**Present:** Dr David Caldwell, (Chair) Brian Lawrie, Fiona Davidson, Sarah Scarlett, Frank Quinault, Councillor Lesley Backhouse

**Attending:** Heather Stuart, Kirsty Keay, Michelle Sweeney, Julie Aitchison, Lesley Toles, Dallas Mechan, Lisa McGrotty, June Souter, Sarah Patrick, Diane White (mins) for Fife Cultural Trust

**Apologies:** Councillor Ian Cameron, Councillor Jane Ann Liston, Councillor Dave Coleman, Derek Bottom

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and Introductions were made around the table.

1. **Chair’s Business**There were no declarations of interest. It was felt to be of concern that only one Elected Member had been able to attend this evening’s meeting, although a variety of circumstances were noted. The Chief Executive explained that Councillor Dave Coleman had been appointed to the Board, but that contact had yet to be established with him. It was suggested that an attendance record for each meeting should be sent out with Board Minutes. The Chair apologised on behalf of the Board to the attending colleagues for what may appear as lack of interest in their work in terms of the overall level of attendance, assuring them that this was not the case.

**Action – an attendance record for each meeting to be sent out with the Board Minutes.**
Michelle Sweeney introduced Dallas Mechan and the New Vision for Museums Heritage project.
2. **New Vision for Museums and Heritage**

Dallas ran through the presentation on the New Vision for Museums and Heritage. The new vision aims to build on achievements so far, but takes account of current staffing and financial constraints. Consultation and audience research will be used to look holistically at the service. This will help to Increase audiences and diversity of audience and how we can reflect our communities better. Working partnerships, meaningful involvement and volunteering were thought to be very important. Programming was felt to be the area which needs the most radical review. It was agreed that high profile exhibitions were needed but, how these are achieved within our resources was discussed. There were some questions around constraints on charging, donations boxes, friendship groups and membership programmes, and collection of data/feedback from attendees. Michelle explained that a wider piece of work was being done around data within the Trust. Frank asked that he be kept informed around the details of the Burns exhibition mentioned for next year.

**Action – Dallas to ensure Frank is kept informed about the details of the Burns exhibition taking place next year.**
3. **Volunteering Presentation**

Lesley Toles ran through her volunteering programme presentation. Successes of the programme so far were highlighted. 100 FCT staff are now engaged in volunteering. There has also been a significant change in attitude towards volunteers who are now an essential part of programme delivery, where their roles add value to employed staff. 40% of FCT volunteers are under 25. An increasing number of hard to reach groups are now becoming involved in volunteering. Working in partnership with the Dunfermline Heritage Quarter, relationships are very good. Co-ordination of events and shared education space are now in place which means a better offer for local schools and community groups. The post of Volunteer Development Officer has been extended to March 2020. Volunteering would be developed as a core part of Trust business going forward. There were some questions around retention of volunteers and capturing their stories.

**Action – the Board to feed back ideas around how they could be part of Volunteers week to Diane White
Action – Diane to send out the full volunteering report to the Board.**
4. **Macmillan Project Presentation**

June Souter introduced the Macmillan Cancer Information Support Centres in libraries project. 7 hubs would be created, one in each council area. £248,000 funding had been received for the project. Sarah Patrick had been employed as the project officer. Sarah introduced herself to the Board. Sarah explained that she had been visiting different locations where services exist in libraries. An inception meeting had taken place with Macmillan, and work was ongoing to look at space in Lochgelly as a pilot. Recruitment for a volunteer co-ordinator had begun. A soft launch of the project would take place in Lochgelly. This would ensure that the service is working for people before too much promotion takes place. The official launch would be 3-6 months later. Sarah explained that she would present to the FCT Board annually, but more regular updates would be available if required and that she would be very grateful for any input from the Board for development or promotion. It was felt that this was a really exciting opportunity for both Macmillan and Libraries particularly in smaller or more rural locations. There was some discussion around how this could be rolled out to include other long term health conditions.

Sarah, Dallas, and Lesley, left the meeting at this point. The Chair thanked them for their presentations.
5. **Library Opening Hours Review** **– Paper 1**

June ran through the opening hours review paper. Michelle explained some changes to the review since the paper had been sent out. There were some changes to staff working patterns where consultation and discussions will be ongoing over the next 4 weeks. The Trade Unions have been informed of this and are supportive. The go live date being worked to is still 6 May. The Board asked for an update be circulated as soon as one is available.

**Action – An update on the changes to the Library Opening Hours Review to be circulated to the Board as soon as one was available.**

June left the meeting at this point. The Chair thanked her for her input.

Kirsty Keay spoke to the board about a letter of complaint that had been received regarding library opening hours. The response sent explained why the opening hours were as they had been set. There had been no reply as yet. It was agreed that as the complainant had copied a lot of people into their complaint, it was important that any reply also be sent to these people. An offer of a face to face meeting would be extended if a reply was received. The Chief Executive explained that we had specifically been asked to table a copy of the letter of complaint at the March Board Meeting by the complainant, and copies had been circulated to all Board members.

**Action – A copy of the response to the complaint around Library Opening Hours to be sent to the people copied in on the original complaint.**
6. **Minutes of the Last Meeting**

Sarah Scarlett asked that any reference made to items outwith the Board Papers be linked into the minutes
Brian Lawrie asked that a correction be made to the minute as the meeting with Fife Council had been on 5th November rather than 6th.

With these corrections the minute was accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters arising

It was agreed that any matters arising were complete or ongoing. There was some discussion around the Annual report and how this could be updated going forward.
7. **Strategic Plan 2019 – 2024 and Business Plan 2019/20**The Chief Executive gave an update on the Strategic plan and Business Plan. The four strategic priorities being unpacked. The strategic plan framework document would be sent to the Board in the next week for comment within the next two weeks. Michelle confirmed that there had been a really good session with the Management Team on the framework and that they were happy with it and appreciated the opportunity to input to the framework. The importance of the foundations behind the framework was discussed along with the flexibility of it if priorities change in the future.

The Board Development Day was discussed, and it was agreed that the Strategic plan would make up part of the day along with the session on finances requested at the Finance & Audit Committee Meeting, if not at a future development day. It was agreed that an outline programme for the day would be sent out. There was some discussion around FCT values in the context of recruitment and retention. It was agreed that this should also be added to the outline programme for the Board Development Day.

**Action – The strategic plan framework document to be sent to the Board in the next week.
Action - An outline programme for the Board Development Day to include the strategic plan, finance, and values to be sent out to the Board**.

1. **Dates for Future Board Meetings – Paper 2.**The dates for 2020 Board Meetings were noted, and 10th April was agreed as the date for the next Board Development Day.
2. **Chief Executive’s Report – Paper 3**This paper was taken as read
3. **Performance Report – Paper 4**This paper was taken as read. It was agreed that the Finance performance report should be sent out to Board Members.

**Action – Finance performance report to be sent to the Board**
4. **Budget Report – Paper 5**Brian Lawrie highlighted certain areas of the budget report for discussion and asked that the Budget spreadsheet supplied to the Finance & Audit Committee be sent to the Board for clarity, and outlined recent engagement between Fife Council and FCT at political and officer level.

Following no comment from Fife Council FCT had asked Fife Council if they were in agreement with their account of the December meeting, but no response had been received, despite a further request for clarity.

The Board expressed disappointment at their comparative position to the other Fife Trusts, particularly given the significant level of savings delivered previously, along with the ongoing strong performance and lack of an operating deficit within the Trust.

It is now clear that the full amount of previous savings will now stand. The Board expressed concern at the position where no capital funding had as yet been confirmed by the mobile libraries, and acknowledged that if this not resolved, the service may cease to be feasible to deliver.

The Capital Budget allocated to FCT has been reduced from 100k to 30k per annum for the next two years. The Board was pleased that the capital investment requested for Adam Smith Theatre had been awarded as part of the budget process.

It was agreed that the spend to save proposals, if approved, will take time to return on investment and there was a need to pursue these with Fife Council as a potential means to mitigate savings to be delivered, and that associated savings would require to be re-profiled as necessary.

The Board thanked Brian for the update.

The Chief Executive confirmed that once the budget position had been confirmed further clarity had been requested and that she had met with Tim Kendrick and Paul Vaughan of Fife Council, also emphasising the service impacts of the savings now approved by Fife Council. Further meetings would be arranged with Fife Council for a strategic stocktake on the budget issues. Some of the savings proposals will require discussion with other Council services, which may provide alternative options.

It was agreed that the transparency of a written audit trail was incredibly important around the budget discussions and negotiations.

 It was agreed that the Chair should write to the Co-leaders and the Chief Executive of Fife Council setting out the key points discussed and agreed by the Board, with a copy of that letter to be circulated round all Board members for information.

**Action – Budget Spreadsheet supplied to the Finance & Audit Committee to be sent to the Board for clarity.
Action – A budget letter to be drafted to the Co-Leaders of Fife Council and copied to the Full Board once sent**
5. **Quarterly Highlights Report – Paper 6**This paper was taken as read
6. **Updates From Convenors – Papers 7 & 8**These papers were taken as read
7. **AOCB**

Frank Quinault asked about Board recruitment as this was now a crucial issue, this was flagged up in the CEO report in paragraphs 4.14-4.21. KK explained that plans were in place and that these would be circulated round the Board.

Kirsty Keay reported that Fife Council were pushing forward with the Templehall Community Hub project but as yet it was unclear as to what stage the project was at. Discussions were ongoing. Proposals regarding St Andrews Library also require greater clarity.

Brian Lawrie commented that he felt that a chance to scrutinise the performance of museums, libraries, and theatres was potentially being missed. This was flagged up in the Finance & Audit Meeting minutes of 19th February. The Executive Team to consider how there could be greater focus on these areas at and between Board meetings.

**Action – Kirsty to circulate plans around Board Recruitment to the Board**The Chair thanked everyone for their participation in the meeting.
8. **DONM – Wednesday 26th June**