

**UNITE  
MEDIATION•CONCILIATION•TRAINING**

**Board of Directors Meeting**

**Tuesday 29 July 2008 at 5.00 p.m.  
Conference Room 1, Southlands Centre**

<b>Present</b>	J Shepherd G Dobson C Butterfield S Twist	Vice Chair Treasurer Director Director
<b>Apologies</b>	L Harding D Whiting P Frankland H Wallace L Laidler H Lowrie	Chair Director Director Director Director CEO
<b>In Attendance</b>	N Darwent C Fields	Deputising for CEO Prospective Board Member (Observing)
<b>BO30/08</b>	<b>Good Governance game</b> A review of Board recruitment, support and development concluded that UNITE's practices were good but consideration should be made to assigning individual Board members to act as buddies for newcomers. Any relevant training undertaken by Board members should be cascaded to other members.	
<b>BO31/08</b>	<b>Apologies for absence and declarations of interest</b> The Vice Chair welcomed C Fields who was observing today and N Darwent deputising for the CEO. There were no declarations of interest. Those present provided documents to address the money laundering requirements of the auditors. L Pearsall to contact absentees.	
<b>BO32/08</b>	<b>Approval of the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting 4/06/08</b> It was noted that P Frankland had attended but had not been listed as present. With that correction the minutes were approved by C. Butterfield and G Dobson	
<b>BO33/08</b>	<b>Matters arising from the Board of Directors meeting 4 June 2008</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Lyons and Co are in the process of providing a quote for their fees.</li><li>❖ The Board agreed £xxxx to be paid to the Revenue and Customs in respect of unpaid tax on essential car user expenses.</li><li>❖ Mean travel times have been calculated and included in the procedure.</li><li>❖ Software is being introduced to log the use of the web site and the Board minutes (in the same form as that currently proved for Stockton BC) will be available in PDF format. There will be capacity to log usage.</li></ul>	

All other actions are on going or agenda items.

**BO34/08**

**Financial matters**

- **Income & Expenditure and Balance Sheet**

The Treasurer commented that the balance sheet circulated with the agenda was a little out of date and a corrected version was now available. The figures showed the cash position remained strong to the end of June. She noted that UNITE has a much stronger liquidity position than it had had for some years. For the benefit of C Fields she made it clear that a break even position was projected for the year end and the current situation was because of reserves from last year and the robust negotiations of staff that had ensured prompt payment from customers. N Darwent commented that the organisation now needed to build on this and ensure an early start for negotiations for funds for 2009/10.

- **Income Generation Table – 23 July 2008**

It was noted that a donation of £xxx had been made towards computer costs and the Board thanked P Frankland in his absence. It was also noted that Gateshead Council had indicated that they wished to extend their contract.

- **Draft Audited Accounts 2007/08**

The Treasurer explained that the accounts needed to be signed off before the AGM but there were some questions and updates needed before the draft circulated could be signed off. The Board confirmed the recent review of the risk policy and its implementation and also reviewed the reserve policy and agreed to maintain it.

The Treasurer also pointed out that there was very little change to the balance sheet from the accounts submitted. The Board thanked L Pearsall and M Stocks for their hard work.

The Board approved the audited accounts in principle and delegated the Treasurer to ensure that the appropriate amendments are made.

**BO35/08**

**Annual General Meeting**

The Board confirmed that the AGM would be held on 30<sup>th</sup> September and that it would take the usual format. Further discussion to be held as to whether to mark the 15<sup>th</sup> year of UNITE at the AGM in 2009.

The Vice Chair reported that the Chair would be chairing the AGM but intended to resign from the Board following this. Directors recognised the great contribution that the Chair had made to the organisation over many years and agreed she would be much missed.

**BO36/08**

**Supervisor's Report on case conversions**

The Board thanked xxxx for this report and the work undertaken to ensure good conversion rate outcomes. C Butterfield felt that work needed to be done (especially with new customers) to improve the quality of referrals. S Twist suggested that the perception of mediation was changing and the new European directive showed that its importance was recognised in many other countries. The Board understood that everyone wanted good conversion rates – and mediators in particular got a lot of satisfaction with a successful conversion

**BO37/08**

**Membership**

The Board welcomed Jim Millar and Irene Davidson as new members.

- BO38/08 Customer/Client feedback register – tabled**  
N. Darwent tabled a format in response to the Board request to detail complaints and compliments.  
Directors made a range of comments, including the need to call it complaints and compliments rather than customer feedback, the need to number cases and omit the contact names. The Board needed to know a brief detail of the complaint/ compliment, its outcome and whether any actions had been undertaken in response.
- BO39/08 Human Resources**  
Learning and Development Plan 2008/09  
  
The Board noted the learning and development plan for 2008/09. The Board had previously agreed the funding for this within the budget and the plan remains within the allocated funding.  
C Butterfield suggested a contact for coaching.
- BO40/08 Equality & Diversity.**  
S Twist reported that UNITE staff had actively promoted access for a person with a disability who had been interested in attending mediator training. Although this person had subsequently decided against the training UNITE had made sure that disability had not barred them from attending.
- BO41/08 Health and Safety Issues**  
The office move has meant that cables could be a hazard and a mat is being purchased.
- BO42/08 Correspondence**  
No correspondence received
- BO43/08 Any other business**  
The Directors complimented staff on the new UNITE banners. They were felt to be an excellent representation of the work of UNITE.
- BO44/08 Date of next Board Meeting – Tuesday 30 September 2008 5.00 p.m.**