

1.1 BOARD MINUTES COMPANY CONFIDENTIAL

Date: 27th September 2023, 10.00am -16.00pm, Framestore - London

Present: Baroness Nicky Morgan (NM) (Chair)
Steve Holliday (SH)
Dame Julia Cleverdon (JC)
Mo Isap (MI)
Elizabeth Beale (EB)
David Baldwin (DB)
Ashwin Mistry (AM)
Neil McLean (NML)
Oli de Botton, Chief Executive (OdB)
John Yarham, Deputy Chief Executive (JY)

In attendance: Paul Lewis, Chief of Strategy and Communications (PL)
Nicola Hall, Director of Education (NH)
Kevin Ronan, Director of HR & Operations (KR)
Elizabeth Kingsley, Head of Finance and Commercial (EK) Virtual
Laura Hawksworth, Head of Policy and Impact (LH)
Max Rowe, Associate Director of Grants and Development (MR)
Sarah Yong, Head of External Affairs (SY)
Sara Mohideen, Company Secretary/Internal Operations Senior Manager (SM)
Alice Coventry, EA to CEO/DCEO (AC)

Notes

1. Welcome and Introduction

NM opened the meeting and welcomed the group. NM welcomed NML to his first Board meeting.

NM informed the Board that Christine Hodgson accepted the invitation to become CEC's first Patron.

NM asked the Board for any declarations of interest:

- NM has been asked to be an honorary Professor at the University of Birmingham (lecturing in character).
- AM has invested in 2B Enterprising and Eric Digital.

1.1. Minutes from the Last Meeting

The minutes from the board meeting on 15th June 2023 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

1.2. Table of Actions

The Board noted the complete and in progress actions in the table.

OdB and PL gave an update on activity relating to Enterprise since the last Board meeting in June.

1.3 Committee Minutes

1.3.1 Audit Committee

SH flagged that salary adjustments relating to Cost-of-Living increase will be sent to the Audit Committee via email to approve before the next Committee meeting on October 19th.

1.3.2 Nominations Committee

NM made a suggestion to the Board that the responsibility for Committee membership should lie within the Nominations Committee. The Board agreed and therefore this will be reflected in the committee's Terms of Reference.

NM also suggested that every Committee should have a Youth Board Member in attendance, which the Board also shared their agreement with.

2. Items to Note

2.1. Performance Update Slides

OdB informed the Board that the CEC all-staff planning days and Board meetings are scheduled to ensure a coherent line of communication. OdB shared a list of successes from the past quarter that was developed by staff at the recent planning day.

OdB took the Board through the highlights since the last board meeting, performance against strategic goals, organisational health metrics and progress against KPIs.

The Board noted the position and commended the development of the organisational health data.

The Board discussed the positives and negatives of remote work experience and the value for money report. MI suggested auditing the value for money figure externally and adding the impact of the value back into the economy/city/region (return of money, confidence, wellbeing etc) to the report.

2.2 Workstream Updates

The Board noted the following update papers:

- 2.1.1 Network and Employers

JY provided an update on the highlights from the NET team, including managing the transition from LEPs to LAs/CAs, devolution, ATE framework report and the continued focus on disadvantage.

The Board discussed the risk surrounding areas where there is a LEP with no CA and a different partner is needed.

- 2.1.2 Data and Digital

JY provided an update on the highlights from the D&D team, including the broadening of CEC's digital offer, the ongoing work around standards, the use of FSQ through digital portals and the cohesive approach to professional development.

The Board discussed opportunities to expand the use of the data and insights captured via our digital tools.

- 2.1.3 Education Development

NH provided an update on the highlights from the Education team, including the careers impact system, development of teachers/education leaders/professional qualifications and the growth and the challenges of the primary offer, including the risk relating to delivering the primary programme due to some schools no longer being able to take part. DfE are aware of this, and we are working in partnership to address this risk.

Action: AC to set up a Board visit to see start small, dream big in action at Key Stage 2.

- 2.1.4 Strategy and Communications

PL provided an update on the highlights from the Strat & Comms team, including feedback from the Education Select Committee, Careers Strategic Action Plan 2024, Ofsted Thematic Review and the Careers Excellence Event.

- **2.1.5 Operations**

KR provided an update on the highlights from the Operations team, including reduced turnover, successful recruitment, the ITT for an IT service provider, data protection and preparation for the ISO27001 surveillance audit in Jan 2024.

The Board asked about CEC's diversity statistics, which were shared in the meeting and the ED&I strategy which is now in place to address related challenges.

2.3 Management Accounts

EK presented the management accounts, and the Board noted the current position – the spend against the Budget year to date is on target, with increased staff retention and an early signing of the GFA allowing good progress and reducing the risk of underspend in the year. We are currently undertaking a mid-year reforecast, the results of which will be reported to Audit committee in October. Total spend for the year is expected to be around £35m, with around £32m of that from the main GFA and the remainder from other sources, including the primary grant.

3. Deep Dive

OdB introduced the top opportunities and risks for CEC.

JY spoke through the context, SWOT and key actions of the devolution deals.

The Board provided their reflections, and believe that CEC are in a good position, as a trusted partner in the field to be flexible and to understand the needs and support regions effectively with their devolution deals. A focus on employer voice was emphasised as a way to better understand the needs of the country.

PL spoke through the context, headline risks, SWOT and key actions of the next phase of funding.

The Board shared their reflections and suggested using the value for money report as a supportive document of our impact and as leverage to partner with strong organisations in the sector.

Action: The Board would like to see a mapping exercise done of who is doing the best in the market, what their models/plans are, which employers are behind them, and how can we support them?

OdB spoke through the context, headline risks, SWOT and key actions of a change in government.

The Board advised that we need to showcase the excellent work we do, our social justice approach, and our evidence of long-term impact to key shadow ministers so they can see with their own eyes why CEC is essential going forward.

4. Longer Term Strategic Reflections

OdB talked through the four key strategic shifts that CEC's current position necessitates.

The Board discussed the gap between skills development and career readiness, the need to understand the granularity in socially patterned disadvantage and the need for greater connectivity between young people and employers.

PL took the Board through four possible models for the future, and each were questioned and considered. The Board agreed that our values should remain core to the organisation, but flexibility and enhanced scope are necessary to respond to the changing needs of the country and to remain relevant. Additional areas of focus need to be reviewed such as employability, character, soft skills, enrichment and new forms of data usage.

5. DfE Discussion

NM welcomed Hannah Sheehan (HS) to the Board meeting. HS introduced herself and her role within the Department for Education.

The Board and HS discussed skills, character, employability, enrichment and the strategic action plan. The relationship between CEC and the DfE was also spoken about, as well as what steps can be taken to ensure we are working in the most advantageous possible way.

6. Reflections

The Board reflected on the key takeaways and actions from the meeting.

7. AOB

Amy Smith, Global Director of Recruitment and Outreach at Framestore came to talk to the Board about her experience as an EA, and her experience of working with CEC.

Date of next meeting: 29th November 2023, 10.00 – 13.00, Birmingham

Lunch & Board visit: 29th November 2023, 13:00-16:00, Birmingham