the end of May 2010. The best case budget assumed increments and all staff employed to the end of the year.

The Treasurer expressed concern that whilst the zero based budget gave 5 months of reserves the best case budget only three. The Board agreed that it was important that income was not accepted unless it properly covered costs.

The Board agreed to extend temporary contracts to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2010.

**BO77/09 Human Resources**

The draft 2010 staffing structure was set out for the Directors. This could not be confirmed until the budget was clearer but H Wallace was concerned that full support was given to mediators and that a post of voluntary mediator co-ordinator be added. This like other posts to be implemented when funding confirmed.

**BO78/09 Web site report**

The CEO reported that unfortunately an application for up to xxx funding from Business Link was turned down. UNITE received a low score because it was not possible to guaranteed that the project would create new jobs.

The Chair relayed L Laidler's suggestion that a link be included that enabled people visiting the site to donate to UNITE or express interest in joining the UNITE Board. These suggestions to be passed on to appropriate staff.

**BO79/09 Mediation Resources report**

The Board discussed this update on the current situation and noted the current deployment of staff.

The CEO reported on progress to run a mediation course, which would be paid for by participants. In discussion in a team meeting it felt that the course could be a cheap way of getting a mediator for some current funders.

There was a full discussion by the Board. M Kuby who had proposed this venture in January explained that the course should be marketed as a skills course rather than a mediation course. Should participants wish to continue to mediation they would be able to get live practice on the second part of the course, but the skills taught by UNITE were generic and could be used in many different settings.

C Butterfield advised that it was important to make robust links with job centres to explain what the course was and who it was intended for.

The Board also discussed a realistic cost for such a course and the need to run it sooner rather than later to attract people leaving the chemical / steel industries.

The Board asked to see any advertising before it went out.

**BO80/09 Corporate Social Responsibility update report**

The Board thanked the CEO for this report and noted that UNITE, Groundwork and Middlesbrough environment city are to meet to clarify roles.

The Board also noted the activities that the organisation was planning for the summer and asked to be kept informed.

CEO will pass the feedback onto M James who was responsible for producing the report.

**BO81/09**      **Equality and Diversity**  
Nothing to report

**BO82/09**      **Health and Safety**  
Nothing to report

**BO83/09**      **Correspondence**  
No correspondence received

**BO84/09**      **Any other business**

- ❖ H Lowrie's performance review confirmed as 31<sup>st</sup> March with J Shepherd and L Laidler
- ❖ Outstanding Board members bi-annual Performance reviews to be completed in May 2010
- ❖ Apologies for meetings up to May 2010 received from S Twist

**BO85/09**      **Date of next Board Meeting**  
Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010 at 5pm

**Action sheet from the Board of Directors' Meeting  
Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2010**

Agenda Item Number		Action	By Whom	Deadline
This Meeting	Previous Meeting			
BO72/09		Safeguarding exercise to be concluded	Board	March Board
BO75/09	BO91/08	Invest reserves in £50,000 tranches	Treasurer/RTL	Ongoing review
BO75/09	BO40/09	S Twist to contact probate solicitor re UNITE's success in achieving awards and suggest that it be included in charitable lists.	S Twist	June 2010
BO75/09	BO18/09	Board get together to be arranged in better weather	L Laidler	Summer 2010
BO75/09	BO61/09	Apprenticeship funding being made available to the sub region is still being investigated	CEO/P Frankland	March 2010
BO75/09	BO64/09	Continue to consider mentoring project but renewing existing contracts to take precedent.	SMT	April 2010
BO76/09		CEO to respond to supporting people explaining her concerns about the process of the Gateshead audit C Butterfield to look at the audit and the response and give her views Supporting People to be invited to a Board meeting so that Directors can understand the issues and ensure that UNITE is fully compliant with any future audits.	CEO  C Butterfield  CEO	ASAP  ASAP  March 2010
BO76/09		Temp contracts extended to 31 <sup>st</sup> May	CEO	ASAP
		CEO to ensure that funding covers costs or is not accepted	CEO	ASAP
BO77/09		Draft structure to be amended to include a vol. mediator co-ordinator as to be implemented when funding available	CEO	ASAP
BO78/09		L Laidler's comments re web site considered by staff	CEO	ASAP
BO79/09		Board to see the adverts for training courses and to advise	CEO /Board	April 2010