

Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee

Monday, 20th January, 2020

MEETING OF BELFAST WATERFRONT AND ULSTER HALL LTD. SHAREHOLDERS' COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Mulholland (Chairperson); and
Alderman Haire; and
Councillors Collins, Flynn, Groves,
Kelly, Magee and McAteer.

In attendance: Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;
Ms. C. Toolan, Chief Executive, Belfast Waterfront
and Ulster Hall Ltd.;
Mr. I. Bell, Business Support Director, Belfast Waterfront
and Ulster Hall Ltd.;
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were received from Alderman Copeland and Sandford and from Councillors Canavan and Cobain.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 18th November were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 2nd December.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Welcome

The Chairperson welcomed Mr Patrick McClughan, Board Member of BWUH Ltd, who was attending his first meeting of the Shareholders' Committee.

RESTRICTED ITEM

The information contained in the report associated with the following item is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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BWUH Ltd. Annual Business Plan, 2020/2021

The Chief Executive of Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. (BWUH Ltd.) presented the 2020/2021 Business Plan to the Shareholders' Committee.

She provided the Committee with an update of the strategic goals for the company, which included:

- attracting 50,000 annual conference delegate days (per annum) to the City;
- attracting 35,000 (of the 50,000) out-of-state conference delegate days;
- contributing £100million of economic return to the City by 2020; and
- meeting the requirements of the MOU Table and Letter of Offer.

She highlighted to the Members that the business had already exceeded its economic impact target, of £100million, one year earlier than planned.

She explained the importance of Business Tourism to the venue, in both the national and international markets, and reminded the Members of the two C&IT Awards which the company had recently won. In addition, she advised the Members that Marie Claire Caldwell, Head of Sales and Marketing, had been named as one of the "20 in their twenties" to watch at the Professional Convention Management Association in November 2019.

The Committee was advised of the importance to the Company of the new catering contract which had been agreed.

The Business Support Director then provided the Committee with a detailed overview of the Financial Plan for 2020/2021. He also updated the Members on the sales pipeline and the five year revenue and management fee.

The Committee noted a number of challenges which 2020/2021 would bring, including the continued uncertainty around Brexit and increased competition with other new conference venues across the UK and Ireland.

The Chief Executive stated that she was keen to see Belfast join the Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDSI), which had been created specifically to help destinations, event planners and suppliers to evaluate the sustainability strategies of destinations and their events industry.

The Members were advised that the recent Conditions Survey had been completed and that the Council and BWUH Ltd were working on identifying a costed priority list.

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The Committee was provided with a PESTEL impact map, which outlined the key Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental and Legal factors which the company should be conscious of.

The Members were also given an overview of the work which the company was undertaking as part of its health and wellness, corporate social responsibility and community outreach plans.

In response to a Member's question, the Director of Economic Development advised the Committee that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on the future work of the International Relations Unit in light of Brexit.

After a number of further questions from Members, the Chief Executive reminded the Members that all Members of the BWUH Board had been invited to attend the February meeting of the Shareholders' Committee, and that it would take place in the ICC Belfast.

The Committee noted the update which had been provided and agreed the 2020/2021 Business Plan.

Chairperson